

Riina Bray, BAsC, MSc, MD, FCFP, MHSc, highlighted the continued support from the Environmental Health Clinic at Women's College Hospital for the Environmental Health Association of Canada and the Environmental Health Association of Quebec. She explained that in her daily clinical practice, she treats patients living with Multiple Chemical Sensitivity (MCS) and other complex, long-term health conditions. Dr. Bray observed that patients experience severe, widespread bodily symptoms from everyday environmental exposures, even at very low levels that most people would not notice. Beyond these physical health struggles, her patients face massive obstacles trying to get proper medical care, keep their jobs, and participate in normal social life.

Her experience in the clinic points to a much larger problem nationwide. Dr. Bray noted major gaps in public awareness, a lack of environmental health training in medical schools, and a shortage of support within the healthcare system. Consequently, she highlighted that science is improving its understanding of the biological pathways and physical mechanisms behind how these environmental exposures trigger chronic illness.

Looking back at the past year, Dr. Bray shared that there has been meaningful progress, particularly in how MCS is increasingly recognized as a valid disability in healthcare accessibility and human rights debates. However, she emphasized that much work remains. To improve current life and care standards for those affected, the medical community must better educate doctors across the healthcare system, integrate environmental health into routine checkups, and maintain a strict commitment to listening to and learning from patients.