

# Do The Rights Thing? Making the Case for GBA+

presented by

**Bonnie Brayton**  
**DAWN Canada**



**GBA+ Awareness Week**  
**Public Service Commission of Canada**  
**September 24th, 2019**



# About DAWN Canada

## Our Mission

Our mission is to end the poverty, isolation, discrimination and violence experienced by Canadian women with disabilities and Deaf women.

For nearly 35 years, DAWN Canada has worked towards the advancement and inclusion of women and girls with disabilities and Deaf women and girls to address these issues and advocate for change at a systemic level.



# About DAWN Canada

## The public service and our genesis ...

The founding meeting of DAWN Canada, held from June 20th to 23rd, 1985 in Ottawa was funded by the Department of the Secretary of State Women's Programme and the Department's Disabled Persons Secretariat of the Government of Canada.

At the time, there was no national voice for women with disabilities.

Two public servants who recognized this initiated this gathering and worked together and secured the funding to bring together women with disabilities for the first time.

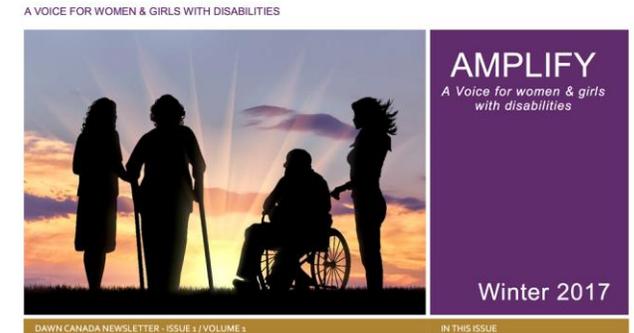
Nearly 35 years later we are here, together again!



# About DAWN Canada

## How we work

- Grounded in the lived experiences of women with disabilities and Deaf women, using an evidence-based and life-course approach, DAWN Canada works to create change at a systemic level.
- We amplify the voices of women with disabilities and Deaf women by ensuring that our voices are represented at decision-making tables.
- We work to increase the capacity of women with disabilities and Deaf women in their communities in identifying and articulating their needs and leading the change they want to see.



### Tackling systemic barriers is about collective responsibility and leadership

By Bonnie Brayton, National Executive Director

This first issue of AMPLIFY is about recognizing the systemic barriers faced by women with disabilities and what those gaps mean to women who are already experiencing violence at the highest rates. With the close of the 16 Days Campaign for 2016 behind us DAWN Canada is bent on keeping policy makers and service providers focused on one thing in 2017 – a better response for women and girls with disabilities.

Canada's record on human rights, particularly reports/findings that have been released this past year all have one common thread: each of them points to the fact that women and girls with disabilities, including Indigenous women and girls have been

completely forgotten. This is evident in the Recommendation of the United Nations Committee for the Covenant on Economic and Social Rights (CESR), the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and Canada's pending appearance in March 2017 in Geneva before the United Nations Committee for the Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (CRPD). How much more evidence do we need to do better? DAWN Canada is determined to AMPLIFY our message until we see real change and that will only happen when there is a sense of collective responsibility towards ALL women. (continued on page 2)



Anti-violence policies exclude women with disabilities Page 3



DAWN News Page 2

# About DAWN Canada

## How we work

**RESEARCH**

**EDUCATION**

**POLICY**

**ADVOCACY**

We work with community-based researchers and academic partners to shift the discussion around how research and community development can and should be done using an intersectional approach.

We work with partners, sharing research in order to develop curriculum and tools to deepen knowledge and skill in the practice of intersectionality and inclusion to a range of stakeholders.

We continue to challenge and engage policy-makers in the review and development of policies so that they are informed by community-defined needs.

We are committed to ensuring that the voices of women and girls with disabilities and Deaf women and girls are represented at decision-making tables in the areas that matter to us most.



# Intersectionality

Disability is the one intersection that all women in Canada may experience at some point in their lives.

It goes beyond race, class, sexual orientation or geography.



# Intersectionality

*There is no such thing as neutrality. If you have privilege, you can never be neutral, because you are constantly benefiting off of that privilege—even at the same time as you are also being oppressed. That is what “intersectionality” (for lack of a better word) is about.*

Mia Mingus, February 25, 2012



A photograph of two women sitting at a table, smiling and talking. They are holding coffee cups. The background is a brick wall. The image has a purple tint.

