

A silhouette of a person standing on a wooden pier or boardwalk, with their arms outstretched horizontally. They are facing away from the camera towards a bright sunset over the ocean. The sky is a mix of orange, yellow, and purple. The water is dark with some white foam from waves.

# Menopause Support: The Library Perspective

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@MCHFTJetLibrary

# The Conversation

Equality & Diversity chat with Head of OD  
*"Did you know many female leaders leave post when they hit the menopause – what can we do?"*

**<No time to do anything....  
Time Passes>**

We Tweeted



Informal chat with a couple of members of the Health & Wellbeing Committee and Exec for Workforce & OD

*"Not looking at it yet, might be interesting"*

*"This has recently been raised at HMPA. There was a presentation from someone in Wales."*

BBC Menopause awareness week



*"Oh this is interesting, did you listen to the discussion on Radio 4"*

Helen Kiely  
Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust

**Subject:** Re results sanitary products & menopause related products for healthcare staff



# The Evidence

## Work and the Menopause – Evidence Review

Jennings (Jennings, Mazaik, & McKinlay, 1984) found that women who worked were healthier than those who did not. However, once education was controlled for the associations between employment status and health measures were reduced.

High (High & Marcellino, 1994) surveyed 89 post-menopausal women. In addition to night sweats and hot flushes symptoms reported by at least 40% of the women included weight gain, irritability, depression, bloating, and mood changes. These symptoms were reported as being disruptive to their lives by 47% of the women with 30% indicating that their job performance had been adversely affected. Irritability and mood changes showed significant correlations with job performance. Excluding night sweats and hot flushes the non-managerial group showed a significantly higher percentage reporting each symptom.

Mary Hitchcock Memorial Hospital in New Hampshire (Fisher, 1994) began a group for women to discuss their menopause and how it affected their work. The objective was for women to learn the process their bodies were undergoing and discuss how this could affect them physically and emotionally. There was education about hormone-replacement therapy (HRT), diet, exercise, vitamins, herbs and meditation. Supervisors were also encouraged to attend.

Carlson (Carlson, 1995) interviewed nine career women. Six themes emerged from the interviews which were: uncertainty and confusion; seeking medical help; consequences of the experience; what is helpful; effects of the experience on work; their mother's experience. However, there were individual differences within each theme, and there were no aspects of menopause that were universally present for everyone.

In 2003 a survey of 500 workplace health and safety reps found that only one in five employers provided information about the menopause and only 2% of respondents said health and safety policies covered menopause-related issues (Anonymous, 2003)

In 2004 *Evidence-Based Mental Health* reported that depression increases in women during early- to late-menopause but decreases after menopause ("Depression increases in women during early to late menopause but decreases after menopause," 2004)

Salazar (Salazar & Paravie, 2005) found no connection between menopause and job performance. Most of the women in Salazar's study did their job well. Most of the women showed a moderate alteration of the Menopause Quality of Life and "a deficit of self-care was detected in 92.2%." Perceived social support correlated with job performance.

A study of 208 women by Kakkar (Kakkar, Kaur, Chopra, Kaur, & Kaur, 2007) found that working women seem to suffer more from psychological symptoms whereas non-working women showed a greater incidence of physical symptoms. Educated women showed a lower incidence of psychological and physical symptoms.

Cassou (Cassou, Mandereau, Aegerter, Touranchet, & Derriennic, 2007) studied the link between work-related factors and age of menopause. Cassou found that earlier menopause was associated with having a high-strain job and difficult schedules. Later menopause was associated with higher educational status and repetitive work. Earlier menopause was associated with high job control and not going to university.

## Sanitary products for healthcare staff.

### Key messages

There are no available examples demonstrating the free provision of sanitary products for NHS or healthcare staff at present.

One hospital has recently introduced fans which can be obtained by staff experiencing menopause related symptoms.

Part of the Unite union's campaign to tackle period poverty has recommended workplaces offer free sanitary provision. A Scottish council has introduced this in its public buildings, along with other individual businesses.

Studies have been conducted demonstrating the impact of menopause symptoms in healthcare, although research has focussed specifically in nursing.

