

Women's reproductive health at work: Menopause awareness

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During Menopause Awareness Month, Dr Ruth Abrams and Dr Lilith Whiley share emerging findings from their NIHR funded project on supporting women's reproductive health at work. Here are five evidence-based ways that organisations can support employees who are experiencing menopause.



1. Education

Educational interventions that foster awareness and practical knowledge about menopause can help those experiencing symptoms at work to feel more empowered to recognise and ask for workplace adjustments. As women gain more knowledge, they become more able to reflect on their own needs and confidently discuss them. To learn more about education interventions at work, please read [Geukes et al \(2023\)](#).

2. Self-help CBT

Self-help strategies in the form of booklets featuring CBT and information about how to manage common symptoms such as hot flushes and night sweats can help to improve employees' coping strategies at work. To learn more about how self-help CBT booklets can help, please read [Hardy et al \(2018\)](#).



3. Digital apps

Digital apps can provide support across (peri)menopause to reduce the severity of symptoms at work, particularly if the apps feature evidence-based menopause content and personalised support provided by expert menopause practitioners. To learn more about how digital apps can support menopause at work, please read [Schei and Abernathy \(2024\)](#).

4. Adaptable materials

Women need to see themselves in the available support, and feel represented above and beyond their symptoms. Making adaptations to available materials really matters. This includes finding ways to overcome language barriers, and having the presence and support of line managers and colleagues of the same ethnic background. To learn more about some of the ways in which materials can be adapted, please read Verburgh et al ([2022](#); [2020](#)).



5. Line manager and peer support

Line management support is crucial. When line managers are upskilled (e.g. through training), they feel better prepared in how to start conversations and make adjustments. When women have peers they can confide in, then they feel less stigma and a greater sense of relief. To find out more, please read [Hardy et al. \(2019\)](#) and [Steffan and Potočník \(2022\)](#).

Sustainable menopause support at work involves raising awareness across the whole organisation and employee groups and creating inclusive and welcoming climates where menopause is normalised. This includes inclusive behaviours, physical and mental health promotion, and welcoming workplace experiences. Sustained impact necessitates structural support and ongoing engagement. This includes senior buy in, policies and practical action.

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