**The risk of women with disabilities experiencing violence increases if they are young, racialized, Indigenous, LGBTQI2S, immigrants, migrant workers, non-status migrants, or those who live rurally.**

# Intersectionality

## An example from CRIAW

- **Intersectionality** takes into account how different kinds of discrimination work together.
- First used by Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989, the principles of intersectionality have been present in Black feminist thought for decades, as a way of understanding the complexities of Black women's lives.



**Innermost Circle:** unique circumstances

**Second Circle:** aspects of identity

**Third Circle:** types of discrimination impacting identity

**Outermost Circle:** larger forces and structures reinforcing exclusion

**Note:** it is impossible to name every discrimination, identity or structure. These are just examples to help give you a sense of what Intersectionality is.

Graphic adapted from CRIAW/ICREF's Intersectionality Wheel Diagram published in *Everyone Belongs: A Toolkit for Applying Intersectionality* (2009, p. 6)



# Intersectionality

## What happens when you have overlapping identities?

Women with disabilities who experience violence as children are almost **two times as likely** as those who had not experienced physical abuse to be victimized in the last 12 months.

In general, women with disabilities who identify as lesbian, gay or bisexual **experience 2.3 times higher rates of violence** than among heterosexual women with disabilities.

Women who experience mental health related disabilities and those with cognitive disabilities experience **disproportionately high rates** of sexual assault.



Photo: [Disabled and Here](#)

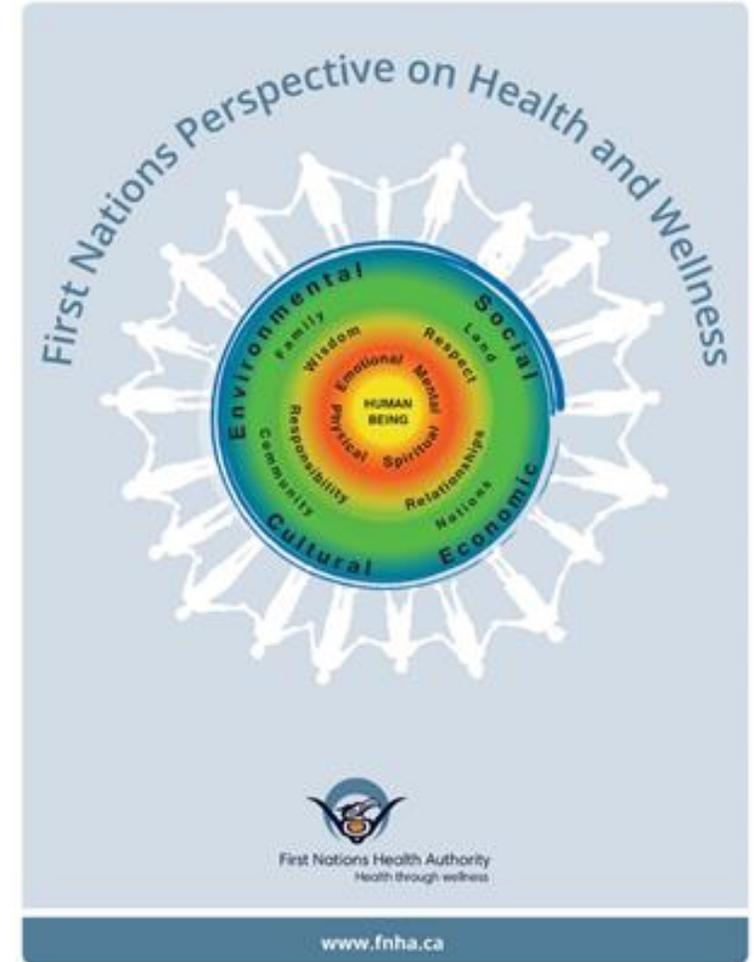


# Intersectionality

**Indigenous understandings of connectedness and ‘all my relations’ share many links with intersectionality.**

This visual depiction of the Perspective on Health and Wellness is a tool for the First Nations Health Authority(FNHA) and First Nations Communities. It aims to create shared understanding of an holistic vision of wellness

The original image was created from researching other models; from feedback and ideas gathered from BC First Nations over the past few years and from traditional teachings and approaches shared by First Nations healers and elders at gatherings convened by the FNHA and its predecessor - the First Nations Health Society



# Intersectionality

## More resources for federal policy makers (and everybody else!)



CENTRE FOR  
GENDER,  
DIVERSITY AND  
INCLUSION  
STATISTICS

Statistics Canada's [Gender, Diversity and Inclusion Statistics hub](#) aims to address gaps in available information on gender, sex and other intersecting identity factors, such as disability status, Indigenous identity (First Nations, Métis and Inuit), and other ethno-cultural characteristics.