Recommendations for workplaces have included supportive provisions for staff such as: access to cold water, increased access to toilet breaks for ward staff, changes to the environment such as ways to regulate the heating or access to fans and changes to uniform practices – for example making the fabric a looser and softer material- along with other psychological and social provisions such as support groups, flexible working and access to counselling services.

May 2019

Mersey Care Evidence Review Service

### Guidelines, Policies and Reports

#### ACAS

[Menopause at work 2019](#)

#### BMA

[Ageing and the workplace](#) 2016 BMA updated 2018: <https://www.bma.org.uk/advice/employment/occupational-health/ageing-and-the-workplace>

#### British Occupational Health Research Foundation

[Work and the Menopause: A Guide for Managers](#) 2010

#### CIPD

[Silently dancing on the ceiling: women's workplace experiences peri-, menopausal and postmenopausal in the UK](#) 2017  
[Let's talk menopause](#) CIPD 2019 [added]

#### Faculty of Occupational Medicine of the Royal College of Physicians

[Guidance on menopause and the workplace](#) 2018

[Advice on the menopause](#) 2018

[Infographic](#) 2018

#### NASUWT

[Managing the Menopause in the Workplace](#) (n.d.)

#### HMPA

[Menopause at Work](#) p7 (2019) [added]

#### NHS Employers

[Menopause and the workplace](#) (2019) [added]

#### NICE

[Menopause: diagnosis and management](#) 2015

[Menopause](#) 2015

[Menopause \(Quality Standard\)](#) 2017

[Note: included the above for background information – may be too detailed / specific for your policy]

#### Royal College of Nursing

[Menopause: lifestyle and therapeutic approaches: RCN guidance for nurses, midwives and health visitors](#) 2014

[The Menopause and Work: Guidance for RCN Representatives](#) 2016

At the launch of the Mental Health First Aiders, many of the issues raised were the result of the menopause! 80% workforce are female, the majority are in the menopause age range...

# The Action Plan

## Menopause Task & Finish Group Rolling Actions

### T&F Group Objectives

- Raising Awareness of Menopause across the Trust
- Supporting staff pre, during and post menopause
- Creation of a Trust Policy/Guidelines to support staff
- 6-12 month duration of T&F group then transfer into H&W Group Work Plan

Meeting Date	Attendance
17 June 2019 (11am – 12pm)	Anna Bickerton, Bobby Sharma, Flick Nixon, Penny Dobson, Alison Langley, Susan Smith
16 July 2019 (2-3pm)	Anna Bickerton, Susan Smith, Flick Nixon
27 August 2019 (11am-12pm)	Anna Bickerton, Susan Smith
24 September 2019 (11am – 12pm)	Anna Bickerton, Susan Smith
22 October 2019 (11am – 12pm)	Meeting Cancelled by AB
19 November 2019 (11am – 12pm)	

Action Number	Action	Lead	Timescale for implementation	Update	RAG
1	Agree dates for future meetings	Anna	30 June 2019	6 months worth of meeting dates agreed. Lisa Ralphs confirming venues.	Complete
2	Review Menopause café license and sign	Anna, Susan, Bobby	30 June 2019	Anna and Bobby have read the license and confirmed happy to sign. Susan to sign.	Complete
3	Establish appropriate venue for Menopause Café (e.g. Bistro)	Bobby	30 June 2019	Mandy Cartmill confirmed we can use the Bistro on a Monday or Tuesday 3.30-4.30	Complete

Document Owner: Anna Bickerton, HR Manager

June 2019

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4	Agree Menopause Café Date	Anna	31 July 2019	Confirmed as Tuesday 6 <sup>th</sup> October 2019	Complete
5	Arrange Crossroads information event to promote menopause and menopause cafe	Anna	31 July 2019	Crossroads booked 30 Sept – 03 Oct 2019	Complete
6	Comms plan to be agreed re. crossroads event and Menopause Café event	Anna, Bobby, Susan	31 August 2019	Susan has drafted comms. AB has emailed Jon 28.08.19 to confirm happy with content. Awaiting reply.	Complete
7	Develop Menopause Info Leaflet for staff / MHFA Team	Susan	31 August 2019	Work in progress. Draft developed by John Gale. Lizzie Price to discuss content with Obs & Gynae Consultant.	a
8	Cost up "Emergency Menopause Boxes"	Penny	31 August 2019	Approx £20 per box	Complete
9	Trial Emergency Menopause Boxes on Ward 9 and Ward 10 and seek feedback from staff	Penny	31 August 2019		a

