

“Silent issues” in the health of Australia’s women and girls

Dear [NAME OF POTENTIAL PARTICIPANT]

Thank you for your interest in our study, “Silent issues” in the health of Australia’s women and girls (Project ID: 45483).

We at Monash University are conducting this research on behalf of the Sisterhood Foundation (formerly the Priceline Sisterhood Foundation). Our aim is to learn about the health and social conditions currently affecting women and girls living in Australia and of these, which you perceive to be the most important in terms of requiring additional funding support and research. The findings will be used by the Sisterhood Foundation to inform their decisions about the health conditions and social issues which should be prioritized for awareness and funding.

I have attached an Explanatory Statement which explains more about the study and what participation involves.

Participation in this research is voluntary. If you don’t wish to take part, you don’t have to.

We would like to invite you to complete a brief anonymous online survey (15 minutes) and/or participate in an interview.

Everyone who completes a survey and/or participates in an interview will go in the draw for one of thirty x \$50 gift vouchers.

You can access the survey by clicking on the following link:

https://monash.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_ahlc2VjzR7LnMa

Or by scanning this QR code on your smartphone or tablet:



If you would like to participate in an interview, please contact Dr Sara Holton from Monash University on email: sara.holton@monash.edu.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions about the study.

Thank you once again for your interest in our study.

With best wishes

Dr Sara Holton
Senior Research Fellow
Health and Social Care Unit
Monash University



Research Advert / Flyer / Poster

“Silent issues” in the health of Australia’s women and girls

Would you be willing to share your thoughts about:

- the health conditions and social issues currently affecting women and girls living in Australia?
- which health conditions and social issues you perceive to be the most important in terms of requiring additional funding support and research?

Your thoughts could help others

We are looking for women and girls aged 16 years or older to complete a brief anonymous survey and/or take part in an interview and tell us about their thoughts on the health conditions and social issues that prevent women and girls from living healthy lives in Australia.

This research is being conducted by Professor Helen Skouteris, Dr Sara Holton, Mr Mitchell Bowden and Ms Tracy Van Dyke from the Health and Social Care Unit, School of Public Health and Preventive Medicine at Monash University, in collaboration with the Sisterhood Foundation (formerly the Priceline Sisterhood Foundation).

The results of the research will help the Sisterhood Foundation better support the health of women and girls in Australia.

The project has been approved by the Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee (Project ID: 45483).

WHO CAN PARTICIPATE?

Women and girls aged 16 years or older who able to communicate in English or one of these community languages: Mandarin, Arabic, Cantonese, Vietnamese and Punjabi.

WHAT YOU’LL BE ASKED TO DO

You will be asked to complete a survey and/or participate in an interview. Before you agree to participate, you’ll be given detailed information about the research (which is also available here: Survey - [Revised application Dec24\Explanatory Statement \(survey\) v2 12Dec24.pdf](#); Interviews: [Revised application Dec24\Explanatory Statement \(interviews & Delphi\) v2 12Dec24.pdf](#)).

Everyone who completes the survey or participates in an interview will be eligible to go in the draw for one of 30 x \$50 shopping vouchers.

HOW TO BE INVOLVED

If you would like to participate, or want further information, please email Dr Sara Holton at sara.holton@monash.edu. More details about the study and the link to the survey are available here: https://monash.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_ahlc2VjzR7LInMa



Default Question Block



“Silent issues” in the health of Australia’s women and girls

Thank you for your interest in this study. The study has been approved by the Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee (Project ID: 45483).

The aim of the study is to identify the health conditions and social issues (i.e. issues such as homelessness, violence etc.) that prevent women and girls from living healthy lives in Australia. The findings will be used by the Sisterhood Foundation to inform their decisions about the health conditions and social issues which should be prioritized for awareness and funding.

When we use the term "silent issues" in this survey, we are referring to health conditions or social issues which may have been overlooked, or we need to know or do more about.

The Explanatory Statement tells you more about the study and can be accessed via this link: [INSERT LINK]

This survey is anonymous so please do not write your name anywhere.

There are no right or wrong answers to any of the questions. We are just interested in your thoughts and experiences. If you are unsure how to answer a question, please

select the response which corresponds mostly closely to how you feel.

The survey will take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

Your completion of the survey indicates your consent to participate in the study.

Thank you for your participation. If you have any questions about the study, please contact Dr Sara Holton (sara.holton@monash.edu).

SECTION 1: Some questions about you

What was your age at your last birthday?

Are you Aboriginal or a Torres Strait Islander?

☐ Yes

☐ No

In which country were you born?

