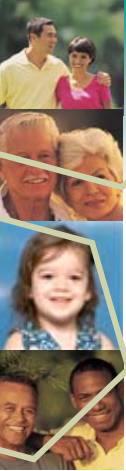


“Challenges of Research on Sex and Gender: Context of Women's Health”

Women's Health Research Network of British Columbia

*Dr. Miriam Stewart
Scientific Director
CIHR-Institute of Gender and Health*

September 29, 2005
Vancouver, BC



Fostering Women's Careers in Research

The participation of women in research
.... *Research **BY** women...*

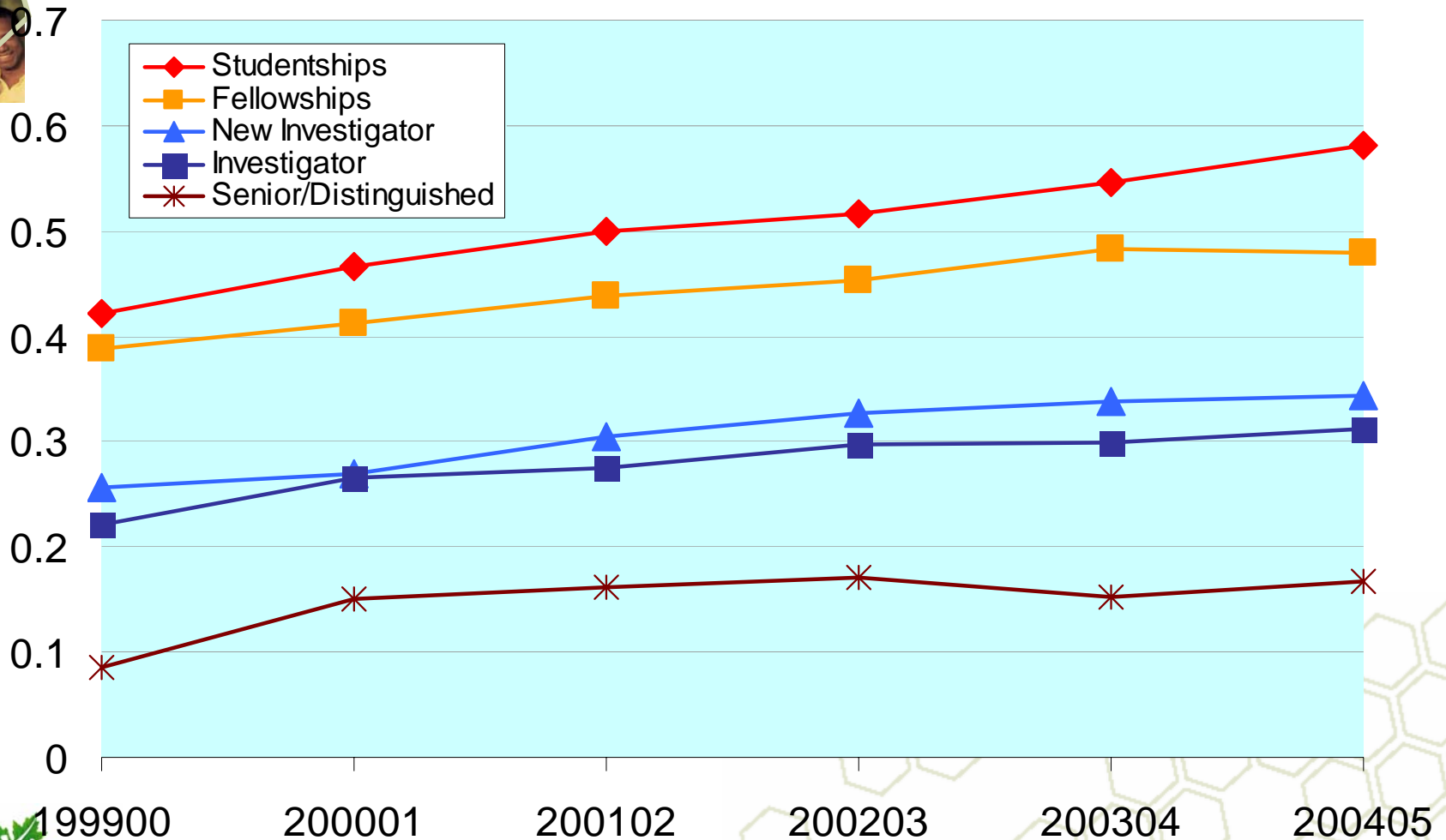


Gender and Sex Based Analysis

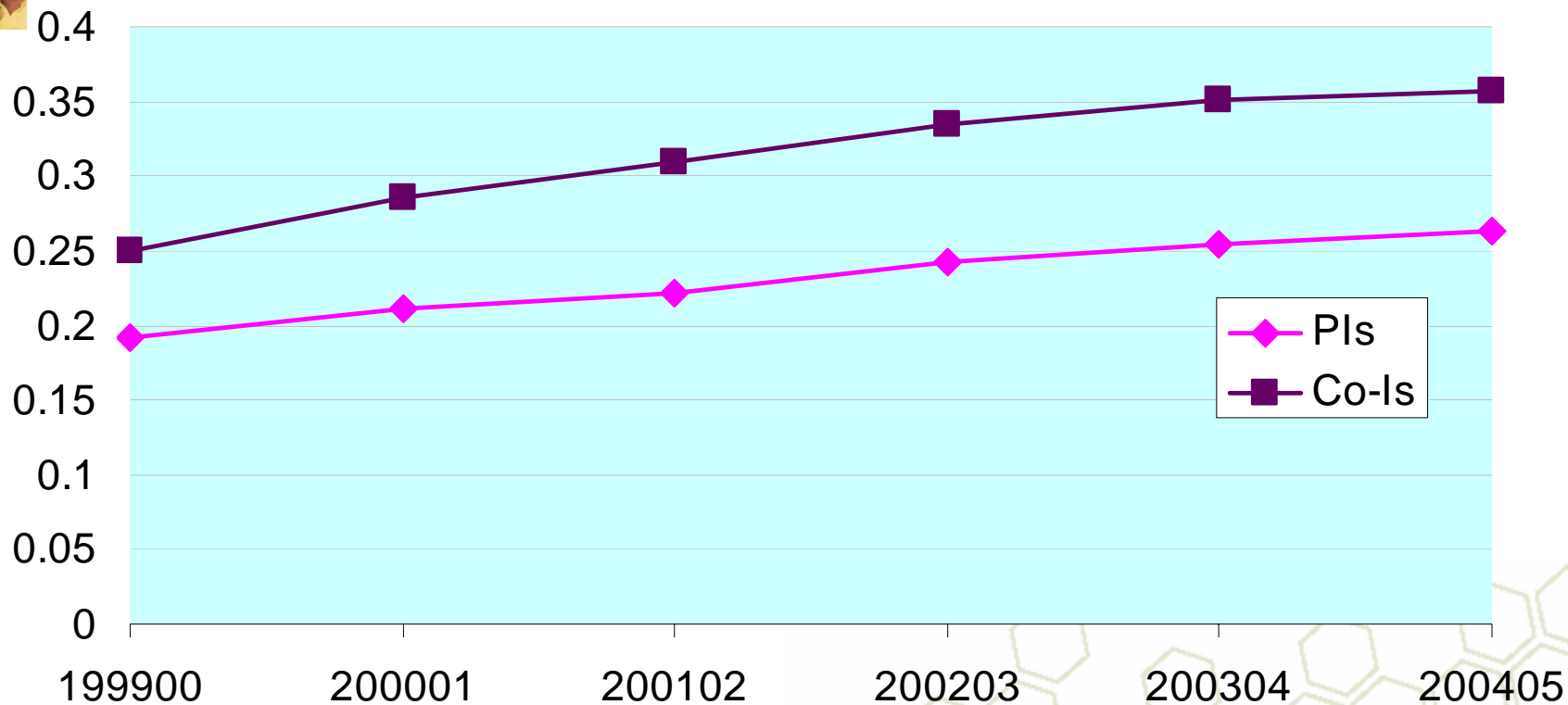
... *Research **FOR** and **ABOUT** women...*

