

**ORGANON CANADA DECLARES PAID TIME OFF FOR ALL EMPLOYEES  
ON INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY.**

**ALL EMPLOYEES IN CANADA CAN FOCUS ON THEIR OWN HEALTH IN  
RECOGNITION OF THE GROWING WOMEN'S HEALTH INEQUITY.**

*As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to have a disproportionate impact on women, Organon and the Alberta Women's Health Foundation issue a call to action for other leaders to create opportunities to focus on women's health in Canada.*

**KIRKLAND, Quebec, February 2, 2022** — Organon Canada, a subsidiary of Organon (NYSE: OGN), a global women's health company, is designating International Women's Day (IWD) on March 8 as a day to recognize the growing health disparities women face that have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Since its inception, IWD has focused on accelerating gender parity. Organon recognizes the need for a global effort to address her health and is starting with its own employees by providing paid time off this year for all employees to attend to their own health needs. Organon Canada will offer that paid time off to 125 employees across Canada. The company invites other organizations in Canada and across the globe to join in raising awareness of the inequity in women's health and to adopt initiatives that help women prioritize their health.

Women have worked hard to advance in the workplace, but the pandemic is unraveling these hard-fought gains. A recent study on women in the workplace in the United States has shown that women are now significantly more burned out than ever, even more than men<sup>a</sup> which can take a huge toll on their physical and mental health. According to the

Canadian Women's Foundation, a recent poll showed that women in Canada were carrying a bigger burden of worry about the pandemic than men.<sup>b</sup>

“Organon launched with a commitment to listen to the needs of women and as part of our research, we learned that women are finding it harder than ever to make the time to care for even their most basic health needs,” said Kevin Ali, Chief Executive Officer, Organon. “As a company investing in innovation to improve women’s health, I felt a responsibility to help address this within our own global community of almost 9,500 employees. This year, the symbolic action we are taking is to encourage all our people to spend this day off to make a commitment to their own health or the health of the women in their lives, whether that’s going to the doctor, taking stock of their own wellbeing or reflecting on how to make a change.”

“Organon is strongly committed to women’s health in Canada and from day one, also committed to the wellbeing of our employees. We proudly join this global initiative and I want to personally invite other Canadian business leaders to join us or to adopt internal initiative to help women prioritize their health. Our workforce – and our families and our communities – can truly benefit in the long term from this investment,” said Michael Casia, President and Managing Director, Organon Canada.

We believe healthy women are the backbone of a thriving, stable and resilient society and when she is healthy, she prospers and so does her community and her society, for generations to come. In its budget 2021, the Department of Finance of Canada issued a recommendation to create a National Institute for Women’s Health Research to improve outcomes as “Sex and gender-related disparities continue to persist in Canada’s health system. Women are more likely to die of preventable illnesses and bear a higher burden of chronic illnesses.”<sup>c</sup> This is what Organon is hoping to change and asks others to join in the effort to improve women’s health.

In May 2021, the Alberta Women’s Health Foundation set out to study the impacts on the pandemic on women in Alberta and found that 63 per cent of women reported pandemic stress was affecting their physical health in a negative way—including poorer

diet, weight gain, reduction in exercise, difficulty sleeping, worsening of a chronic health issue, or onset of new health concerns—as well as several negative impacts on mental health. And while in poorer health, they are also facing barriers to the care they need. Related to COVID-19, more women than men (by an average of 12 per cent) reported skipping a medical appointment or having their medical appointments postponed or cancelled by a medical provider. Similarly, many appointments specific to women’s health, such as mammograms and Pap tests, were postponed due to the pandemic.<sup>d</sup>

“There is still a lot to be done to help close the gaps in women’s health, to remove barriers to care, and give women what they deserve—an equal chance to be healthy. As the research shows, the pandemic has had a disproportionate impact on women and highlighted additional limitations on women’s ability to pursue their own health, such as increases in already-lopsided unpaid caregiving duties, increased rates of depression and anxiety in pregnant and postpartum women, and a plethora of economic impacts,” said Sharlene Rutherford, President and CEO, Alberta Women’s Health Foundation. “We applaud this leadership and bold action taken by Organon to demonstrate a commitment to meeting the unmet health needs of women and are proud to stand with them to help bring this crucial conversation to the forefront.”

We believe that by improving the understanding of women’s health needs, we are one step closer to closing the inequity gap. Organon and the Alberta Women’s Health Foundation urge all organizations to join in this mission and be part of the solution.

## **About Organon**

Organon is a global healthcare company formed through a spin-off from Merck, (NYSE: MRK) known as MSD outside of the United States and Canada, to focus on improving the health of women throughout their lives. Organon has a portfolio of more than 60 medicines and products across a range of therapeutic areas. Led by the women’s health portfolio coupled with an expanding biosimilars business and stable franchise of established medicines, Organon’s products produce strong cash flows that will support investments in innovation and future growth opportunities in women’s health. In addition, Organon is

pursuing opportunities to collaborate with biopharmaceutical innovators looking to commercialize their products by leveraging its scale and presence in fast growing international markets.

Organon has a global footprint with significant scale and geographic reach, world-class commercial capabilities, and approximately 9,500 employees with headquarters located in Jersey City, New Jersey.

For more information, [www.organon.ca](http://www.organon.ca) and connect with us on [LinkedIn](#) and [Twitter](#).

### **About The Alberta Women's Health Foundation**

The Alberta Women's Health Foundation (AWHF) aims to foster equity in women's health, close gaps that exist in research today, and connect pathways from lab to life; all of which advance clinical care at the Lois Hole Hospital for Women and other women's health centres across Alberta and beyond. An initiative of the Royal Alexandra Hospital Foundation, the AWHF supports over 160 researchers at the Women and Children's Health Research Institute (WCHRI), whose research projects focus specifically on women's health.

For more information, visit AWHF at [albertawomenshealthfoundation.org](http://albertawomenshealthfoundation.org).

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<sup>a</sup>McKinsey & Company: Women in the Workplace 2021: <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/diversity-and-inclusion/women-in-the-workplace>

<sup>b</sup>The Facts: Learn the Reality About A Pandemic's Effect On Women ([canadianwomen.org](http://canadianwomen.org))

<sup>c</sup> Budget 2021: [Supporting Women - Canada.ca](http://Supporting Women - Canada.ca)

<sup>d</sup>Alberta Women's Health Foundation (2021) [\*Finding the Fractures: The Pandemic, Women's Health Disparities, and the Path to Equity\*](#)