☐ Australia

☐ Other (please specify)

Do you speak a language other than English at home?

☐ No

☐ Yes (please specify)

What is the highest level of education you have completed so far?

☐ Partially completed secondary school (less than Year 12)

☐ Completed secondary school (Year 12)

☐ Trade/apprenticeship (eg hairdresser, chef)

- ☐ Certificate/diploma (eg child care, technician)
- ☐ University degree
- ☐ Higher university degree (eg Master's, PhD)

Which of these best describes your current relationship status?

- ☐ Married (in a registered marriage)
- ☐ Living with a partner in a relationship
- ☐ I have a girlfriend/boyfriend/partner I don't live with
- ☐ Not currently in a relationship

How do you describe your sexual orientation?

- ☐ Straight (heterosexual)
- ☐ Gay or lesbian
- ☐ Bisexual
- ☐ I use a different term (please specify)
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

What is the postcode where you live?

Do you have a health care or concession card?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

What is your current occupation? (select all that apply)

- ☐ Manager or administrator (eg farm manager, general manager, director of nursing, school principal)
- ☐ Professional (eg scientist, doctor, registered nurse, allied health professional, teacher, artist)
- ☐ Associate professional (eg technician, manager, youth worker, police officer)

- ☐ Tradesperson or related worker (eg hairdresser, gardener, florist)
- ☐ Advanced clerical or service worker (eg secretary, personal assistant, flight attendant, law clerk)
- ☐ Intermediate clerical, sales or service worker (eg typist, word processing / data entry operator, receptionist, child care worker, nursing assistant, hospitality worker)
- ☐ Intermediate production or transport worker (eg sewing machinist, machine operator, bus driver)
- ☐ Elementary clerical, sales or service worker (eg filing / mail clerk, parking inspector, sales assistant, telemarketer, housekeeper)
- ☐ Labourer or related worker (eg cleaner, factory worker, general farm hand, kitchenhand)
- ☐ I am self-employed
- ☐ I am a student
- ☐ I am retired
- ☐ I don't have a paid job

Have you ever been treated for or diagnosed with any of the following health conditions in your lifetime? (select all that apply)

- ☐ Autoimmune conditions (eg multiple sclerosis, rheumatoid arthritis)
- ☐ Cancer (eg breast, skin)
- ☐ Cardiovascular/Heart disease (including high blood pressure/hypertension, stroke)
- ☐ Gynaecological cancers (e.g., womb, ovarian, cervical, vulva)
- ☐ Chronic fatigue
- ☐ Chronic pain (including back problems, pelvic pain)
- ☐ Headaches/migraine
- ☐ Diabetes
- ☐ Osteoporosis
- ☐ Urinary tract infections (UTIs)
- ☐ Asthma
- ☐ Mental health conditions (eg depression, anxiety, stress, bipolar disorder)
- ☐ Eating disorders (eg anorexia, bulimia)
- ☐ Alzheimer's disease/dementia
- ☐ Neurodiversity (eg autism)
- ☐ Endometriosis
- ☐ Polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS)
- ☐ Fibroids

- ☐ Menstruation (including period pain, heavy menstrual bleeding etc)
- ☐ Infertility (including assisted reproductive treatment)
- ☐ Sleep problems
- ☐ Drug and alcohol problems
- ☐ Sexually transmitted infections (STIs)
- ☐ Other physical health conditions (please specify)
- ☐ Other mental health problems (please specify)
- ☐ None of these conditions

Have you ever experienced any of the following in your lifetime? (select all that apply)

- ☐ Abortion
- ☐ Violence (eg sexual violence, intimate partner violence)
- ☐ Bullying
- ☐ Homelessness

SECTION 2: Health conditions and social issues affecting women and girls in Australia

When you think about women's and girls' health and wellbeing in Australia, which health conditions and social issues (i.e. issues such as homelessness, violence etc.) are you **most concerned** about (i.e. you think they are important and need the most attention)? Choose the **five** you think are most important from the list and rank them from 1 to 5 (i.e. 1 = 'most important' and 5 = 'least important')

- Asthma
- Autoimmune conditions (eg multiple sclerosis, rheumatoid arthritis)
- Alzheimer's disease/dementia
- Cancer (eg breast, skin)
- Chronic fatigue
- Chronic pain (including back problems, pelvic pain)