Fraction of Holders of CIHR Personnel Awards who are Women

Note: No new Investigator or Senior/Distinguished Awards were made in 2004-05



Fraction of CIHR grant holders who are Women



Participation of women is theme-specific

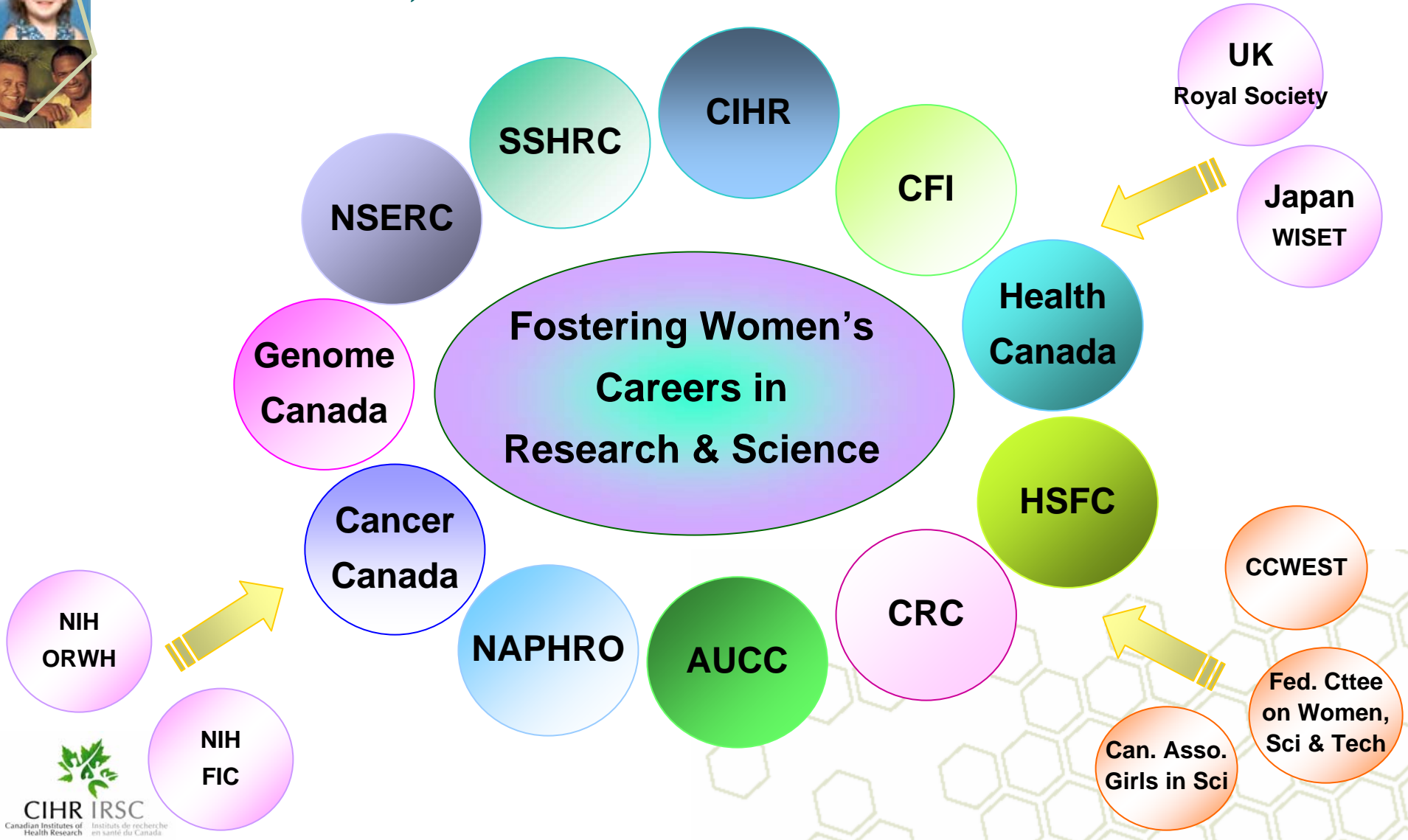
CIHR's 2003 awards competitions

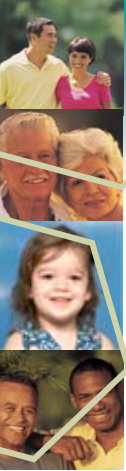
	Biomedical	Clinical	Health services	Population health
PhD award	46% (248)	73% (91)	69% (21)	83% (64)
Postdoctoral	40% (93)	56% (34)	67% (18)	81% (17)
New investigator	25% (52)	48% (30)	53% (18)	50% (31)



Fostering Women's Careers in Research

National, Provincial and International Collaboration