- Information Leaflet
- Awareness event
- Menopause Café
- Menopause Policy
- Menopause Support Boxes
- When Business As Usual will be maintained by HWB

# Raising Awareness



<https://www.menopause-exchange.co.uk/>



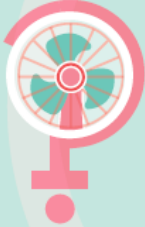
<https://www.menopausecafe.net/>


## #Pausivity


**MENOPAUSE** ♀


EVERY WOMAN GOES THROUGH THE MENOPAUSE  
IT USUALLY OCCURS BETWEEN THE AGES OF 45 & 55


DO YOU HAVE ANY OF  
THESE SYMPTOMS?


**HOT FLUSHES** 

**HEADACHES** 

**MOOD SWINGS** 

**PALPITATIONS** 


**TIREDNESS** 

**PAINS IN JOINTS** 

YOU MAY ALSO EXPERIENCE:  
Sweats, Have difficulty sleeping, Depression, Anxiety, Loss of sex drive (libido), Feelings of not coping as well as you used to and changes to your periods.

If you suffer any of these you might be menopausal.  
Be aware of the symptoms and discuss it with your doctor.

#KnowYourMenopause #PosterSelfie @Pausitivity2



Design by Sheds Design @shedsdesign08

# Menopause Cafe



WHAT ONE THING MAKES YOUR  
MENOPAUSE SYMPTOMS MORE  
MANAGEABLE?



WHAT IS THE MOST DIFFICULT  
OR CHALLENGING PART OF THE  
MENOPAUSE FOR YOU?



WHO DO YOU TALK TO ABOUT  
YOUR MENOPAUSE SYMPTOMS  
AND CONCERNS?



THE 4 PILLARS TO A HEALTHY  
MENOPAUSE ARE KNOWLEDGE,  
FOOD, EXERCISE AND POSITIVITY –  
WHAT WORKS FOR YOU?



# Menopause Cafe

## Positive Impact?

Was really good to talk to other people and not thinking I was going mad!!

Knowing others have experienced the same symptoms

Yes, so many of my colleagues going the same as me

Really enjoyed it, thank you

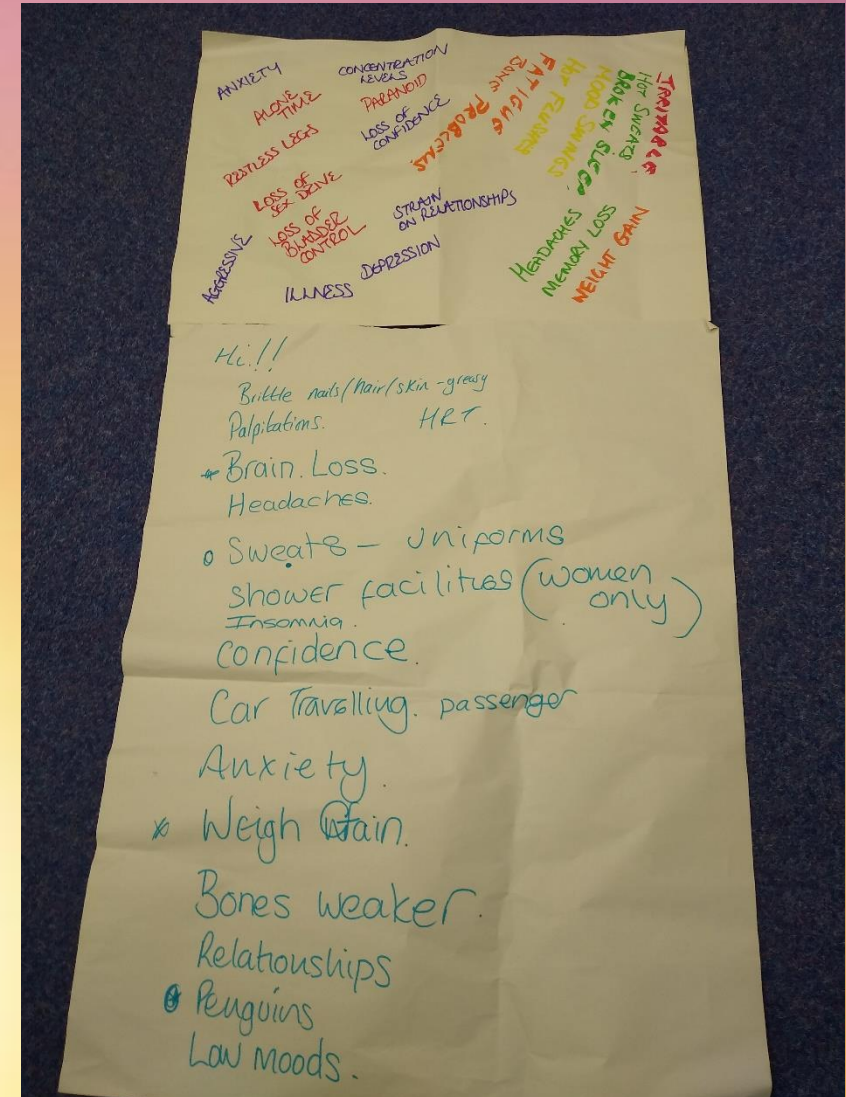
Fab idea - looking forward to the next one

