



Department of Health and Wellness
Barrington Tower
1894 Barrington Street
Halifax, Nova Scotia

May 20, 2026

Dear Minister Thompson,

I'm writing today to draw your attention to the serious issues women and gender diverse Nova Scotians face in our province accessing healthcare, and the need for your government to create a Women's Health Strategy to ensure their health needs are not being ignored.

It's extremely concerning that women in our province are waiting over a year to get routine mammograms. As recently [reported by CBC](#), women are waiting 15 months at the Cobequid Community Health Centre, 16 months in Dartmouth, and 17 months at the Halifax Shopping Centre location. Women in our province are worried and stressed, waiting for routine scans that they cannot get in a timely manner.

Timely access to this screening is crucial. Early diagnosis of breast cancer means less invasive and more effective treatment so that more women recover sooner and fewer families lose loved ones. Not only are the wait times for screening mammograms too long in our province, but [data](#) also show our province's breast cancer screening rate is the second worst in the country. In Ontario, where screening uptake is higher, women can typically get an appointment within a few weeks - not several months. That's not a coincidence. Until your government stops ignoring these issues and ensures timely access, not all women will get the care they need when they need it.

Your government's continued inaction to create a plan to address these issues in our healthcare system is failing women. Nova Scotians wait [nearly 3 times longer](#) than other Canadians to get gynaecology care. It takes women living with chronic pain an average of [two years](#) to get an appointment at the Endometriosis and Chronic Pelvic Pain Clinic, with many people waiting much longer. Pregnant Nova Scotians are currently [only able to get one ultrasound](#) in Halifax instead of the two [recommended](#) by the Society of Obstetrics and Gynaecologists of Canada.

Women are fed up and want to know there's a plan and that their needs aren't being ignored. A Women's Health Strategy would provide a clear road map for how your government is going to fix women's healthcare in our province. It's not too much for the women of Nova Scotia to expect that fixing healthcare means fixing healthcare for everyone.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. Chender".

Claudia Chender
Leader, Nova Scotia New Democrats

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