

Menopause: A Visual Resource

In support of the
Scottish Government's Women's
Health Plan 2021-2024



Between late 2021 and throughout 2022 the Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland (the ALLIANCE) hosted a series of webinars on the topic of menopause. These sessions covered various aspects of menopausal experiences, and the different areas of life that menopause may impact. These sessions were run in partnership with the Scottish Government, and in support of the Scottish Government's Women's Health Plan.

This booklet brings together three graphic resources that were produced to summarise the discussions of each webinar. The graphics present central points raised by panellists, as well as key themes identified by audiences. The graphics were created by Clare Mills of Listen Think Draw.

In this booklet you will find graphics related to:

- **Menopause Mythbusting**
- **Menopause and the Workplace**
- **Menopause, Sexual Wellbeing and Relationships**

How can you use this visual resource?

- Learn more about menopause, including symptoms, treatments and adjustments
- Share the graphics with friends, family and colleagues to help them understand your menopausal experience, and help you to vocalise your symptoms and what support you might need
- Use as conversation points with a group – whether that be of friends, an employee network, a peer support group, or community group
- Share on social media to raise awareness of menopausal experiences and keep the conversation going

Join our mailing list:



whp@alliance-scotland.org.uk

Follow and tag us on social media:



[@ALLIANCEscot](https://twitter.com/ALLIANCEscot)

For more information on menopause see NHS Inform:



nhsinform.scot/healthy-living/womens-health

Menopause Mythbusting

WORKPLACE

Menopause symptoms can have disabling effect

culture leave part time tired lower paid jobs

brain fog low confidence

More likely to be supported in better paid job

absence Not recorded as menopause

Do not assume who your allies are

We want managers to know where to get support

Make work safe & accomodating = more productive staff

Menopause symptoms can have disabling effect



viagra! managers, sons husbands

Role for men in talking & support groups



Specialists & clinics in most health boards



HEALTHCARE

Difficulties accessing some HRT

Medication can help but not always necessary

Aim for all GPs to have menopause expert

Exercise Sleep Diet

Pre-arm yourself with information



Time for yourself SELF CARE

THIS CAN BE DIFFICULT



BIG CHANGE for men

SEX & RELATIONSHIPS

What is possible?

We have to talk about it

sex pleasure dryness

We have amazing bodies - how do we experience pleasure?



Not everyone wants to talk about it

we need to start talking about it with everyone

get comfy talking about it

Normal part of life

dated!



can be seen as a joke

WOMEN'S PROBLEMS



Ask who has an interest?

Varying experiences with GPs



? Where to get reliable information



#MenopauseMythbusting

Live illustration by www.listenthinkdraw.co.uk

Menopause and the Workplace

MENOPAUSE 101

Menopause may occur naturally or be triggered by surgery or treatment for health conditions, such as cancer

Many treatments:

- ✓ non hormonal
- ✓ hormone replacement (HRT)
- ✓ lifestyle choices



www.menopausematters.co.uk
www.NHSinform.scot/womens-health

Menopause = the last menstrual period (12 months with no periods)
Perimenopause = time experiencing symptoms until the last period
Post menopause = after the last period

45-55 is the usual age range



Symptoms last approximately 7 years
There are many symptoms, including hot flushes, night sweats, anxiety, brain fog and more

Long term increased risks:

- heart attack
- stroke
- osteoporosis
- vaginal dryness

We want a real change in Scotland - it's more than policies



We need to broaden the evidence base.
What we know is based on office type work.
We need more data on:

- ★ Non office based work
- ★ Women of colour
- ★ Small - medium enterprises
- ★ Women with disabilities

PUTTING MENOPAUSE POLICIES INTO PRACTICE

An example from NHS Ayrshire & Arran

Menopause Team - our aim is to raise awareness of menopause to all staff
Made up of Public Health, HR, Occupational Health, Women's Health Team & Staff Wellbeing Team

Ayrshire & Arran Menopause guidance is in place



Raise issues support

Awareness sessions
evaluation



Staff wellbeing team

Let's talk about menopause leaflet



Staff wellbeing app

Social media
Posters
Promotional material

Learn Pro module for managers - aim to be mandatory

Launch in world menopause month



Pop up events



7 minute briefs - what's available?

