Help provide lifesaving education
- 90% of women have at least one heart disease risk factor.
- Almost half a million women aged 30-65 have high blood pressure or high cholesterol without knowing it.
- 65% of women had not had a heart health check before their heart attack.

Help save lives from heart attacks
- If you are a woman over 40, your chance of having a heart attack before the age of 70 is one in three.
- 40% of women said they did not experience chest pains when having their heart attack.
- Health outcomes for women after a heart attack are often worse than for men – particularly in younger women.
- Patient delay is the biggest killer – women need to know the warning signs.

Help protect the vulnerable
- Heart disease affects more Aboriginal women than non-Aboriginal women at every age, particularly younger women.
- Australian women with the lowest socioeconomic status experience heart disease death rates at 1.4 times that of the general population.
- Women living in remote areas are 20% more likely to die from heart disease than those in major cities.
- By working with local communities we can improve the heart health of people in regional, rural and remote areas.

Help raise funds for vital research
- In hospital, women are less likely to be referred for vital and common treatment for heart attacks.
- The ability to monitor women with heart disease and their risk factors is seriously impaired by important data gaps.
- Women have been under represented in heart disease clinical trials.
- By investing in research, we will improve health outcomes for women.

$5 million will help save lives from the single biggest killer of Australian women.
Heart disease kills 24 Australian women every single day.
It takes 3 times as many Australian women as breast cancer.

Heart disease kills 24 Australian women every single day.
Welcome and Thank You

With your help, the Heart Foundation is pioneering women’s heart health in Australia. Real change begins with awareness and education. It’s commonly believed that heart disease is a man’s disease but it is also the leading cause of death among women, killing three times more women than breast cancer does each year. One of the Heart Foundation’s biggest challenges is dispelling widespread myths about heart disease that prevent proper diagnosis and treatment in women.

The Heart Foundation launched a major gifts campaign seeking to raise $5 million from an exclusive group of philanthropists through a relatively silent appeal. This is the first time in over 40 years that the Heart Foundation has launched an appeal of this kind, seeking pledged contributions to invest in the future heart health of Australian women.

Thank you enormously for your support of our work to this point. We now have $1.9 million pledged and have commenced the foundation stage of the awareness program. With your support we have begun to close the gender gap on the awareness of heart disease as an important health issue for women, broaden knowledge of the warning signs of a heart attack in women, strengthen health professionals’ capacity to support women through their ‘cardiac journey’ and help to address the gender bias in research that has been a characteristic of past efforts.

Thank you for joining in our fight to beat heart disease in women. I strongly believe that together we can save lives.

Kerry Doyle PSM
NSW CHIEF EXECUTIVE
Your support is helping to…

1. **Build community awareness of heart disease as the leading cause of death amongst Australian women**

Change begins with awareness. Our goal was to develop a new communication strategy around women and heart disease that dispels the ‘myths’ and reinvigorates the message that heart disease in women is the leading cause of death. Major achievements include:

- The successful launch in June 2016 of a holistic public awareness and education campaign, called ‘Making the Invisible Visible.’ The campaign was developed to highlight that heart disease in women is a poorly recognised issue in the community. The primary aim of the campaign was to put awareness of heart disease in women on the public agenda, and to increase knowledge and understanding of the risk factors and warning signs of a heart attack in women. In 2016, younger women were our focus, with a spotlight on relevant issues such as the importance of a healthy lifestyle, the risks of smoking and oral contraceptive use, vascular complications in pregnancy and the association of these complications with a greater cardiovascular disease risk later in life.

- Since the start of the education program, 293 news items have been televised or published, highlighting that heart disease is the leading killer of women, explaining women’s differing heart attack symptoms and giving information on how to get a heart health check. Television coverage included prominent interviews on Channel 7’s Sunrise, Channel 9 and Ten Eyewitness News, which have been syndicated in regional media. Television coverage was supported by articles in prominent publications including The Huffington Post, The Sunday Telegraph, Prevention Magazine and Women’s Health Magazine.

Program Ambassadors have joined us to champion the message:

- Journalists and media identities Natalie Barr and Natarsha Belling have joined us as key program ambassadors. With a family connection to heart disease, both Natalie and Natarsha are committed to raising awareness and understanding of heart disease in women and supporting our work.

- His Excellency General The Honourable David Hurley, Governor of NSW, is on board as a strong supporter and advocate of the program. We are grateful for the Governor’s support across the following key events:
  - Launch of the Women and Heart Disease Program in June 2015.
  - Participation in the annual Bulls and Bears charity golf day (raising funds for the Women and Heart Disease Program) in March 2016.
Your support is helping to…

2. **Build local community engagement at the grassroots level, for individual women in individual communities and workplace champions to spread the message**

Through surveys, consultation, research and community engagement we know that women are keen champions in helping spread the message to others either through their workplaces, their networks or in sharing their own personal stories.

As a result, over the past twelve months, we have directly reached a total of 3,500 people across NSW to educate them about women and heart disease, through local community champions, workplaces and health professionals and spread the message onwards through their own networks. This has been achieved through local events and group presentations where we have had the opportunity to speak to women and provide evidence based resource materials for ongoing dissemination.

Further, we know that the impact of heart disease is felt most keenly amongst women from rural, low socioeconomic and culturally diverse communities. In response, through the provision of five community grants in 2015/16 we have supported projects to educate and build awareness in areas where the risk is highest.

These grants have been a vehicle to engage with health services and local women in these communities. Activities undertaken as part of these local community programs have been wide ranging, and highlights include:

- Three forums conducted for a total of 212 Cantonese, Mandarin and Korean speaking women. Development of translated resources disseminated at the forums and through Chinese and Korean medical networks.