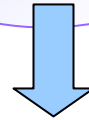




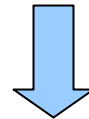
**National
Steering Cttee of
Research Funders
in Canada**

**National
Roundtables
with Policy
Influencers**

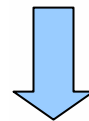
**International
Projects,
Partnerships and
Presentations**



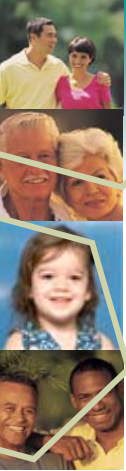
**SNAPSHOT: Recruitment & Retention of Women in
Research/Science Nationally and Provincially**



**STRATEGIES for Fostering Women's Research
Careers in Canada**



Joint Agreement and Strategies



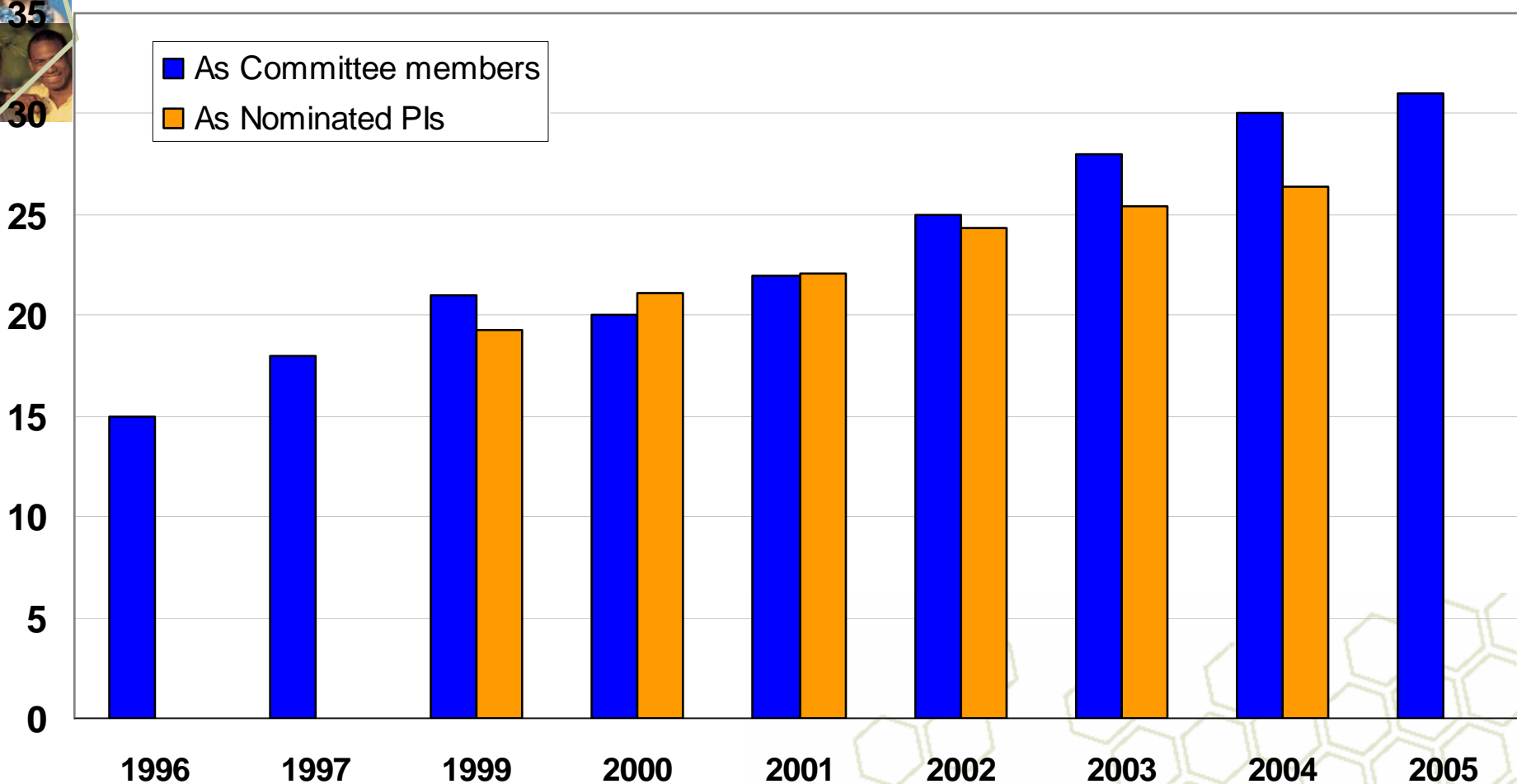
Women in Research Committee - June 9, 2005

