

WOMHER

Uppsala University's Centre for
Women's Mental Health

Annual Report

2025

Executive Summary

WOMHER IS AN INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH CENTRE AT UPPSALA UNIVERSITY THAT STRENGTHENS WOMEN'S MENTAL HEALTH BY:

- Increasing knowledge about women's mental health
- Promoting and leading high-quality and high-impact research
- Undertaking professional development and knowledge transfer tailored to different stakeholders
- Fostering local, national and international collaborations



UPPSALA
UNIVERSITET

OUR MISSION

Mental health issues are among the most urgent societal challenges of our time, with serious consequences for individuals, society and the economy. In Sweden today, nearly half of all sick leaves are due to common mental disorders such as anxiety, depression and stress-related conditions.

Women face more than twice the risk of long-term sick leave due to stress-related conditions, yet the gender gap in mental health remains insufficiently understood. WOMHER was founded in 2020 to address this urgent societal challenge. Through interdisciplinary expertise, WOMHER aims to strengthen collaboration among researchers, deepen national and international partnerships and reinforce Uppsala University's role as a leading actor in research on women's mental health.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS AND INTERDISCIPLINARY COLLABORATIONS

In 2025, WOMHER made significant progress, strengthening both its internal capacity and its position within the broader research landscape.

Two new university-wide centres were established with the support of WOMHER – the Interdisciplinary Centre for Women's Health Over the Lifecourse (WHOLE) and the Centre for Preventive Psychiatry – reinforcing long-term structures for women's mental health research. WOMHER also initiated the development of new graduate and research level courses and secured funding for an interdisciplinary research network on eating disorders and body image among young women. Together, these developments expanded opportunities for collaboration, methodological innovation, and sustained interdisciplinary research.

As a result, collaborative engagement deepened across national and international arenas. The partnership with the University of Tübingen and its research school IRTG 2804 continued with joint activities, including participation in their Spring School. Across these efforts, WOMHER contributed to connecting research with clinical practice, civil society and policy actors, reinforcing the importance of interdisciplinary perspectives in shaping future approaches to women's mental health.

womher@uu.se | uu.se/en/centre/womher



WOMHER Management Group from the left: Lisa Ekselius, Emma Hovén, Ingela Nyström, Ulrika Dahl, Hannah Bradby, Sigrid Schottenius Cullhed, Hanna Spangenberg and Alkistis Skalkidou (not pictured: Fatih Özel and Katie Winkle).

EXAMPLES OF KEY INTERDISCIPLINARY ENGAGEMENTS

- **Almedalen Week** – public dialogue on young people's mental health
- **The Nordic Federation of Societies of Obstetrics and Gynecology (NFOG)** – integrating mental health within obstetrics and gynaecology
- **National Equal Opportunities Conference** – conditions for women in academia
- **IAWMH World Congress (India)** – WOMHER's interdisciplinary model presented globally
- **Spring School in Tübingen (IRTG 2804)** – joint research exchange and discussion
- **Government workshop series on suicide prevention** – contributing expertise to national efforts

RESEARCH

Seven doctoral students from WOMHER's research school defended their theses during the year, contributing new insights into, for example, postpartum mental health, digital health tools, parenting and cancer, gender dysphoria, and women's homelessness.

Researchers across WOMHER's network produced a substantial number of scientific publications, highlighting the centre's breadth and collaborative research environment. WOMHER's seminar series remained a key platform for cross-field dialogue, bringing together researchers from multiple disciplines.

Major initiatives including *GODDESS ADHD*, *Re-MEND*, *UPIC* and *Mom2B* continued to evolve as important arenas for cross-disciplinary exchange, reinforcing WOMHER's long-term commitment to advancing knowledge on women's mental health.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND IMPACT

WOMHER increased its visibility in public debate and media. Research from the centre was featured in national broadcasting, and the interdisciplinary anthology *Women's Mental Health – Cross-disciplinary Perspective* developed in close collaboration with WOMHER received significant public attention. Expanded editorial work on the website broadened outreach to practitioners, policymakers and the wider public. Through these efforts, WOMHER helped shape societal discussions and elevate women's mental health on the national agenda.

ORGANISATION

WOMHER's organisational structure reflects its interdisciplinary foundation, bringing together expertise across fields through its Board, Management Group and International Advisory Board. Since 2024, the centre has been led by Director Emma Hovén and Deputy Director Ingela Nyström. In 2025, WOMHER strengthened its leadership by recruiting Project Coordinator Kristina Lundgren and adding Fatih Özel, a former doctoral student in WOMHER's research school, and Katie Winkle to the Management Group. The Board was also renewed with external member Sissela Kyle, bringing a societal perspective on women's mental health, and student representative Klara Lithammer, ensuring that student perspectives are integrated into WOMHER's strategic development.