- ☐ Cardiovascular/Heart disease (including high blood pressure/hypertension, stroke)
- ☐ Diabetes
- ☐ Eating disorders (eg anorexia, bulimia)
- ☐ Endometriosis
- ☐ Fertility/infertility (including assisted reproductive treatment)
- ☐ Gynaecological cancers (e.g., womb, ovarian, cervical, vulva)
- ☐ Headaches/migraine
- ☐ Homelessness
- ☐ Menopause/perimenopause
- ☐ Menstruation (including period pain, heavy menstrual bleeding etc)
- ☐ Mental health conditions (eg depression, anxiety, stress, bipolar disorder)
- ☐ Miscarriage/stillbirth
- ☐ Drug and alcohol problems
- ☐ Neurodiversity (eg autism, ADHD)
- ☐ Osteoporosis
- ☐ Postnatal health and support (including breastfeeding)
- ☐ Polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS)
- ☐ Pregnancy
- ☐ Sexual and reproductive health (eg abortion, contraception)
- ☐ Sleep problems
- ☐ Urinary tract infections (UTIs)
- ☐ Uterine fibroids or polyps

☐ Violence (eg sexual violence, intimate partner violence)

☐ Obesity

☐ Aging

☐ Poverty

☐ Palliative care

☐ Other (please specify)

Which health conditions and social issues (i.e. issues such as homelessness, violence etc.) affecting women and girls living in Australia do you think are the **most commonly funded** (i.e. get the most money from the government or other organisations)? Choose the **five** from the list that you think get most funding and rank them from 1 to 5 (i.e. 1 = 'most important' and 5 = 'least important')

☐ Aging

☐ Asthma

☐ Alzheimer's disease/dementia

☐ Autoimmune conditions (eg multiple sclerosis, rheumatoid arthritis)

☐ Cancer (eg breast, skin)

☐ Chronic fatigue

☐ Chronic pain (including back problems, pelvic pain)

☐ Cardiovascular/Heart disease (including high blood pressure/hypertension, stroke)

☐ Diabetes

☐ Drug and alcohol problems

☐ Eating disorders (eg anorexia, bulimia)

☐ Endometriosis

- ☐ Fertility/infertility (including assisted reproductive treatment)
- ☐ Gynaecological cancers (e.g., womb, ovarian, cervical, vulva)
- ☐ Headaches/migraine
- ☐ Homelessness
- ☐ Menopause/perimenopause
- ☐ Menstruation (including period pain, heavy menstrual bleeding etc)
- ☐ Mental health conditions (eg depression, anxiety, stress, bipolar disorder)
- ☐ Miscarriage/stillbirth
- ☐ Neurodiversity (eg autism, ADHD)
- ☐ Obesity
- ☐ Osteoporosis
- ☐ Postnatal health and support (including breastfeeding)
- ☐ Polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS)
- ☐ Poverty
- ☐ Pregnancy
- ☐ Sexual and reproductive health (eg abortion, contraception)
- ☐ Sleep problems
- ☐ Urinary tract infections (UTIs)
- ☐ Uterine fibroids or polyps
- ☐ Violence (eg sexual violence, intimate partner violence)
- ☐ Palliative care
- ☐ Other (please specify)

Which health conditions and social issues (i.e. issues such as homelessness, violence etc.) affecting women and girls living in Australia do you think get the **most attention** (i.e. are the most commonly discussed in the media or community discussions, or have the most research etc)? Choose the **five** from the list that you think get most attention and rank them from 1 to 5 (i.e. 1 = 'most important' and 5 = 'least important')

☐

Aging

☐

Asthma

☐

Alzheimer's disease/dementia

☐

Autoimmune conditions (eg multiple sclerosis, rheumatoid arthritis)

☐

Cancer (eg breast, skin)

☐

Chronic fatigue

☐

Chronic pain (including back problems, pelvic pain)

☐

Cardiovascular/Heart disease (including high blood pressure/hypertension, stroke)

☐

Diabetes

☐

Drug and alcohol problems

☐

Eating disorders (eg anorexia, bulimia)

☐

Endometriosis

☐

Fertility/infertility (including assisted reproductive treatment)

☐

Gynaecological cancers (e.g., womb, ovarian, cervical, vulva)

☐

Headaches/migraine

☐

Homelessness

☐

Menopause/perimenopause

☐

Menstruation (including period pain, heavy menstrual bleeding etc)

- ☐ Mental health conditions (eg depression, anxiety, stress, bipolar disorder)
- ☐ Miscarriage/stillbirth
- ☐ Neurodiversity (eg autism, ADHD)
- ☐ Obesity
- ☐ Osteoporosis
- ☐ Postnatal health and support (including breastfeeding)
- ☐ Polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS)
- ☐ Poverty
- ☐ Pregnancy
- ☐ Sexual and reproductive health (eg abortion, contraception)
- ☐ Sleep problems
- ☐ Urinary tract infections (UTIs)
- ☐ Uterine fibroids or polyps
- ☐ Violence (eg sexual violence, intimate partner violence)
- ☐ Palliative care
- ☐ Other (please specify)

Some health conditions and social issues **only affect** women and girls.
Do you think any of the following health conditions and social issues which only affect women and girls have been overlooked and need more funding and support to help improve the health and wellbeing of women and girls living in Australia?

