

September 2022

Introduction

Menopause is part of a woman's life that every General Practitioner requires understanding of to enable them to care for their patients, (and their families and carers when appropriate).

The effect of menopause on individual women is widely varied with many facing significant impacts, some facing devastating impacts, some experiencing little to no impact and others requiring reassurance and lifestyle advice without needing medication. Ensuring every member of the primary care team is aware of the variable presentation and impact of the menopause is therefore essential.

GPs understand that a personalised approach to care is key to ensure every person receives the right care for them, individualised to their specific needs. This is emphasised in the RCGP curriculum which provides a "women centred life course approach" where every contact throughout a women's life matters. The menopause and perimenopause is one significant part of this, ensuring GPs are able to care for and support their patients at every stage of their lives.

An overview of GP training

GPs have the broadest curriculum, yet shortest training programme (3 years) of any medical specialty. This aims to expose trainees to the full breadth of conditions they are likely to see in general practice and become expert generalists.

GPs also undertake lifelong continuing professional development and have to demonstrate ongoing learning across the curriculum to continue to practise.

Menopause as part of the GP curriculum

Menopause remains a key part of the RCGP curriculum which all GP trainees need to demonstrate competency of in order to practise independently as a GP in the UK.

The RCGP has worked with partners including the British Menopause Society (BMS) and Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RCOG) to develop educational resources for GPs on women's health of which menopause forms a part of. This includes:

- Our [women's health](#) toolkit
- Our [menstrual wellbeing](#) toolkit
- E-learning resources
- Events
- Our [Women's Health Online Library](#).

RCGPs response to the Committee's recommendation for mandatory training for GPs on menopause

All GPs are already trained to support women with menopause as it is already a core competency of all qualified GPs. The RCGP believe that introducing additional mandatory training courses for some areas of medicine and not others would be unworkable. In order to practice independently as a GP in the UK, all GPs need to demonstrate competency of the RCGPs curriculum, which menopause is a key part of.

The RCGP are responding to the NHSE consultation on a women's health care pathway and are supportive of NICE's process of reviewing its menopause guidance. In addition, the Women's Health Strategy highlights the importance of caring for every aspect of women's health throughout their lifetime with the menopause being one significant part. RCGP will continue to work with NHS England, the Department of Health and NICE on these efforts to try to ensure the best care for patients experiencing menopause.