

# Menopause Awareness in the Workplace

Women experiencing menopause are the fastest-growing working demographic up nearly 40 per cent since 1980. Menopause costs Australian organisations \$10 billion in replacement costs alone. 1 in 8 women retire during menopause, and another 2 in 8 women want to.

## About the 2025 event

On 11 March 2025, the Office for Women hosted an event on Menopause Awareness in the Workplace. Attendees included government and business leaders, executives, managers, and HR professionals. The event explored menopause's impact on the workplace from economic, psychosocial, and health perspectives.

Three key themes emerged during the event.

## Key theme 1: The need to talk about menopause

### Key statistics

- 80 per cent of women will be impacted by menopause in a moderate to severe way.<sup>i</sup>
- 37.7 per cent of women will retire under the age of 55<sup>ii</sup>, generally the peak earning period of their career.<sup>iii</sup>
- 17 per cent of women aged 45 to 64 take an extended break from workforce participation due to illness. Menopause is a significant factor in this decision<sup>iv</sup>.
- Long term absence from work and early retirement is costing women \$17 billion each year in lost earnings and superannuation. <sup>v</sup>Menopause increases the risk of heart disease<sup>vi</sup>, while 1 woman dies every hour of heart diseases in Australia.<sup>vii</sup>
- The highest rate of female suicide is during perimenopause, between 45 and 49.<sup>viii</sup>

### Key takeaways

- Menopause impacts women's health, careers, and economic stability.
- Stigma is preventing conversations about how to support people experiencing menopause symptoms in the workplace and leads to misinterpretation of symptoms (for example, brain fog mistaken for performance issues).
- Only talking to women and not taking a broader family, social, economic view is reinforcing this stigma and shame.
- The lack of knowledge surrounding menopause can negatively affect those experiencing symptoms. This can occur at the outset with women being told that they are too young for perimenopause or throughout menopause with women not having appropriate mental health supports.

### Research Reports

[Shattering the silence about menopause: 12-month progress report – GOV.UK](#)

## Key theme 2: The impacts of menopause in the workplace

### Key statistics

- 83 per cent of women report at least one menopause symptom that affects their work.<sup>ix</sup>
- 15 per cent have considered quitting a job due to their symptoms with an additional 13 per cent who have quit their jobs.<sup>x</sup>
- Menopause costs Australian women \$15.2 billion annually in lost earnings and super.<sup>xi</sup>
- Businesses face \$10 billion in direct costs, plus hiring, training, and productivity losses.<sup>xii</sup>

### Key takeaways

- Education is vital to supporting people with menopause symptoms in the workplace – educating individual managers but also educating workplaces as a whole.
- HR policies that include inclusive accommodations (that make reference to menopause) can provide flexibility for all people in a way that is not stigmatising and is equitable.
- There is a heavy cost of not addressing menopause in the workplace – organisations risk losing their best and brightest at the prime of their working life.

### Resources

[The Definitive Guide to the Perimenopause and Menopause – by Dr Louise Newson](#)

[The Importance of Menopause Policy: Supporting Women's Well-being in the Workplace](#)

## Key theme 3: Changes that need to happen in the workplace

### Key statistics

- 60 per cent of women stated that support in the workplace regarding menopause was poor or below average.<sup>xiii</sup>
- 86 per cent of respondents wished they had better access to flexible working options as a way of supporting them through challenging symptoms.<sup>xiv</sup>
- Companies where leaders actively champion allyship report a 37 per cent boost in morale and a 21 per cent rise in productivity.<sup>xv</sup>
- Organisations which integrated allyship into their core values and provided ongoing training to employees saw a 34 per cent increase in employee engagement.<sup>xvi</sup>

### Key takeaways

- Organisations need a dual approach: fostering a supportive culture while embedding menopause within broader life-stage HR policies and strategies.
- Small changes can be made to support people experiencing menopause symptoms in the workplace – it might be as simple as a change in uniform to breathe better or a desk fan or allowing people to start later if they have slept poorly.

