



REPRESENTING CANADIAN ACADEMICS, RESEARCHERS, PATIENT AND CONSUMER ACTIVISTS

October 2, 2026

Marjorie Michel, Minister of Health
House of Commons
Ottawa

Dear Minister Michel,

I am writing as the co-chair of the pan-Canadian non-profit corporation Independent Voices for Safe and Effective Drugs (IVSED) to express our dismay with the *voluntary* breast implant registry that you announced on May 6. IVSED is a voice for safe and effective medicines and medical devices in Canada, grounded in scientific evidence and free of industry influence.

Canadian women and health experts have advocated for over three decades for the government to mandate a registry that would allow tracking these devices in the interests of women's health. In 2023, the House of Commons Standing Committee on Health (HESA), studied breast implants and [its first recommendation](#) was that the federal government establish a national breast implant registry. To finally have one announced, only to discover it is structured to be useless is devastating.

An implant registry serves two vital purposes: to enable notification to patients if the product implanted in their body proves defective or harmful to health, and to collect reliable, comprehensive data for research into the product's potential risks to health.

As pointed out in the May 6 [news article](#), "Advocates slam Health Canada's new voluntary breast implant registry," designating the proposed registry as voluntary goes against the recommendations of the House of Commons' own committee and the [government's response](#). An ongoing concern is that women are often not informed of the known and suspected risks of silicone breast implants, which inevitably rupture. The graphic at the end of this letter, from the HESA committee report, illustrates testimony from women with implants who hoped the government would commit to an effective registry.

Despite years in which regulators dismissed the concern that breast implants might cause health problems, including cancer, multiple studies now show that breast implants with a textured shell are associated with anaplastic large cell lymphoma, a rare type of cancer that can be fatal. As of May 2023, [three fatalities had been reported in Canada](#) and dozens internationally.

Canada's decision to rely on voluntary opt-in participation is also out of step with international best practice. Australia and Sweden operate opt-out breast implant registries, while Germany, Italy and the Netherlands have introduced mandatory registration or reporting requirements. Research consistently demonstrates that voluntary opt-in registries achieve a participation rate of 20%, substantially lower than opt-out systems with 70-90% participation rates. The government's decision to create an opt-in registry undermines both effective patient notification and the collection of data needed to identify safety signals.

