

# About the Novartis Health Equity Initiative

## What is the Novartis Health Equity Initiative?

Canada ranks third to last with respect to equity in healthcare access and experience among nine peer countries.

Despite having a publicly funded healthcare system, many across Canada face challenges accessing timely and appropriate care through a regular healthcare provider.

The Health Equity Initiative (HEI) is Novartis' commitment to helping close gaps in care by supporting individuals and organizations rooted in their communities – who understand local health equity challenges and are working towards lasting, people-first solutions.

Novartis Canada is especially committed to supporting organizations in underserved communities: these organizations do amazing, impactful work but don't receive the resources or recognition they deserve.

In 2025, \$500,000 will be awarded to projects focused on advancing equity in three areas of focus:

- **Social and cultural inclusivity**

To make care truly fair, we must close the gaps affecting millions of Canadians, especially women, Indigenous peoples and underserved communities across the country.

- **Health literacy and education**

When accurate health information is clear and accessible, better health outcomes are made possible for all.

- **Support for newcomers to Canada**

Reducing language and cultural barriers helps ensure newcomers to Canada receive the same quality of care as everyone else

## Novartis Canada's Commitment

Health equity is essential to building a healthier, more resilient society. As many companies roll back their commitments to diversity, equity and inclusion, Novartis Canada is leaning in – because it aligns with our values, and it's the right thing to do.

This Canadian Initiative reflects Novartis' global commitment to reach more patients with innovative medicines and to remove barriers to equitable healthcare. Achieving health equity requires strategies that reduce socioeconomic inequality, promote culturally sensitive care, improve access to services and address the specific needs of underserved communities.

This work starts by addressing the root causes of poor health, such as income, education and access. That's why Novartis Canada works with communities and partners to build real, lasting solutions – *together*.

Launched in 2024, Novartis Canada was proud to partner with Equity Mobilizing Partnerships in Community (EMPACT) to co-develop the Health Equity Initiative and winner selection framework. EMPACT is an innovative, award-winning model of patient and community engagement at Women's College Hospital in Toronto that helps guide projects with community insight and expertise in advancing health equity.

## Health Equity in Canada

Access to timely and appropriate care remains a critical issue for Canadians across the country. Women, Indigenous peoples, rural and remote communities, low-income families, 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals and newcomers to Canada are the most impacted by systemic barriers that affect their well-being and have long-term impacts on quality of life.

These health equity disparities are part of larger socio-economic issues that affect us all. Together, we can create a future where every Canadian has fair access to care.

For more information about health equity in Canada:

- [Social Determinants of Health and Health Inequalities](#)
- [Health Inequalities in Canada](#)
- [Understanding the Report on Key Health Inequalities in Canada](#)

Ready to work together to build a more inclusive healthcare system for all?

Check the guidelines and eligibility criteria. [Apply online](#).

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