



Tackling inequalities in women's cardiovascular health: an online learning approach utilising Chest Heart and Stroke Scotland's HEARTE15

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INTRODUCTION

The **Scottish Government's Women's Health Plan (2021)**¹ and **Women's Health Plan: Phase Two (2026)**² highlight the importance of health inequalities experienced by women, including in cardiovascular health. More than **80,000** women in Scotland live with heart disease³, and it remains a leading cause of mortality. Despite the prevalence and impact of heart disease in women, it is frequently misconceived as primarily affecting men. As a result, women are less likely to receive secondary prevention medications after a heart attack⁴ and are less likely to be invited to and participate in medical research⁵.

METHODS

To help address these inequalities, Chest Heart and Stroke Scotland (CHSS) collaborated with academic, clinical, third sector and lived experience experts to create a free women's heart health eLearning module: **HEARTE15**. Designed for both public and healthcare professional (HCP) audiences, the module covers key cardiovascular diseases (CVD), considerations specific to women, and what people can do to reduce their risk of CVD. It also features engaging, interactive case studies on cardiovascular risk, SCAD (spontaneous coronary artery dissection), and menopause.

RESULTS

Since its launch (19 August 2024 – 18 January 2026), the module has amassed **12,569** views. It has received an average of **4.5 out of 5** from **68** reviews and **67 out of 69 (97%)** reviewers say they would recommend the resource.

Visit HEARTE

[www.chsselearning.org.uk/
hearte/15-womens-health](http://www.chsselearning.org.uk/hearte/15-womens-health)



**97% of
users would
recommend
the resource
to others**

CONCLUSION

Heart disease affects many women in Scotland, yet inequalities persist in awareness, diagnosis and treatment when compared with men. Our **HEARTE15** module aligns with **CHSS's No Life Half Lived (NLHL)** strategy by seeking to increase public awareness of the signs, symptoms and risk factors of cardiovascular disease. It also aims to improve confidence in recognising and managing cardiovascular disease in women. User feedback has been highly positive, emphasising the module's potential to benefit health services, healthcare professionals and people with lived experience.

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4. Jackson AM, Zhang R, Findlay I, et al. Healthcare disparities for women hospitalized with myocardial infarction and angina. *Eur Heart J Qual Care Clin Outcomes*. 2020;6(2):156-165. doi:10.1093/ehjqcco/qcz040
5. Nguyen QD, Peters E, Wassef A, Desmarais P, Rémillard-Labrosse D, Tremblay-Gravel M. Evolution of Age and Female Representation in the Most-Cited Randomized Controlled Trials of Cardiology of the Last 20 Years. *Circ Cardiovasc Qual Outcomes*. 2018;11(6):e004713. doi:10.1161/CIRCOUTCOMES.118.004713

FEEDBACK FROM USERS

"This is an excellent resource for anyone, I will definitely recommend this as a learning tool."

Cardiology specialist nurse

"Very informative cases with good explanations, advice, and outcomes, especially for SCAD as we are seeing more patients with this."

Specialist nurse



"In future I will prioritise asking patients about their menstrual/pregnancy history where appropriate in my assessment as I now understand the important impact this can have on other conditions, and I am more aware of how to signpost for these issues."

Physiotherapist

"Interesting info and well presented. Good resource for all involved from carer/pt to healthcare worker etc."

Physiotherapist



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