

setting women's health apart from health policy generally, which prompted us to check it out, and what we found was demonstrative of the deep-seated bias women face. We found that studies have shown that women's health is treated differently by the medical community, and our use of *treated* here does not refer to medical *treatment*. Rather, we found reports that physicians are more likely to dismiss the health problems of women than men. For instance, women suffer chronic pain at double the rate of men, yet studies indicate their pain complaints are less likely to be taken seriously.

As for actual treatment, that is different, too.

"Young women were more likely to be told to lose weight, where the young men who were actually more overweight were more likely to be put on effective preventive therapy," Streisand Women's Heart Center medical director Dr. Noel Bairey Merz told NBC last year. "People are always sort of judging women according to their weight."

Nor is it just physicians who approach women's health that way. It is also the public. A report by the American Heart Association and the National Institutes of Health (NIH) said 39 percent of women who have a cardiac arrest in a public setting were given CPR, versus 45 percent of men, with the result that men were 23 percent more likely to survive.

Amid women's advances, troubles for the march

The bias also affects medical research. Recently NIH-funded clinical trials gained a requirement to include female subjects. But clinical trials funded by commercial companies have no such requirement.

In laboratory research, male animals are usually used, so some drugs are not evaluated for their impact on women. A 2003 NIH report read in part, "[W]hile little is known about the effects of aspirin on heart disease in women, postmenopausal women, like men, have been encouraged to take aspirin daily. The effects of other widely used drugs, such as Valium, were never tested in randomized clinical trials with female subjects, although 2 million women per year consume this drug to control conditions such as anxiety, epilepsy, muscle spasms, and alcohol addiction."

Planned Parenthood issued a statement on Sisolak's message: "According to the Guttmacher Institute, in 2014, Nevada only met 10 percent of the need for publicly funded family planning services. The Governor's commitment to investing in family planning will go a long way in improving that."

Assemblymember Ellen Spiegel has submitted a bill drafting request for a measure dealing with women's health, but there are no details on what it would do. □

A happy marcher touts the state's new benchmark.
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