We encourage you to use the statistical information that is available through the Centre to evaluate programs, policies and initiatives from a gender, diversity and inclusion perspective.



# We are not a +

## GENDER-BASED ANALYSIS (GBA+)

The Government of Canada has committed to using GBA+ in the development of policies, programs and legislation across all departments.



We are not a



A photograph of two women sitting on a light-colored couch, smiling and holding mugs. The woman on the left has long, curly hair and is wearing a dark top and a patterned skirt. The woman on the right has long, straight hair and is wearing a dark jacket and jeans. In the background, a bicycle is visible, suggesting a focus on accessibility and mobility. The entire image has a purple tint.

**24%**  
of women in  
Canada have  
a disability

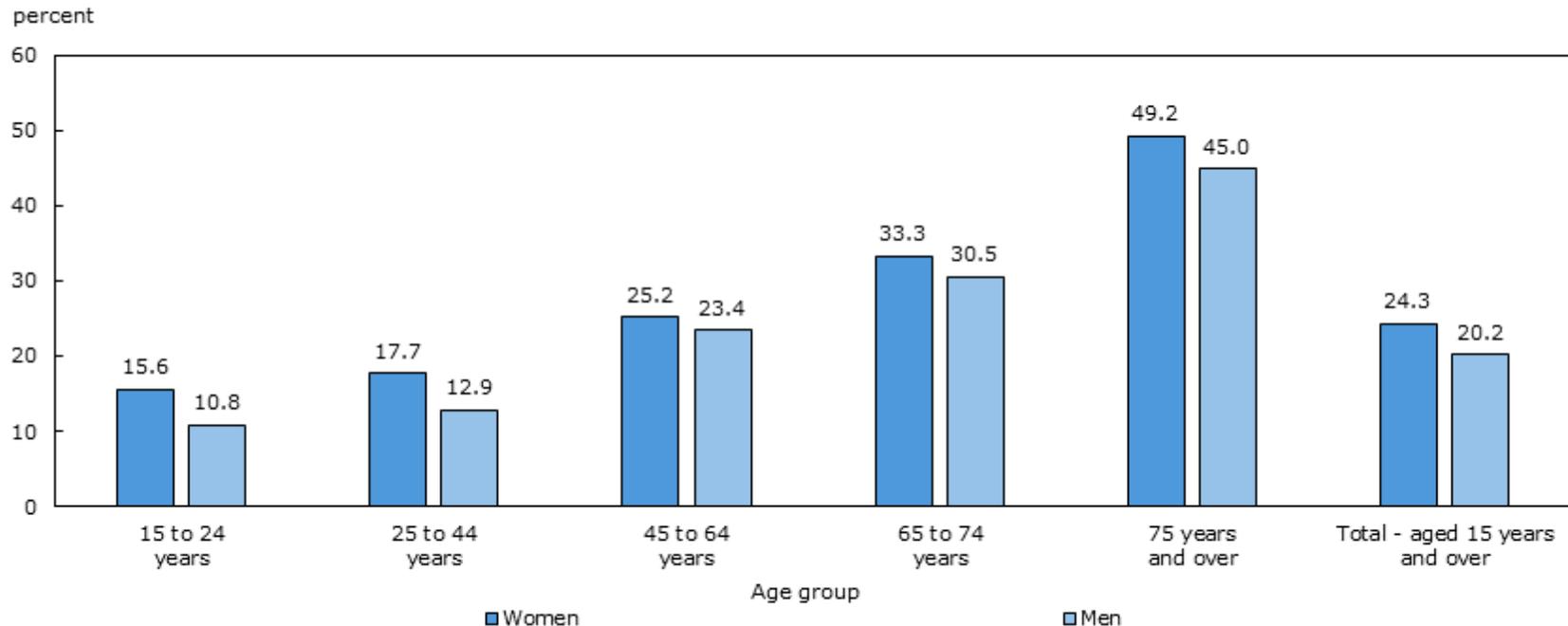
**Is it really  
24%??**



According to Statistics Canada,

**24% of women in Canada live with a disability.**

**Chart 1**  
Canadian population aged 15 years and over with a disability, by age group and sex, 2017



**Note:** Differences between women and men are significantly different for all age groups ( $p < 0.05$ ).

**Source:** Statistics Canada, Canadian Survey on Disability, 2017.



## How does that break down by type of disability?

**Table 3**

Canadian population aged 15 years and over with a disability, by disability type and sex, 2017