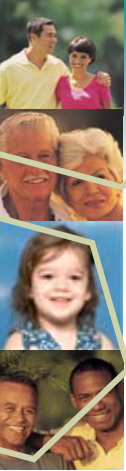


Recommendation: review gender composition of peer review committees at CIHR and other research funding organizations

Women as % of Operating Grant Peer Review Committee Membership and as Nominated PIs

■ As Committee members
■ As Nominated PIs

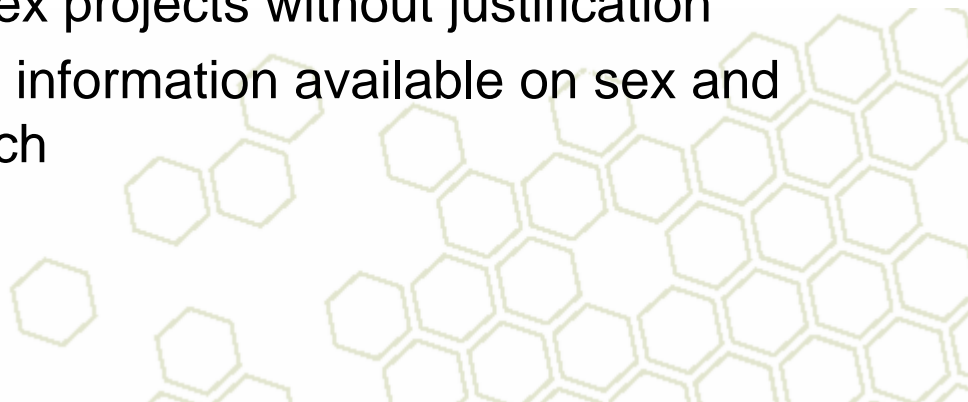




Report on Gov't Health Research Policies Promoting Gender or Sex Differences Sensitivity

by *Joseph Caron*

- Report commissioned by IGH – *available on website*
- Review of policies of research funding organizations in Canada, Europe and U.S.A.
- Mechanisms for promoting gender and sex sensitive research.
- Legislated obligation to include women as subjects of clinical trials, except where justified
 - Refusal to fund single sex projects without justification
 - Compilation of research information available on sex and gender sensitive research



Report on NIH funding - 2005

Women are not small men....

