



Understanding Peri-menopause and Menopause in the workplace

Peri-menopause and Menopause are natural stages of life that all women experience, yet it can bring real and sometimes challenging physical and emotional changes that affect day-to-day life at work. Around 80% of women experience moderate to severe menopause symptoms, and 83% report symptoms that affect their work. Menopause is estimated to cost Australian organisations around \$10 billion annually due to lost productivity, turnover and replacement costs (ABS 2024). Many women manage symptoms quietly, often without understanding or support. By acknowledging menopause with empathy, openness, and flexibility, workplaces can help women feel seen, valued, and supported, while retaining experience, confidence, and wellbeing across their workforce.

What is Menopause?

Menopause is the stage that marks the end of a woman's menstrual cycle and reproductive years. It usually happens between the ages of about 45 and 55.

Peri-menopause refers to the years of hormonal fluctuation leading up to menopause, while menopause is confirmed after 12 consecutive months without a menstrual period.

During menopause, the body's production of hormones - particularly estrogen and progesterone - declines. This hormonal change can cause a range of physical and emotional symptoms, such as hot flushes, sleep problems, mood changes, fatigue and brain fog.

Experiencing these symptoms can impact confidence and wellbeing. Everyone's experience is different: some women have mild symptoms, while others find the transition more challenging.

Menopause isn't an illness - it's a normal life transition - but understanding it and having the right support can make a big difference to quality of life, at work and at home.

Creating supportive Workplaces

Workplaces and organisations play an important role in supporting employees experiencing menopause, but meaningful support is less about applying a standard set of measures and more about fostering open, respectful conversations.

Experiences of menopause vary widely, so a blanket approach is unlikely to meet everyone's needs.

Instead, creating a culture where employees feel comfortable discussing what may assist them, whether that's flexibility, environmental adjustments or other supports, allows for more practical and individualised responses.



This shared approach recognises that employers are not mind readers, while also encouraging awareness and responsiveness. In doing so, organisations not only reduce stigma and support wellbeing, but are better positioned to retain experienced and capable employees.

*If you would like to speak to a clinician with an interest in Women's Health, please call **1800 30 30 90** or contact us via webchat or email appt@bsspsych.com.au*

Ways to support employees

- ▶ Provide accessible resources
- ▶ Encourage open dialogue
- ▶ Create space for women to feel safe
- ▶ Comfortable workspaces with temperature control
- ▶ Comfortable uniforms and dress code (duty dependent)
- ▶ Encourage connecting with a clinician for support

Resources and Support

Australian Menopause Society

GP/Specialist

Leaders can access BSS Supervisor Support sessions for guidance around supporting peri-menopause/menopause in the workplace.

Encourage team members to speak to a clinician with an interest in Women's Health at BSS 1800 30 30 90