Disability type	Both		Women		Men	
	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent
<b>Total population - aged 15 years and over</b>	<b>28,008,860</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>14,345,330</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>13,663,530</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Pain-related*	4,062,000	14.5	2,374,230	16.6	1,687,770	12.4
Flexibility*	2,795,110	10.0	1,568,970	10.9	1,226,140	9.0
Mobility*	2,676,370	9.6	1,601,010	11.2	1,075,350	7.9
Mental health-related*	2,027,370	7.2	1,272,490	8.9	754,880	5.5
Seeing*	1,519,840	5.4	903,040	6.3	616,800	4.5
Hearing*	1,334,520	4.8	619,360	4.3	715,160	5.2
Dexterity*	1,275,610	4.6	784,120	5.5	491,490	3.6
Learning	1,105,680	3.9	560,970	3.9	544,700	4.0
Memory*	1,050,840	3.8	575,760	4.0	475,080	3.5
Developmental*	315,470	1.1	123,310	0.9	192,160	1.4
Unknown	155,810	0.6	75,150	0.5	80,660	0.6

\* significantly different between women and men at  $p < .05$

**Note:** The sum of the values for each category may differ from the total due to rounding.

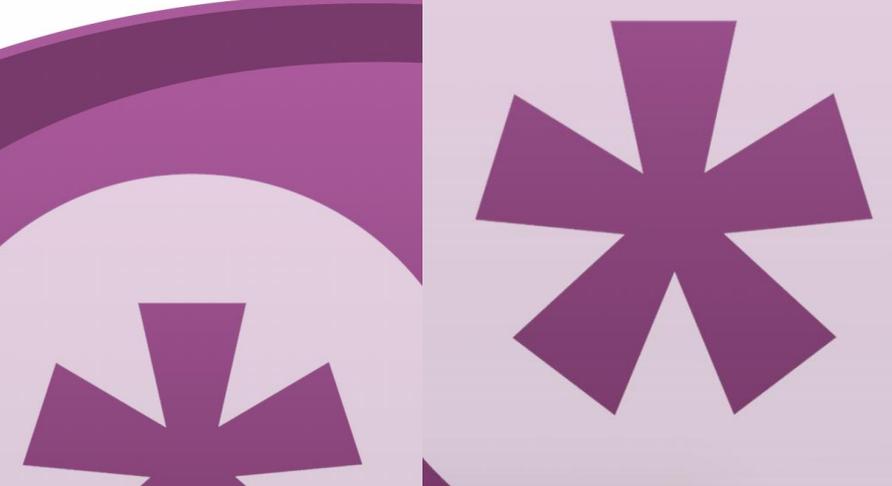
**Source:** Statistics Canada, Canadian Survey on Disability, 2017.



# More Than A Footnote

**24% is just a baseline...**

Released in 2018, DAWN Canada's report *More Than A Footnote: A Research Report on Women and Girls with Disabilities in Canada* examines in depth long-standing issues women and girls with disabilities face – social exclusion, high rates of violence, poverty and, homelessness, barriers to education and employment and lack of accessible services.



# More Than A Footnote

## Some underserved population are not even included in the data

Through this research DAWN Canada has intentionally identified and examined populations that are under the radar in terms of quantifying and identifying 'who are women and girls with disabilities in Canada' including

- **brain injured women,**
- **women living with episodic and chronic illnesses or pain, and**
- **women with intellectual and learning disabilities,**

many of whom live a lifetime of un-named stigma and discrimination.

**MORE THAN A FOOTNOTE**  
A Research Report on Women and Girls  
with Disabilities in Canada

**PLUS QU'UNE NOTE DE BAS DE PAGE**  
Rapport de recherche sur les femmes  
et les filles en situation de handicap  
au Canada



## More than half of all discrimination complaints in Canada are made on the grounds of disability

According to the Canadian Human Rights Commission (CHRC) 2017 Annual Report, 59% of human rights complaints are on the grounds of disability.<sup>1</sup>

64% of these complaints are employment-related.<sup>2</sup>



1,2 The Canadian Human Rights Commission (2017) People First: 2017 Annual Report to Parliament. Available [here](#).