Hope so!

Yes, advice + info - people doing talks would be good

Sharing difficulties + positives

Great idea, made welcome, relaxed



Thanks for putting this on!

# Menopause Cafe

## What Went Well

- Conversation was easy, very little facilitation required
- Wide range of participants from divisions and job roles
- Broad ranging conversation
- Good attendance
- Open conversations, where people felt safe and supported
- Surprise attendance by a couple of members of the public

## What Helped

- Having promotion across different media.
- Having the support from Karen (NHS Wales) who shared ice breaker questions and attendance sheets
- Having multiple facilitators
- Supporting conversation and resources of the Menopause Café
- Informal style
- Cakes & coffee

## Menopause Café 08/10/19 Lessons Learned

### Actions



- Will run again with broader promotion and signage
- Draft roles for facilitators and buddies
- To be more inclusive of dietary requirements
- Potential for community links?
- Potential for talks series and Schwarz Round

## What Didn't Go So Well

- Café locked doors and we need to keep an eye out over multiple entrances
- No male attendees
- Fewer volunteer facilitators than hoped

## What Hindered

- Forgot gluten free cake options – Anna bought from café
- Susan lost her voice
- People attended as drop in and had to be brought up to speed on the process
- Late to planning the day and less facilitators than hoped for
- No signage on doors



# Menopause Boxes

**Penny Dobson – has been trialling one she self funded for her department**

**Library Development Bid for £1200 to supply 60 emergency boxes to departments**

- Hand held fan-£2
  - Hot water bottle-£3-5
  - Tampons-£3-£4
  - Sanitary Towels-£2
  - Small box-£5
  - Knickers/Some spare scrubs (as loose )fitting-S/M/L/LX
  - Looking at under £20 per box and contents.
- 
- Library leaflet & mental health first aiders will be included in the box

Pharmacy didn't approve:

- Paracetamol-(16)-40p
- Brufen -(16)-35p



But they have given us pharmacy vouchers as a compromise

# Future???

- **The Library is currently in the process of writing a Menopause Policy.**
- **A sub group is being formed to look at providing optional lighter weight uniforms and amendment of policy. A potential long term cost saving has been identified, but there will be an initial cost hit.**

**We are still sharing ideas:**

- **Warrington & Halton are interested in our boxes idea and work on uniform policy. They have a different take on weaving through policies rather than an independent policy.**
- **Velindre University NHS Trust has shared details of a buddy scheme we are looking at whether to develop. They have done some figure work around the ratio of disciplinary hearings and attrition in menopausal women, which we are looking to duplicate for our Trust.**