Menopause training support health

This is just the beginning

MENOPAUSE & THE WORKPLACE

Be aware of stereotypes

Many different experiences in the workplace

Sleep disturbances & headaches are the most bothersome
40/advise it impacts work
12/have taken time off
74/experience night sweats
80/experience hot flushes

Health & Safety Act
Equality Act

Help & support women

We need to avoid gendered ageism

Discussions around menopause leave are ongoing

ACAS, CIPD, EMAS & MIPO
all have menopause policies

In work, temperature, washroom availability, stress and culture all effect how employees experience menopause

Affects symptoms

STEPS TO EFFECTIVE MENOPAUSE SUPPORT

ENABLED

Who does the labour?
HR Leaders Managers Colleagues

EMBEDDED

Menopause policy
Flexible working
Diversity & inclusion

You are an ASSET

Think about working practice & how it effects menopause

You do NOT need to be the champion

Informal networks



This is not for performance management

ACKNOWLEDGED

You are part of a broader talent pool
Full & rich work trajectory

Leadership potential

ACCEPTED

Staggered / split lunch breaks
Educate workforce & managers

Micro-accommodations

Working from home is not always the solution

MENOPAUSE & THE WORKPLACE

Menopause, Sexual Wellbeing and Relationships

MENOPAUSE, SEXUAL WELLBEING & RELATIONSHIPS

Responsive desire



....when I get going, I enjoy it.

This is normal

- ★ CHOOSE
- ★ PRIORITISE
- ★ MAKE TIME

PUT your body IN THE Bed

LIBIDO

Sexual excitation system

Stress

We need to manage our life

Caring

Work

Home

Relationships



Libido will never win - the brain always chooses stress system



Children

Work

Caring

Home

Relationships

WHAT'S GOING ON



in pants won't stop like other menopause symptoms can

Atrophy = dying off of tissues due to a lack of oestrogen

Drying up - IT IS HAPPENING

It happens to our eyes too



It doesn't feel right

It takes me longer to orgasm

It's sore

It's uncomfy

My clitoris is shrinking

I keep treating myself for thrush

Can have on its own or with HRT

Absorption of oestrogen to rest of the body is incredibly small

some people who have been advised they can't have HRT can have this

1 Lubrication is a GAME CHANGER



2 Non-hormonal methods moisturise



3 Local vaginal oestrogen



CONFIDENCE

BE HONEST

Partner wants to support & help

DO THIS FIRST

Internal work

I am who I am

I know what I want

do you know?

What do you like?

TALK

What puts the brakes on?

Mess Kids Work Stress

Full sex isn't vagina and penis

it's pleasure

What feels good right now?

Lets have a pleasure adventure

It takes time to arouse the vagina

IT'S ALL NORMAL

Bladder incontinence

- ★ Stress
- ★ Latchkey

Discharge can change

- ↳ Watery
- ↳ Thick

Vaginal flora

PH value changes

bugs grow

urinary tract infections

It's all normal

Please take some action

www.menopausecafe.net

www.nhsinformscot/healthyliving/womens-health

www.pleasurepossibility.com

My mojo has left the building

Absolutely, your body feels broken

You lose so much confidence in yourself

And you feel undesirable

You think you are broken

Notes

Menopause Mythbusting

This session explored various aspects related to menopausal experience, and how we can support women and people experiencing menopause to move through this period more positively.

Chair: Irene Oldfather, ALLIANCE Director

Panel: Rachel Weiss, Founder of the Menopause Café; Dr Claire Macaulay, Menopause sex and relationships expert; Professor Kat Riach, University of Glasgow; Dr Heather Currie, Associate Medical Director, Women, Children and Sexual Health, NHS Dumfries and Galloway; Dr Sigi Joseph, General Practitioner, NHS Lothian

Menopause and the Workplace

The webinar explored the impact that menopause can have within the workplace, effective support that can be put in place by employers, and an example of putting menopause workplace policy into practice.

Chair: Irene Oldfather, ALLIANCE Director

Panel: Professor Kat Riach, University of Glasgow; Dr Katrin Bjornsson, NHS Ayrshire and Arran. With support from Lindsey Millen, Close the Gap.

Watch the webinar on Youtube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qRrYeF4rYaA>

Menopause, Sexual Wellbeing and Relationships

This relaxed and informal webinar explored what is happening during the menopause that can cause changes in people's bodies and sex lives, treatment options to alleviate pain and discomfort, body confidence, having open conversations with partners and how we can find pleasure.

Chair: Jennifer Stewart, ALLIANCE Senior Development Officer

Speaker: Dr Claire Macaulay, Oncologist and menopause and sex expert

Watch the webinar on Youtube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CYFB1bFDcKk>

The Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland (the ALLIANCE) is the national third sector intermediary for a range of health and social care organisations. They have a growing membership of over 3,000 national and local third sector organisations, associates in the statutory and private sectors, disabled people, people living with long term conditions and unpaid carers.

You can find out more on their website:

www.alliance-scotland.org.uk

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