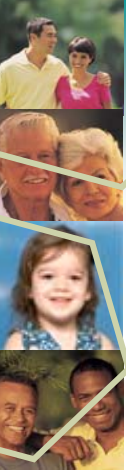
- Until 1990s, bio-medical research firmly rooted in the male model
- Lack of inclusion of women in clinical research studies arose from male model and policies to protect fetus from harm should study participant become pregnant
 - **lack of knowledge about female biology**

Sex matters: the need to conduct research differently....

The inclusion of women in study populations by itself is insufficient to address inequities in knowledge. Only by careful study of sex differences at all levels, from genes to behaviour, would science achieve the goal of optimal health care for both men and women

Report reveals that: Some institutes support sex differences research, but many perform poorly.





Excerpt from IGH RFAs

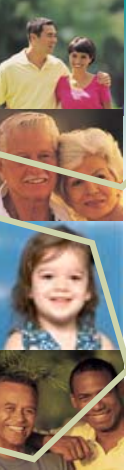
- ✚ The IGH strongly encourages applicants to demonstrate the use of Sex Gender Based Analysis (SGBA) in applications. SGBA is an approach to research and evaluation which systematically inquires about biological (sex based) and sociocultural (gender-based) differences between women and men, boys and girls, without presuming that any such differences exist. The purpose of SGBA is to promote rigorous sex/gender-sensitive health research which expands understanding of health determinants in both sexes, in order to provide knowledge which can result in improvements in health and health care.



Conceptual
Clarity

Methodological and
Disciplinary Diversity

Health
Indicators



Tri-Council Policy Statement

June 2003

- Article 5.1 (a)** Researchers shall not exclude prospective or actual research subjects on the basis of such attributes as culture, religion, race, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, ethnicity, **sex** or age, unless there is a valid reason for doing so.
- Article 5.2** Women shall not automatically be excluded from research solely on the basis of sex or reproductive capacity.

CIHR

- No specific reference to the TCPS and its articles
- No explicit references in the “Grants and Awards Guide”, nor in any information that is provided to applicants when they apply, except a brief reference to “...*the appropriateness of the methodology and of gender representation in the study design and selection of research subjects*” in the description of the Randomized Controlled Trials program
- No explicit references in the “CIHR Peer Review Process – Policies and Responsibilities of Grants Committee Members”

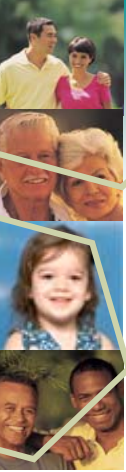


Recommendations...

- 1) Incorporate reference to Gender Sex Based Analysis (GSBA) in the CIHR Peer Review Process - Policies and Responsibilities of Grants Committee Members, under Section 6.2 *Factors in the Assessment*, by adding an item in the paragraph entitled *Research Proposed*.
- 2) Include a Policy on GSBA in the Introduction of the CIHR Grants and Awards Guide.
- 3) Include criteria for GSBA in the program description for clinical trials peer review
- 3) In RFAs for all strategic initiatives launched by CIHR, encourage applicants to include GSBA in their research.
- 5) Develop a Resource Guide (approx 5 pages) for all peer review committees on the criteria for assessing GSBA across the full spectrum of all research (ie: CIHR pillars).



Challenges: 21st Century health research transforms...



Career barriers

Promoting women in science
Supporting emerging scholars



Scientific boundaries

Multi-disciplinary teams (silo-busting)
Multi-organization partnerships



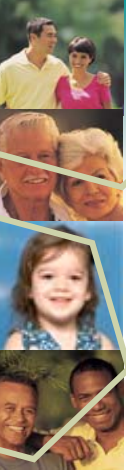
Knowledge uptake boundaries

Policy-centered research
Society-driven research



Geographic borders

Multi-site teams
International scope of emerging health issues



Career Barriers: OWHC / CIHR-IGH Joint Strategy

Goal: provide support for highly qualified candidates engaged in women's health research in Ontario.

Specific Objectives:

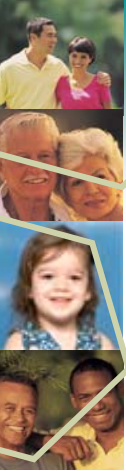
- To support highly qualified candidates who meet the eligibility requirements in extending their research experience by engaging in women's health research at institutions in Ontario
- To build capacity to conduct research in women's health, including emotional, social, cultural, spiritual and physical well-being. It is determined by the social, political and economic context of women's lives, as well as by biology.

