

## MISSION

THE INSTITUTE FOR WOMEN'S HEALTH (IWH) IS DEDICATED TO IMPROVING THE HEALTH OF WOMEN ACROSS THEIR LIFE SPAN THROUGH MULTI-DISCIPLINARY RESEARCH, EDUCATION, CLINICAL AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP.

## VALUES

- The advocacy of a culturally conscious and holistic approach to women's health and wellness
- Encouraging gender-specific approaches to health care research and delivery
- Teaching health care professionals a culturally competent comprehensive approach to women's health
- Advancing the understanding of gender differences in health and disease.
- Fostering collaboration between experts from different disciplines to advance women's health research
- Serving as a resource for scientifically accurate information on women's health
- Connecting the academic resources of the university to the community
- Establishing mutually beneficial community-based partnerships to address women's health within a broader societal context

## Why Focus on Women?

Over the past two decades, there has been a transformation in knowledge of and attitudes about the health of women and gender differences in health. This has led to exciting new opportunities in research and education in these areas. Women comprise most patients in the United States because they outlive men, are more likely to be hospitalized, and visit physician offices at a higher rate than men throughout life. For many years, however, women were under-represented in medical research and their health concerns were traditionally minimized.

There is now widespread awareness that knowledge of sex and gender differences is fundamental to understanding normal human biology and disease. As the Institute of Medicine stated in a 2001 report, "sex matters" – and accounts for differences in the incidence and severity of a wide spectrum of illness.

Locally, Miami-Dade County is home to a uniquely diverse population of nearly a million adult women who are disproportionately affected by poverty and barriers to obtaining health care, including lack of insurance. Additionally, most of these women receive their healthcare in a fragmented fashion, having to schedule visits with providers in multiple disciplines, commit several days a year to healthcare, and often postpone or avoid preventive services.

## WHAT WE DO:

The Institute for Women's Health (IWH) is aggressively moving forward with implementation of an organizational plan which supports the mission of the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine and strategically aligns the Institute's core functions around research, clinical service, academic training/professional development, and community outreach. A major objective for the IWH is to broaden the scope and response to "women's health" within the University and serve as a catalyst for interdepartmental collaboration.

### Research

- Award annual developmental research grants to university faculty in order to pursue new research ideas in women's health.
- Coordinate teams of researchers from different fields to study women's health via working groups in the areas of menopause and sexually transmitted infections.
- Hold an annual Women's Health Research Day recognizing excellence in women's health research within the university and fostering cross-disciplinary collaboration in the field.

### Clinical Services

- Offer a comprehensive women's health care program, in collaboration with the UM Departments of Internal Medicine and Obstetrics and Gynecology, and Jackson Health System, to provide evidence-based exemplary care to women and enhance training of physicians in women's health care.
- Cultivate clinical research opportunities specific to women's health.

### Education and Training

- Provide continuing education opportunities for health professionals in women's health – both on campus and in the community.
- Train medical students in women's health and provide research mentorship through the Pathway in Women's Health.
- Direct a monthly women's health grand rounds series featuring expert speakers from the university and beyond.

### Community Service and Outreach

- Increase awareness of women's health issues within Miami in partnership with community organizations and leaders.
- Partner with local employers to educate their female employees on the latest information in women's health.
- Maintain a user-friendly website providing up-to-date information on women's health topics to women and health providers in South Florida and beyond.

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