## Why we need a systemic response to addressing disability rights

Evidence shows that discrimination on the basis of disability is a systemic problem

The available data is not disaggregated, so we do not know how gender or other intersectional identities influence experiences of exclusion and discrimination

Addressing disability rights requires a systemic response, rather than relying on individual complainants.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Pooran, B. D., & Wilkie, C. (2005). Failing to Achieve Equality: Disability Rights in Australia, Canada, and the United States. *JL & Soc. Pol'y*, 20, 1. (page 33).



# Accessible Canada Act

## The Accessible Canada Act became law in June 2019

The Accessible Canada Act is the beginning of developing a system-level approach.

Through this legislation, there will be new legal requirements for advancing accessibility in federal employment, the built environment, transportation, procurement of goods, services and facilities, information and communication technologies, communication, and the design and delivery of programs and services.

It is historic not only for its focus on disability rights but also for its recognition of the intersectional nature of discrimination.



## A first in law: recognizing intersectional discrimination

DAWN Canada is particularly glad to note that the [amendments](#) to the bill made by the Senate respond thoughtfully to gender, sexual orientation, and race (particularly black and Indigenous) referencing the specific marginalization(s) that create additional barriers for some Canadians with disabilities more than others.

*“Laws, policies, programs, services and structures must take into account disability and the multiple and intersectional forms of discrimination faced by persons with disabilities,”* reads the amendment on intersectionality.



# Employment

## Women with disabilities and employment

Women with disabilities are less likely to participate in the labour force

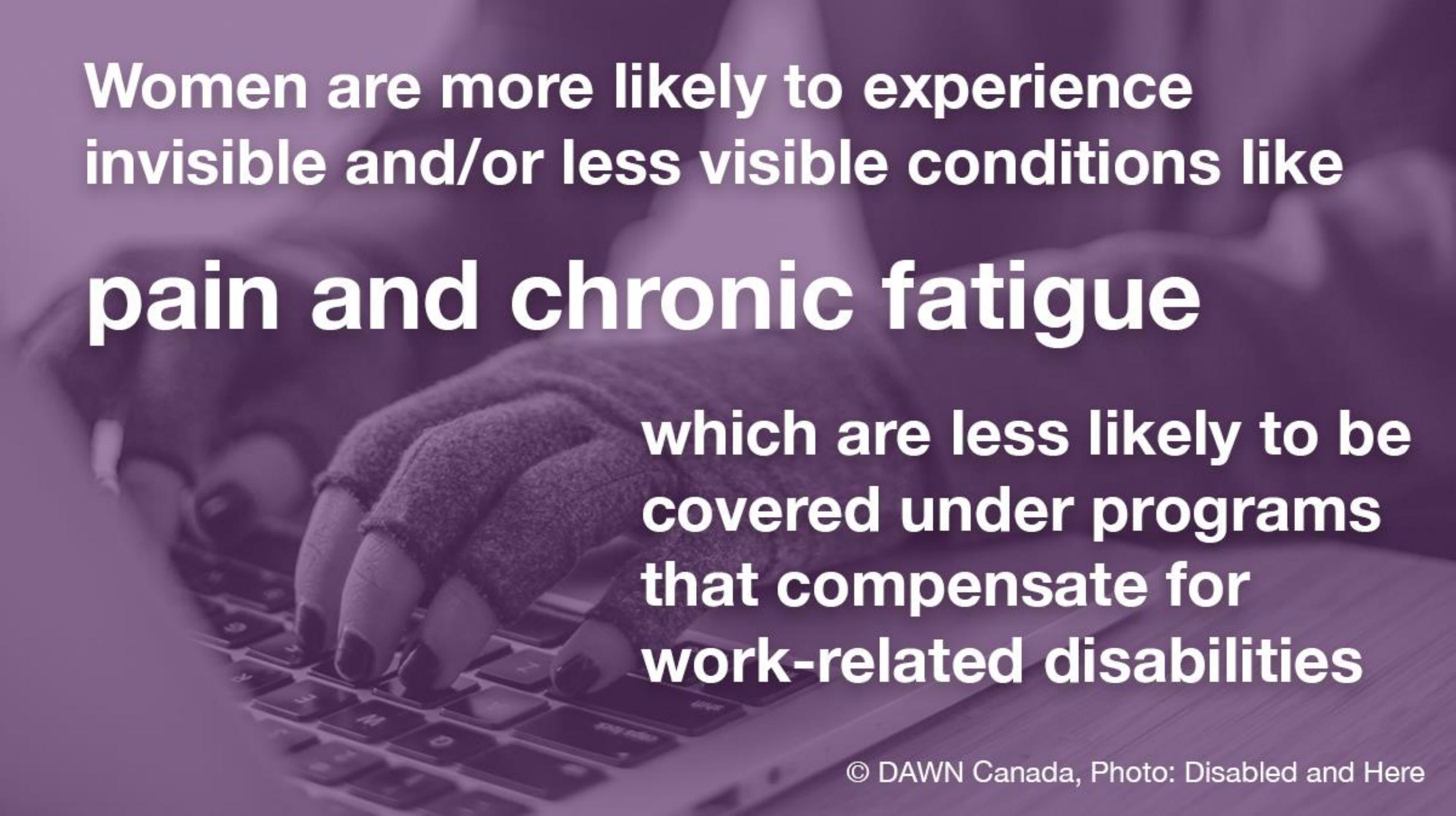
Only 61.3% of women with disabilities between the ages of 25-54 participate in the labour force -13.4% are unemployed.<sup>1</sup>