- Training of bilingual community educators in the “Heartsmart” program for women in the Macarthur region of Sydney to enable them to deliver education sessions to Arabic speaking, Filipino, Indian and Pacific Islander women.

- Production of two videos with Arabic speaking and Italian women, focusing on heart disease and the importance of physical activity. These will soon be available for dissemination to other communities throughout NSW.

- Production of an Aboriginal women’s video featuring the heart health stories of Aboriginal women from Southern NSW.

- Engagement of local community champions in Northern NSW.

Health and corporate leaders also play an important role in assisting us spread information about women and heart disease far and wide. To begin tackling the issue of health in the workplace, we presented to 120 female corporate leaders at the 2015 Women in Leadership Summit and have delivered a series of workplace talks to a number of large financial and legal firms.
Your support is helping to...

3. Build knowledge and engagement with health professionals

Ongoing knowledge sharing and engagement of health professionals will enable better recognition, diagnosis and treatment of heart disease in women. It is also important that they know the Heart Foundation is a “one stop shop” for accessing the latest research and information in relation to heart disease in women.

To date a total of 25 different health and community organisations across NSW have supported our Women and Heart Disease Program through local engagement and awareness-raising initiatives. These organisations include Local Health District and Primary Health Network teams, Women’s Health Centres and community groups.

Highlights include:

- Establishment of a female cardiology roundtable ‘Hearts and Heels’. Membership comprises 25 female cardiologists representing a combination of public and private practice stretching across 12 key hospitals throughout metropolitan Sydney. The roundtable meets quarterly and is led by eminent cardiologist Associate Prof Lynne Pressley. This roundtable meets a number of needs including knowledge exchange, professional development and networking opportunities, creating champions for change and ensuring women are firmly on the heart health agenda.

- Engagement with obstetricians and researchers to explore ways in which vascular issues and pregnancy can be more directly highlighted and effectively promoted. We have completed a scoping exercise highlighting the issues of cardiovascular disease and pregnancy with key messages developed for young women focussing on pregnancy and heart health.

- Working with Breastscreen NSW to promote heart health awareness through their social media channels so that women view heart health checks with the same urgency and importance as they do mammograms.


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Current Risk Factor Summary

For Women Aged 18 – 44:

- 425,000 have high blood pressure.
- 900,000 have high cholesterol.
- Close to 1 million are obese.
- More than 1 million are overweight.
- More than 650,000 smoke.
- Close to 1.3 million did no exercise at all.
- 100,000 have at least five risk factors.
- 350,000 have cardiovascular disease.

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Women and Heart Disease Donor Report 2016 - SUMMARY
Your support is helping to…

4. Improve health systems to better respond to the needs of women, and address the research imbalance

The Hon. Pru Goward MP announced the launch of a new collaborative women and heart disease research grant at the 2015 NSW Cardiovascular Research Network Showcase event, ‘Heart of a Woman’. This grant, kindly funded by the Maple-Brown Family Foundation is specifically targeted at addressing the significant evidence gaps that currently exist in women’s heart health. The grant of $150,000 is to be directed specifically to a project related to heart disease in women. Applications were received from 22 NSW researchers. We are pleased to announce Prof. Elizabeth Sullivan from the University of Technology Sydney as the winner of the Women and Heart Disease Research Grant.

Data from the United States reveals that only one third of cardiovascular clinical trial subjects are female and that less than one third of trials that include women report their research outcomes by gender.

Angela Hehir
Women and Heart Disease Champion

Angela Hehir joined the Heart Foundation NSW in March 2015 as a dedicated Women and Heart Disease Program Manager to specifically manage and drive the implementation of the program. Angela has qualifications in education, nutrition and public health and has extensive experience in the delivery of heart health promotion programs. Angela’s achievements include the implementation of school heart health programs in South Australian and New South Wales, and the management of women’s health promotion and nutrition programs in Western Sydney. Angela spent time in Queensland as Director of Cardiovascular Health for the Queensland Division of the Heart Foundation prior to joining the NSW team. In recent years, Angela has worked as a consultant and as Research and Evaluation Manager within NSW Health. Implementing the Women and Heart Disease program provides Angela with the opportunity to combine her passion for health promotion with a commitment to ensuring that programs are making a difference.
Thank you

Significant progress has been achieved in delivering on the strategic initiatives established as Foundation Phase activities in the Women and Heart Disease Program plan. The interest, support and momentum that the program and supporting campaigns such as Making the Invisible Visible have achieved to this point highlights that the program resonates with a diverse range of Australians, encompassing the general public, corporate community, health professionals, the research community and government. Our experience in launching the campaign highlights that a broad range of Australians understand the need for the program and the practical and very positive health outcomes the program seeks to deliver.

While we have made good progress to this point, the scope of strategic initiatives still to be delivered highlights the critical need for continued donor engagement and support.

An enormous thank you to you as a key supporter of the Heart Foundation Women and Heart Disease Program. Our capacity to plan and deliver the scope of our strategic intent would not have been possible without your input and financial contribution, and for this we are enormously grateful.

In particular we appreciate the continued support of our Campaign Chair, Stanley Roth AM, for his invaluable advice and contribution as the campaign has developed and evolved, and to our team of Ambassadors championing the program to their networks, without whom we would not have achieved the impact and success to this point.

We hope to have your continued support as we move into the next phase of delivery, the third year of our major gifts campaign in 2017, and as we seek to further build our networks and invite the support of more major givers. We have exciting opportunities to create further impact and we look to you to continue this journey with us.

From our hearts to yours