Total Funds Available: Approximately \$7 million

Research Programs (Past, Present and Future):

- Fellowships (June 2003, June 2004, January 2005)
- Mid-Career Awards (June 2004)
- Personnel Awards: MSc, PhD, New Investigator (June 2005)





Scientific boundaries

Multi-disciplinary, multi-site team- building

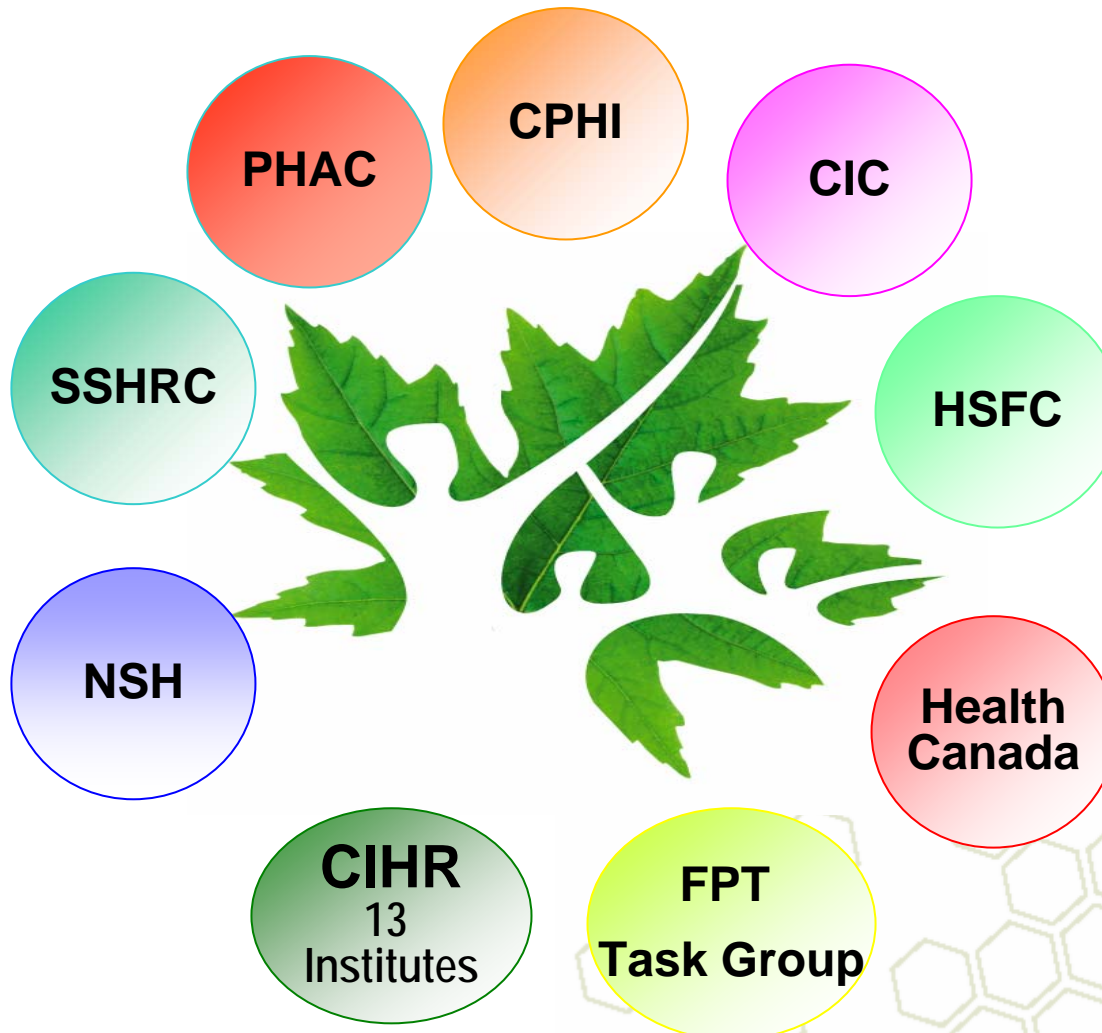
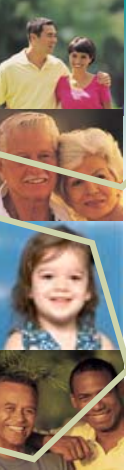
Reducing Health Disparities