- Allyship is key to boosting morale and better supporting people experiencing symptoms because when women thrive, organisations thrive.
- There needs to be review and consideration of including menopause into existing policies in the workplace rather than creating entirely new policies.
- Visibility regarding reasonable adjustments and inclusivity for everyone helps to eliminate stigma.

## Further reading

### Articles

[How to Write a Menopause Policy — Sage Women's Health](#)

[Becoming a Menopause Ambassador: Championing Change in the Workplace — Sage Women's Health](#)

### Books

[Oestrogen Matters by Avrum Bluming - Why Taking Hormones in Menopause Can Improve Women's Well-Being and Lengthen Their Lives Without Raising the Risk of Breast Cancer - Booktopia](#)

[The M Word by Ginni Mansberg – QBD Books](#)

[It's the Menopause by Kaz Cooke](#)

### Online forums

[www.healthyhormones.au](http://www.healthyhormones.au)

## Expert panel

**Dr Erin Morton**, the Director of Bespoke Clinical Research and founder of VITAL, a national registry that has gathered information from over 1,500 Australian women about their experiences with perimenopause and menopause. Her goal is to address the significant underdiagnosis and mistreatment of menopausal symptoms in Australia.

**Michelle Hasani**, the founder of Wellbeing by Design Australia and a consultant for Sage Women's Health, partners with organisations to co-design evidence-based wellbeing strategies that not only improve engagement and productivity but also help leaders show up with confidence, clarity, and purpose.

**Megan Hayward** presented to the 2023 Senate enquiry into Menopause in Australia and was quoted in the final report. She is an Adelaide-based licensed menopause expert. She speaks about the critical intersections between menopause, divorce, and the housing crisis, emphasising the alarming rise in homelessness among older women.

### Expert panel links

[VITAL Virtual registry of peri-/menopause in Australia. Consumer-led, community-driven.](#)

[Mimi Moon Meno – Movement, Mindset and Modify](#)

[Workplace Wellbeing, Mental Fitness and Leadership Coaching | Wellbeing by Design Sage Womens Health](#)

## References

- <sup>i</sup> Jean Hailes for Women's Health (2022), [Symptoms of Menopause](#).
- <sup>ii</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (2024), [Retirement and Retirement Intentions, Australia \(2022-23 financial year\)](#).
- <sup>iii</sup> Payscale (2019), [Earnings Peak at Different Ages for Different Demographic Groups](#).
- <sup>iv</sup> Jean Hailes for Women's Health (2022), [The impact of symptoms attributed to menopause by Australian women](#).
- <sup>v</sup> Senate Community Affairs References Committee, 2024. Issues related to menopause and perimenopause.
- <sup>vi</sup> American Heart Association (2020), [Menopause Transition and Cardiovascular Disease Risk](#).
- <sup>vii</sup> Heart Foundation (2024), [Women and heart disease](#).
- <sup>viii</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (2022), [Causes of Death, Australia](#).
- <sup>ix</sup> Australasian Menopause Society (2024), [Menopause and the workplace](#).
- <sup>x</sup> Korn Ferry and Vira Health (2023), [Understanding the Role of Menopause in Work and Careers](#).
- <sup>xi</sup> The Australian Institute of Superannuation Trustees (2022), [Measuring what matters: Understanding our economy and society while informing policy making](#).
- <sup>xii</sup> Macquarie Business School (2023), [Managers need menopause training to protect profits and retain women in senior jobs](#).
- <sup>xiii</sup> Circle in. (2021) [Driving change: menopause and the workplace](#).
- <sup>xiv</sup> Circle in. (2024) [How to support an employee going through menopause or perimenopause](#).
- <sup>xv</sup> Diversity for Social Impact. (2023), [Allyship in the workplace: A comprehensive overview](#).
- <sup>xvi</sup> Diversity for Social Impact. (2023), [Allyship in the workplace: A comprehensive overview](#).