

# 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](mailto: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](https://nhsinform.scot/healthy-living/womens-health)

# Menopause Mythbusting

## WORKPLACE

Menopause symptoms can have disabling effect

culture leave  
part time  
lower paid jobs  
brain fog  
low confidence  
tired

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

Education

viagra!  
managers, sons  
husbands

Role for men in talking & support groups



Specialists & clinics in most health boards

#MenopauseMythbusting

Live illustration by www.listenthinkdraw.co.uk

## 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

What do I want?

What is possible?

We have to talk about it

sex pleasure dryness

## SEX & RELATIONSHIPS

We have amazing bodies - how do we experience pleasure?

BIG CHANGE for men

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

Practice Nurses

Ask who has an interest?

Varying experiences with GPs

NHS INFORM

? Where to get reliable information

# Menopause and the Workplace

## MENOPAUSE 101

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

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

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

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

- Many treatments:
- ✓ non hormonal
  - ✓ hormone replacement (HRT)
  - ✓ lifestyle choices
- lower stress, BMI
- Long term increased risks:
- heart attack
  - stroke
  - osteoporosis
  - vaginal dryness
- www.menopausematters.co.uk  
 www.NHSinform.scot/womens-health

## MENOPAUSE & THE WORKPLACE

Be aware of stereotypes

Many different experiences in the workplace

Health & Safety Act  
 Equality Act

ACAS, CIPD, EMAS & MIPO all have menopause policies

Help & support women

Discussions around menopause leave are ongoing

We need to avoid gendered ageism

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

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

Affects symptoms

## STEPS TO EFFECTIVE MENOPAUSE SUPPORT



## MENOPAUSE & THE WORKPLACE

## 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

Raise issues support

Ayrshire & Arran Menopause guidance is in place

Awareness sessions

evaluation

Staff wellbeing team

Let's talk about menopause leaflet

Social media Posters Promotional material

Intranet

Staff wellbeing app

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, 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



Libido will never win - the brain always chooses stress system

Work

Children

Caring

Home

Relationships

## WHAT'S GOING ON



Problems 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 uncomfy

It's sore

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

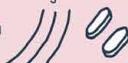
1 Lubrication is a GAME CHANGER



2 Non-hormonal methods moisturise



3 Local vaginal oestrogen



## CONFIDENCE

Partner wants to support & help

DO THIS FIRST

Internal work

I am who I am

I know what I want

do you know?

**BE HONEST**

TALK

What do you like?

What puts the brakes on?

Mess Kids Work Stress

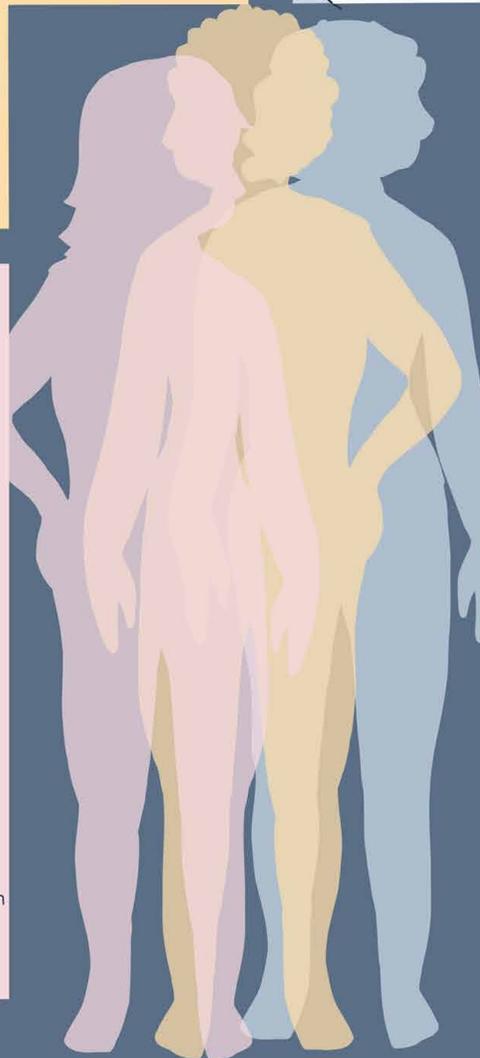
Full sex isn't vagina and penis

**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](http://www.menopausecafe.net)

[www.nhsinformscot/healthyliving/womens-health](http://www.nhsinformscot/healthyliving/womens-health)

[www.pleasurepossibility.com](http://www.pleasurepossibility.com)



My mo jo **NORMAL** has left the building

You lose so much confidence in yourself **NORMAL**

Absolutely, your body feels broken **NORMAL**

And you feel undesirable **NORMAL**

You think you are broken **NORMAL**

# 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](http://www.alliance-scotland.org.uk)

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The ALLIANCE is funded under a Strategic Partnership Agreement with Scottish Government. Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland is a company registered by guarantee. Registered in Scotland No. 307731 Charity number SC037475

