



Women's Health Clinic began with the vision of Manitoba women who saw the need for quality reproductive health care and dedicated time, effort and resources to establish a medical clinic run by and for women.

In 1973, a group of volunteers formed Pregnancy Information Service, Inc., a pro-choice birth control and pregnancy counselling service that operated through Klinik Community Health Centre. In response to a growing need for a wider range of health services and information for women, the Board developed a model for a community health clinic to provide uniquely woman-centred medical and counselling services, as well as education and advocacy on women's health issues.

Women's Health Clinic opened its doors on May 4, 1981 and within 2 years, secured core funding from the Province of Manitoba.

We have continually expanded over the years and today offer a broad range of health programs and support services to women of varying ages (and in specific services, to men and boys). WHC continues to evolve as we engage in reflective practice; reviewing and adapting our practices and policies to reflect current information in response to emerging women's health needs. Through our advocacy work, we think critically about health issues and inform healthy public policy, both provincially and nationally.

We are committed to developing welcoming and accessible programs and services for women who encounter obstacles in mainstream health care, including women from diverse ethno-cultural communities and equity groups, women living with disabilities and those with limited resources. We work closely with community members and groups, other service providers, organizations and governments to share our experience, expertise and information about women's health.

Throughout our history, many of our services were made possible through the commitment of time, energy and caring of our volunteers. Today, highly skilled and dedicated volunteers continue to play important roles at WHC - as peer counsellors about birth control and unplanned pregnancy options, mentors for mothering, community speakers and facilitators and as members of our elected Board of Directors.

Grounded in the strengths and accomplishments of our past WHC strides confidently into the future. Remaining true to our mission of "empowerment, choice and action", we encourage and support women in learning all they can about their health and well-being so they can make informed choices.



## 1980's

WHC opens its doors with a small staff (5 employees in 1982 and 14 staff in 1983) and a very small annual budget.

- » creates Teen Drop-In Clinic (1985)
- » establishes Birth Control & Unplanned Pregnancy volunteer training Program (1985)
- » develops Volunteer Speaker's Bureau (1987)
- » establishes feminist mental health counselling services (1987)
- » adds HIV/AIDS testing & counselling to medical services (1988)
- » offers motherhood stress counselling (1989)

## 1990's

WHC moves into the 1990's with 46 staff, 110 volunteers and an annual budget of over \$1 million.

- » develops *Catching Our Breath* smoking cessation program for women (1990)
- » creates Women & Healthy Aging Project (1994)
- » hosts national consultations leading to formation of the Canadian Women's Health Network
- » launches Women & Poverty Project (2001)
- » receives Commonwealth Secretariat Award for Excellence in Women's Health Practice (1997)

## 2000's

We enter the new millennium with 56 staff, 125 volunteers and an annual budget of almost \$4 million.

- » incorporates midwifery services into medical program (2001)
- » creates WHC Endowment Fund (2002)
- » amalgamates Jane's Clinic (formerly Morgentaler Clinic) abortion services into medical program (2007)
- » opens first Birth Centre in Manitoba, offering pregnant women alternatives to hospital birth (2011)
- » pilots Provincial Eating Disorder Prevention & Recovery Program (2009)
- » forms WHC Council of Past Chairs (2012)
- » Birth Centre receives *City of Winnipeg Accessibility Award*

## 2010's

### **Expanding client services**

- » New social worker position (2013)
- » *Getting to Know Yourself* mental health skill-building workshop series (2013)
- » Birth Centre begins offering prenatal classes (2013)
- » Launched new WHC website (2014)
- » Started *The Circle*, a monthly discussion group to support women's mental health (2016)
- » Birth Centre begins offering hearing screening for newborns (2017)
- » WHC Portage begins offering medical abortion services (2018)
- » Developed booklet *Pregnancy and Infant Loss: A Guide to Coping with Loss* (2018)

### **Strengthening the healthcare system**

- » Created postpartum information kits for Manitoba service providers (2014)
- » Begins offering *Sexual Health Information Facilitator Training (SHIFT)* for service providers (2016)
- » Developed *Pregnancy and Infant Loss: A Guide to Coping with Loss* information kit for service providers (2018)

### **Community action**

- » Counter-protest to rally to defund abortion services (2013)
- » Missing & Murdered Indigenous Women public awareness campaign *Raise Your Voice – Strengthen Your Community* (2015)
- » Spoken word event: *Pro-Voice for Choice: sharing abortion experiences through spoken word* (2015)
- » Social media project: *#HeartEverybody* (2015)
- » Public presentation *Raise your Voice – End Violence against Indigenous Women & Girls* (2016)
- » *Body Peace Zone* community initiative for International No-Diet Day (2016)
- » Co-organized *Women's March on Washington – Winnipeg* (2017)

### **Celebrations**

- » *Celebrate Choice* event acknowledging 25 years of reproductive choice in Canada (2014)
- » *Speak. Dance. Reunite.* WHC's 35th Anniversary Dance Party & Spoken Word Event (2016)
- » Received *Body Confidence Canada Award for Equity & Inclusion* (2016)
- » *Women. Wine. Food.* event for International Women's Day (2017, 2018)

### ***Community partnerships***

- » *Body Positive Project* pilot project with École Seven Oaks Middle School (2014-2018)
- » Launched *Eating Disorders Manitoba* website with Health Sciences Centre Eating Disorder program (2015)
- » Birth Centre becomes the first Manitoba drop site for *NorthernStar Mothers Milk Bank* (2016)
- » *Hosted Your Life as a Tree* art camp for girls & teens in CFS care with Métis Child & Family Services (2016)
- » Doula training at the Birth Centre with the Indigenous Doula Collective (2017)
- » Co-organized panel discussion *Rights from the Start: Sexual and Reproductive Health in a National Pharmacare Strategy* (2018)