More than 2 in 5 women with disabilities in Canada report part-time employment.<sup>2</sup>

This impacts income and access to disability benefits like Employment Insurance.



<sup>1,2</sup> Burlock, A. ( 2017) Women with Disabilities. Women in Canada: a Gender Based Statistical Report. Statistics Canada. Available [here](#).

A person wearing a grey fingerless glove is typing on a laptop keyboard. The background is a blurred image of a person's hands typing on a laptop keyboard, overlaid with a semi-transparent purple filter.

**Women are more likely to experience  
invisible and/or less visible conditions like**

**pain and chronic fatigue**

**which are less likely to be  
covered under programs  
that compensate for  
work-related disabilities**

# Employment

## Chronic and episodic disabilities

**82.4%** of the adult population aged 18 to 64 years with disabilities in Canada were classified as having an episodic disability.<sup>1</sup>

Employers require ongoing supports in order to be able to understand episodic disabilities and accommodate workers appropriately including training, toolkits and access to resource networks.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> based on an analysis of the 2012 Canadian Survey on Disability by Furrie et al.

<sup>2</sup> More Than A Footnote: A Research Report on Women and Girls with Disabilities in Canada. 2018. DAWN Canada. Appendix 5: Episodic Disabilities Information by Wendy Porch from Realize



# Employment

## Women with disabilities and employment

**44.5%** of women with disabilities report feeling disadvantaged in their employment because of their disability

**12.6%** of women with disabilities have been refused a job in the last 5 years because of their disability.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Burlock, A. ( 2017) Women with Disabilities. Women in Canada: a Gender Based Statistical Report. Statistics Canada. Available [here](#).



# Employment

## Women with disabilities and employment

A review of attitudinal barriers among employers reveals that perceptions of disability greatly impact one's ability to find and secure employment.<sup>1</sup>

For women with disabilities, employment discrimination can take place because of both gender and disability status as women with disabilities.<sup>2</sup>

While employment is often seen as an isolated issue, it is important to note that discrimination in employment has impacts across one's life and well-being

<sup>1</sup> Shier, M., Graham, J. R., & Jones, M. E. (2009). Barriers to employment as experienced by disabled people: a qualitative analysis in Calgary and Regina, Canada. *Disability & Society*, 24(1), 63-75.