	Yes, needs more funding/support	Maybe	No, doesn't need anymore funding/support	I don't know/I haven't heard of this condition
Pregnancy	☐	☐	☐	☐

	Yes, needs more funding/support	Maybe	No, doesn't need anymore funding/support	I don't know/I haven't heard of this condition
Menstruation (eg heavy, irregular, painful periods, premenstrual syndrome (PMS))	☐	☐	☐	☐
Menopause/perimenopause	☐	☐	☐	☐
Endometriosis	☐	☐	☐	☐
Polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Breastfeeding	☐	☐	☐	☐
Pre-eclampsia	☐	☐	☐	☐
Uterine fibroids	☐	☐	☐	☐
Cervical cancer	☐	☐	☐	☐
Vaginal/vulva cancer	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ovarian cancer	☐	☐	☐	☐
Uterine/ Womb cancer	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other (please specify) 	☐	☐	☐	☐

Some health conditions and social issues are **more common** among or **affect more** women and girls than men/boys.

Do you think any of the following health conditions and social issues which mostly affect women and girls have been overlooked and need more funding and support to help improve the health and wellbeing of women and girls living in Australia?

	Yes, needs more funding/support	Maybe	No, doesn't need anymore funding/support	I don't know/I haven't heard of this condition
Osteoporosis	☐	☐	☐	☐
Perinatal depression	☐	☐	☐	☐
Anxiety	☐	☐	☐	☐
Eating disorders (eg anorexia nervosa, bulimia)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Abortion	☐	☐	☐	☐
Miscarriage	☐	☐	☐	☐
Stillbirth	☐	☐	☐	☐

	Yes, needs more funding/support	Maybe	No, doesn't need anymore funding/support	I don't know/I haven't heard of this condition
Postnatal health and support	☐	☐	☐	☐
Multiple sclerosis	☐	☐	☐	☐
Chronic pain	☐	☐	☐	☐
Depression	☐	☐	☐	☐
Migraine/headaches	☐	☐	☐	☐
Lupus	☐	☐	☐	☐
Arthritis (including rheumatoid arthritis)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Skin cancer	☐	☐	☐	☐
Breast cancer	☐	☐	☐	☐
Alzheimer's disease	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other (please specify)	☐	☐	☐	☐

Some health conditions and social issues affect women and girls **differently** than men/boys (e.g. women/girls might experience different symptoms to men/boys).

Do you think any of the following health conditions and social issues which differently affect women and girls have been overlooked and need more funding and support to help improve the health and wellbeing of women and girls living in Australia?

	Yes, needs more funding/support	Maybe	No, doesn't need anymore funding/support	I don't know/I haven't heard of this condition
Cardiovascular/Heart disease (including stroke)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Stress	☐	☐	☐	☐
Urinary tract infections (UTIs)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Infertility/fertility	☐	☐	☐	☐
Body image	☐	☐	☐	☐
Smoking (including vaping)	☐	☐	☐	☐

	Yes, needs more funding/support	Maybe	No, doesn't need anymore funding/support	I don't know/I haven't heard of this condition
Alcohol use/problems	☐	☐	☐	☐
Illicit drug use/problems	☐	☐	☐	☐
Homelessness	☐	☐	☐	☐
Obesity	☐	☐	☐	☐
Sleeping difficulties/problems	☐	☐	☐	☐
Physical activity	☐	☐	☐	☐
Palliative care	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other (please specify) 	☐	☐	☐	☐

Do you think women and girls in Australia need **more information** about any of the following health conditions and social issues? Choose the **five** from the list that you think women and girls need more information about and rank them from 1 to 5 (i.e. 1 = 'most important' and 5 = 'least important')

- ☐ Aging
- ☐ Asthma
- ☐ Alzheimer's disease/dementia
- ☐ Autoimmune conditions (eg multiple sclerosis, rheumatoid arthritis)
- ☐ Cancer (eg breast, skin)
- ☐ Chronic fatigue
- ☐ Chronic pain (including back problems, pelvic pain)
- ☐ Cardiovascular/Heart disease (including high blood pressure/hypertension, stroke)
- ☐ Diabetes
- ☐ Drug and alcohol problems
- ☐ Eating disorders (eg anorexia, bulimia)

