

6.1.6. External Resolution: Health Services and Technology

Title of proposed resolution	Health Services and Technology
Proposed by	BPW Canada
Seconded by	NFBPWC
Supported by	BPW UK
Financial Impact	Administrative costs only

MOTION:

Mindful that access to health care and health information is essential for good health and well-being and that this responsibility often rests on women.

Being aware that internet access and cell phone usage have changed how health is practiced and how health information is obtained. Digital equity, however, has not been achieved as marginalized and Indigenous women and those living in rural, remote, and underserved areas have limited access to this technology.

Recognizing BPW International's commitment to fulfilling the SDGs, including SDG 3, 4, 5, 9, 17 and the UN Women CSW67, March 2023. *Technology and the Digital Gender Divide Agreed Conclusions*.

Acknowledging that a significant portion of the global population still lacks access to vital healthcare services.

Be it Resolved:

That all BPW International Affiliates urge their governments to:

- a. advance gender equality by promoting a healthy society and promote health, education, protection, and well-being in all communities;
- b. ensure universal and reliable internet access that does not hinge on income or geographic location as per UN CSW67 Technology and the Digital Gender Divide Agreed Conclusions;
- c. increase investment in health systems and infrastructure for health education and services and advocate for sustainable funding for that implementation;
- d. include governance mechanisms that engage marginalised groups, Indigenous women, childbearing women; women living with disabilities, gender diverse, and elderly women, especially in rural, remote locations, and as stakeholders in a national digital health strategy;
- e. create a national information and communication technology (ICT) framework that facilitates alignment between the health and ICT sectors, and which can build globally;
- f. mandate a reporting process to measure data on services to marginalised groups, Indigenous women, childbearing women, disabled women, gender diverse, and elderly women, especially in rural, remote locations; and
- g. ensure access to education regarding digital and portable electronic device literacy to facilitate the advancement of these goals

RATIONALE FOR THE RESOLUTION:

Full and equitable participation in the digital society requires universal and reliable internet access that does not hinge on income or geographic location. New and updated health

research is continually being published on the internet. Digital equity is a necessity and right for all women and girls to access crucial health and health education services.

Increased investment in health systems is needed to overcome these setbacks, address long-standing healthcare shortcomings, support countries in their recovery, and build resilience against future health threats.

It is important to acknowledge that different countries could be at different stages of development or implementation when it comes to their own national and local digital health strategies.

Addressing disparities is critical to bridging this gap and ensuring equitable healthcare provision. Various determinants of health, including environmental and commercial factors, need attention to achieve our common health objective for all.

Ensuring healthy lives for all requires a strong commitment, but the benefits outweigh the cost. Countries worldwide are urged to take immediate and decisive actions to predict and counteract health challenges. This becomes especially critical in safeguarding vulnerable population groups and individuals residing in regions burdened by high disease prevalence.

HIMSS, April 2020. *How Femtech is Advancing Women's Health*.

<https://www.himss.org/resources/how-femtech-advancing-womens-health>

UN Women CSW67, March 2023. *Technology and the Digital Gender Divide Agreed Conclusions Report V1.0*. <https://www.unwomen.org/en/csw/csw67-2023>

IMPLEMENTATION:

Affiliates of BPW International advocate this issue through their government and UN agencies.