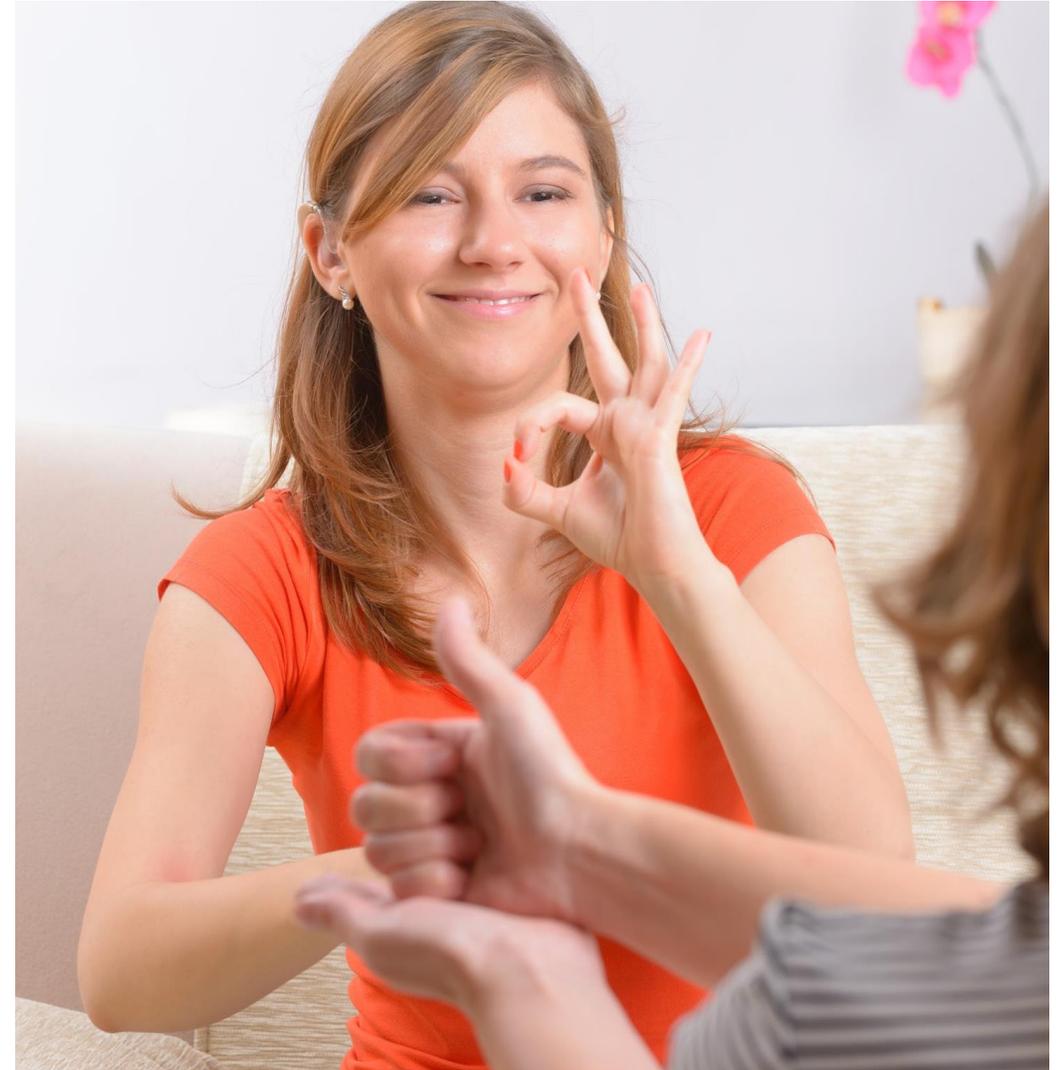
<sup>2</sup> Pettinicchio, D. (2017) How Double Labour Market Barriers Hurt Women with Disabilities. Scholar Strategy Network. Available [here](#).



# Employment

## Deaf women

- Very little information is available on the employment rate and needs of Deaf women as they are subsumed in the larger category of women with disabilities.
- However, we know that they have unique needs.
- DAWN Canada is undertaking a separate research study on Deaf women.



# Public Service

## Women and Public Sector Precarity: Causes, Conditions, and Consequences

A 2016 study by CRIAW on the impact of changing public services on women as workers and service recipients revealed the following:

- There has been some consideration of public sector precarity on racialized women and that this impact has often been negative
- However, Indigenous women, women with disabilities, LGBTTTQ women and others who are often marginalized, and whose experiences may be shaped differently by policies and social structures, are often invisible in the existing literature about the impacts of public sector precarity on women.



### WOMEN AND PUBLIC SECTOR PRECARIETY

#### CAUSES, CONDITIONS AND CONSEQUENCES

BY LEAH LEVAC AND YURIKO COWPER-SMITH



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# Public Service

## Composition of the public service

An excerpt from the Values and Ethics Code for the Public Sector  
**Respect for People**

Treating all people with respect, dignity and fairness is fundamental to our relationship with the Canadian public and contributes to a safe and healthy work environment that promotes engagement, openness and transparency. The diversity of our people and the ideas they generate are the source of our innovation.

Data from the 2011 Public Service Employee Survey indicates that 55 per cent of core public sector workers are women, while 11.3 per cent are racialized, 4.7 per cent are Aboriginal, and 5.6 per cent are people with disabilities (Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, 2013)



# Public Service

## Discrimination in the public service

The 2018 Public Service Employee Survey indicates that 8% of employees indicated that they have been the victim of discrimination on the job in the past 12 months

Type of discrimination:

sex: 29%

age: 26%

race: 25%

national or ethnic origin: 20%

**disability: 17%**

family status: 15%



<https://www.canada.ca/en/treasury-board-secretariat/services/innovation/public-service-employee-survey/2018/2018-public-service-employee-survey-summary-report-results.html#Toc04018>

# Public Service

## Marginalization and discrimination

Marginalized workers are, on average, exposed to more harassment than socially advantaged groups, with labour stratification likely playing a significant role (CUPE, 2014).