- ☐ Endometriosis
- ☐ Fertility/infertility (including assisted reproductive treatment)
- ☐ Gynaecological cancers (e.g., womb, ovarian, cervical, vulva)
- ☐ Headaches/migraine
- ☐ Homelessness
- ☐ Menopause/perimenopause
- ☐ Menstruation (including period pain, heavy menstrual bleeding etc)
- ☐ Mental health conditions (eg depression, anxiety, stress, bipolar disorder)
- ☐ Miscarriage/stillbirth
- ☐ Neurodiversity (eg autism, ADHD)
- ☐ Obesity
- ☐ Osteoporosis
- ☐ Postnatal health and support (including breastfeeding)
- ☐ Polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS)
- ☐ Poverty
- ☐ Pregnancy
- ☐ Sexual and reproductive health (eg abortion, contraception)
- ☐ Sleep problems
- ☐ Urinary tract infections (UTIs)
- ☐ Uterine fibroids or polyps
- ☐ Violence (eg sexual violence, intimate partner violence)
- ☐ Palliative care

Other (specify)

SECTION 3: Anything else?

Have we missed anything? If there anything else you would like to say about health conditions and social issues experienced by women and girls living in Australia and which need more support or funding please write it in the box below.

Everyone who completes the survey is eligible to go in the draw for one of 30 x \$50 shopping vouchers in recognition of the time and inconvenience involved in participation and/or receive a summary of the findings from the study.

Would you like to enter the survey draw and/or receive a summary of the findings? (you will be directed to a separate survey so your responses to this survey remain anonymous)

☐ Yes

☐ No

Thank you for completing this survey!

The findings of this study will help the Sisterhood Foundation make decisions about the health conditions and social issues which should be prioritized for awareness and funding.

“Silent issues” in the health of Australia’s women and girls (ERM Project ID 45483)

Interview Guide: Women, girls & key stakeholders

[Thank participants for volunteering; introduce self.]

[Go through informed consent process.]

[Process for obtaining summary of results]

[Reminder that can withdraw at any time, and can choose not to contribute to particular topics.]

[Talk about interview process: Confidentiality; No right or wrong answers, recording etc]

As you know the aim of this study is to identify the health conditions and social issues that prevent women and girls from living healthy lives in Australia.

I’m going to ask you some questions about your thoughts on the health conditions and social issues (ie homelessness, violence etc) currently affecting women and girls living in Australia and of these, which you perceive to be the most important in terms of requiring additional funding support and research.

Monash University is conducting this research on behalf of the Sisterhood Foundation (formerly the Priceline Sisterhood Foundation) and the findings will be used by the Foundation to inform their decisions about the health conditions/social issues which should be prioritized for awareness and funding.

Common/important health conditions and social issues

When you think about women’s and girls’ health and wellbeing in Australia, what do you think are the most important health conditions/social issues?

[Ask about women and girls separately]

What do you think are the most well-known and funded or supported health conditions and social issues affecting women and girls living in Australia?

Do you think this level of support [for the identified condition/issue(s)] is appropriate and adequate?

Why/why not?

Do you think any of these health conditions/social issues need a better response?

[eg additional funding, support or research? Or a 'reorganisation' of what is already available?]

Silent health and social conditions

Do you think there are any health conditions/social issues affecting women and girls living in Australia which mean they can't live healthy lives/have a negative effect on their health and wellbeing?

Do you think there are any health conditions/social issues affecting women and girls in Australia that have been overlooked which we need to know or do more about?

Why do you think these conditions/issues are silent or overlooked? (ie why do you think these conditions/issues don't get enough/appropriate attention/support/funding?)

What might 'better' (ie doing more) look like?

Do you think women/girls need more information/support/resources about any of these?

Which one(s)? Why?

Is there anything else you would like to say about health conditions and social issues experienced by women and girls living in Australia and which need more support or funding?

Participant sociodemographic characteristics

Before we finish the interview, I'd like to ask you a few questions about yourself so that we can summarise the characteristics of everyone who participated in an interview as a group.

Women and girls

Age: What is your age?

Country of birth: In which country were you born?

Education: What is the highest level of education you have completed so far?

Relationship status: What is your relationship status?

Residential postcode: What is the postcode where you live?

Health conditions: Have you been diagnosed with or treated for any health condition(s) in your lifetime?

Key stakeholders

Gender

Role/profession and length of time in current role/profession

Thank for participation.

Offer summary of results: collect contact details (name, email address).

Women/girls: Request preferred contact details for gift voucher (if interested in going in the draw).