- **High application pressure: 90 research proposals submitted to 2 competitions (2002-3 and 2003-4)**
- **24 multidisciplinary, multi-institute research teams funded**
- **Increasing impact: 74 letters of intent for multidisciplinary teams submitted in 2005**





Multi-organization partnerships



Knowledge Uptake Boundaries



CANADIAN JOURNAL OF
P U B L I C
H E A L T H

VOLUME 96, SUPPLEMENT 2 ■ MARCH/APRIL 2005



Reducing Health
Disparities in Canada

REVUE CANADIENNE DE

S A N T É
P U B L I Q U E

VOLUME 96, SUPPLÉMENT 2 ■ MARS/AVRIL 2005

Disabilities
and
Disparities

Aboriginal
Peoples
and
Disparities

Literacy
and
Disparities

Homelessness
and
Disparities

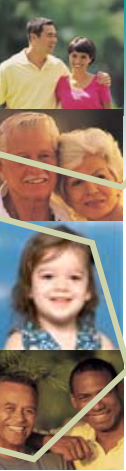
Gender
and
Disparities

Immigrants
and
Refugees



CIHR IRSC
Canadian Institutes of Health Research
Instituts de recherche en santé du Canada

Copies available at IGH: Contact Ximena Sales at ximena@cihr.ualberta.ca



Scientific boundaries



Multi-disciplinary, multi-site team-building

Over \$3 million in IGH investment in gender and violence research

- Six multi-site, multidisciplinary teams (over 100 researchers) with community partners researching violence and race, violence across lifespan, violence against girls, aggression in girls, effects of child abuse in adolescence, long term impacts of partner violence
- Investigators funded through other Strategic initiatives (Global Health, New Perspectives on Gender and Health, OWHC/IGH Program, Priority Announcement)

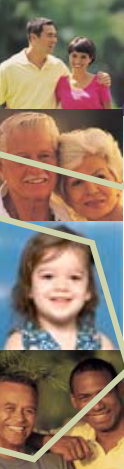




Policy-centered research and emerging scholars

‘Violence, Gender and Health’ Workshop (Toronto, 2004)

- Over 100 participants from across Canada
- Leading researchers, research trainees, practitioners, and policy-makers discussed:
 - Insights from funded research
 - Key issues related to the translation of research into practice; and
 - Goals for future research



Collaborators in Gender, Sex, and Global Health Research

Canada

- Canadian Institutes of Health Research
- Canadian Coalition on Global Health Research (CIDA, IDRC, HC)
- Canadian Society for International Health

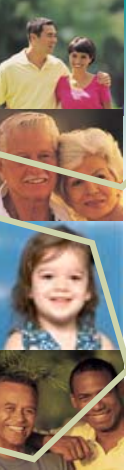
International

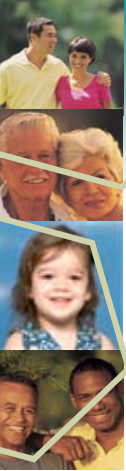
- WHO
- UNIFEM
- UNESCO
- World Bank
- Ford Foundation
- Wellcome Trust



United States

- Department of Health and Human Services
- National Institutes of Health (Fogarty, ORWH)
- Yale
- Harvard





Contributions of Women's Health Research Network of British Columbia

- Community partnership models
- Conceptual clarity
- Methodological diversity
- Databases and directory
- Gender / sex health indicators
- Research Capacity Building
- Cross Geographic and Disciplinary Boundaries
- Knowledge Translation and Transfer