In a number of studies on workplace harassment, women; LGBT, racialized, Aboriginal, and immigrant workers; and workers with disabilities report disproportionately high levels of harassment (CUPE, 2014, p. 4) |



# Employer needs

## Positive effects of inclusion and representation

A recent study of the public service in the United Kingdom suggests that gender and ethnic minority representativeness help to foster a more inclusive work environment and guard against harassment and bullying.<sup>1</sup>

This suggests that not only does precarity contribute directly to bullying, but also that the potential loss of diversity associated with precarity also erodes inclusion in the workplace.<sup>2</sup>

1, 2 Rhys Andrews, Rachel Ashworth, Representation and Inclusion in Public Organizations: Evidence from the U.K. Civil Service, Public Administration Review, Vol. 75, Iss. 2, pp. 279–288. © 2014 by the American Society for Public Administration.



# Employer needs

## Disability-confident employers

Research out of Australia suggests that while employers are open to employing persons with disabilities, they lack confidence about their capacities to do so and often want assistance in building this capacity.<sup>1</sup>

This research also suggests employers did not feel traditional “formal training” could provide this. Rather, they sought the kinds of “informal learning” that happen through supportive relationships with a knowledgeable third party.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1, 2</sup> Waterhouse, P., Kimberley, H., Jonas, P., & Glover, J. (2010). What Would It Take? Employer Perspectives on Employing People with a Disability. A National Vocational Education and Training Research and Evaluation Program Report. National Centre for Vocational Education Research Ltd. PO Box 82



# Employer needs

## Disability-confident employers

The Disability Confident Employer Program (DCEP) offered by our project partner, the Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work (CCRW), is an online training for supervisors, managers and recruiters who have some experience with hiring and retaining persons with disabilities, and want to take their business to the next level.

The program helps employers develop the skills to effectively recruit and retain an untapped labour pool

Training includes:

- Inclusive interview processes
- Beginning a conversation about accommodation when an employee has not disclosed
- Developing an accommodation plan
- Performance management
- How to retain employees who develop disabilities
- How to choose the right service agency to support you



CCRW | CCRT

# Do the Rights Thing

## So why “Do The Rights Thing?”

DAWN believes that traditional training frameworks often lack informal elements that are intrinsically linked to lived experience.

Do The Rights Thing centres the knowledge, capacities and leadership of women with disabilities and Deaf women.

This in turn provides opportunities to foster relationships that are central to dismantling entrenched attitudinal barriers.

Employers can only unlearn stereotypes about women with disabilities and Deaf women if their training is led by those with lived experience.



# Do the Rights Thing

## About Do The Rights Thing

DAWN Canada's initiative, "Do the Rights Thing: An Intersectional Approach to Human Rights" provides a framework for moving forward.

"Do The Rights Thing" will address issues related to employment and services.

Instead of focusing on complaints mechanisms this initiative repositions Deaf women and women with disabilities as leaders who will inform and deliver this change.

The curriculum provides employers and allies with the knowledge and skills necessary for them to begin the process of change from within.



# Do the Rights Thing

## Workshops for employers

Do The Rights Thing will offer workshops for employers, service providers, and union representatives on how to understand and address accessibility needs. Content includes discussions and hands-on activities that help employers:

- Recognize the many systemic barriers that a disabled person must navigate in order to access and participate in the workforce
- Analyze in detail what is required to create equitable hiring and retention practices



# Do the Rights Thing

## Workshops for women with disabilities

**Do The Rights Thing** will also offer workshops for women with disabilities - an anti-stigma workshop that gives women the space to explore and understand why their best efforts at obtaining employment have not been successful

Content includes discussions and hands-on activities that help women with disabilities:

- Understand systems that impact their lives and ability to prepare for, seek and obtain and retain employment
- Understand power dynamics in employment (and other) settings
- Develop strategies for addressing barriers, including self-advocacy



# Do the Rights Thing

## National Human Rights Forum- Do The Rights Thing: An Intersectional Approach to Human Rights

DAWN Canada and our partners have planned a national forum on December 3, 2019 in Ottawa.

This is an opportunity to learn about what can be done to address systemic barriers to services and employment faced by women with disabilities and Deaf women.



# Contact us

## Our contact information

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