

# Hot topic:

## Menopause and how to manage

### Evaluation Snapshot



WHISE, in collaboration with the other Victorian Women's Health Services, the Epworth Hospital, the Victorian Women's Trust and the Women's Spirit Project, hosted a free public webinar to raise awareness about the impact of perimenopause and menopause on women's physical and mental health and wellbeing, employment and relationships.

The webinar was delivered on Wednesday 28 September and featured Dr Fatima Khan from the Epworth Hospital, Mary Crooks AO and Executive Director of the Victorian Women's Trust and Jodie Belyea, founder and Managing Director of the Women's Spirit Project.

#### The aims of the session were to:

- Enhance understanding of menopause, and its impacts, on physical and mental health and wellbeing, including sexual health.
- Increase understanding of the impacts of menopause on employment and experiences in the workplace.
- Increase understanding of how to access support and symptom management for menopause, including different treatment options available.
- Increase confidence in discussing menopause and its impacts with family, friends, health professionals and colleagues.
- Increase confidence in accessing or offering support and symptom management for menopause.

### Who registered for and attended the forum?

A whopping 256 people registered for the webinar and completed the pre-webinar survey as part of their registration. Of these people, 147 (57%) attended the webinar and 120 (82%) completed the post-webinar survey which is an incredible completion rate!!



Please note that the pre-webinar data reported in this evaluation report will include all 256 registrants as we are unable to separate the responses from the 147 attendees. Therefore, given 43% of people did not attend, it is important to read the comparative analyses between pre and post surveys with caution.

The majority of the registrants were women (99%, n=253) and two people preferred not to say what their gender identity was. Of the 120 people who completed the post-webinar survey, 109 (91%) were women, 10 (8%) said they identified as a man, and 1 (0.8%) as trans or gender diverse. These are some strange findings and I wonder if some people selected "man" accidentally.

People primarily heard about the webinar from a colleague/workplace or another person/organisation (n=129). Email (n=43), social media posts on Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn (n=32), and directly through WHISE (n=21) were also common pathways to learning about this webinar. A smaller number of people heard about it from their working group/SRH CoP (n=8), from the GHDS (n=5), and from the Women's Spirit Project (n=5).

### Overall ratings of knowledge and understanding

As can be seen in Figure 1, there was an overall increase in knowledge about menopause following the webinar with a notable increase in the proportion of people who rated their knowledge as high following the webinar.

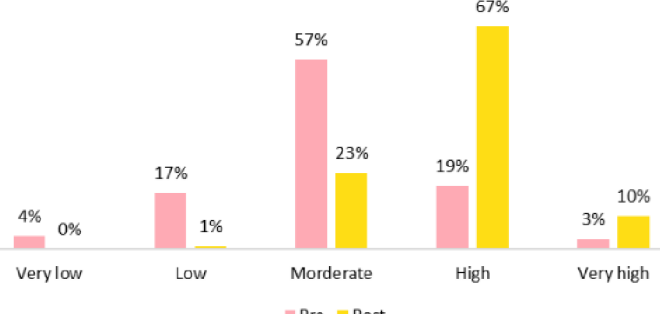


Figure 1: Pre and post webinar ratings of knowledge about menopause

Figures 2 to 5 show that there were changes in understanding from pre to post the webinar. Worth highlighting is the increased understanding of the impacts of menopause on sexual health and wellbeing following the webinar (see Figure 3). The increased proportions of people who had high or very high understanding are notable. Furthermore, looking at Figure 5, people overall increased in their level of understanding of the management and self-management of menopausal symptoms, including different therapies available, with the proportion of people reporting high levels of understanding increasing from 9% to 43%.

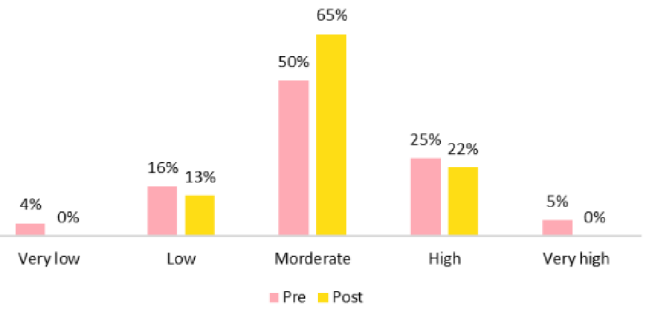


Figure 2: Pre and post webinar ratings of understanding of the impacts of menopause on physical and mental health and wellbeing

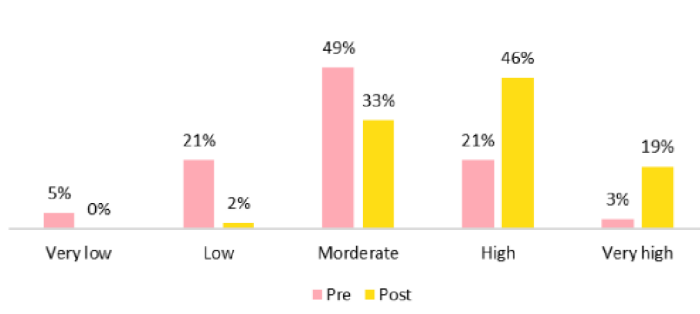


Figure 3: Pre and post webinar ratings of understanding of the impacts of menopause on sexual health and wellbeing

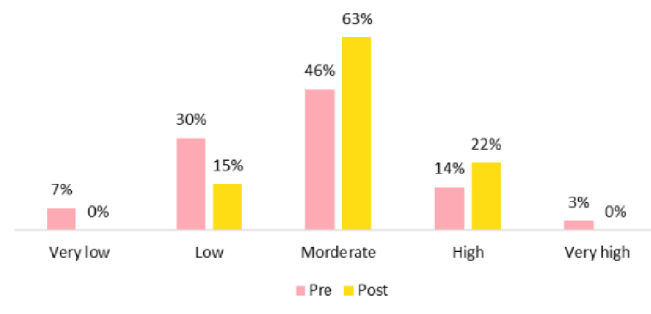


Figure 4: Pre and post webinar ratings of understanding of the impacts of menopause on women's employment and experiences in the workplace

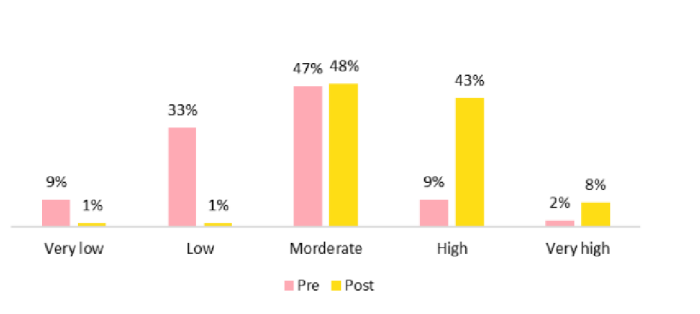


Figure 5: Pre and post webinar ratings of understanding of the management and self-management of menopausal symptoms, including different therapies available

Levels of understanding of the impacts of menopause on sexual health and desire was only measured in the pre webinar survey. However, the pattern of responses mirrors the pre-webinar responses for the other questions with most people feeling they have a moderate level of understanding.

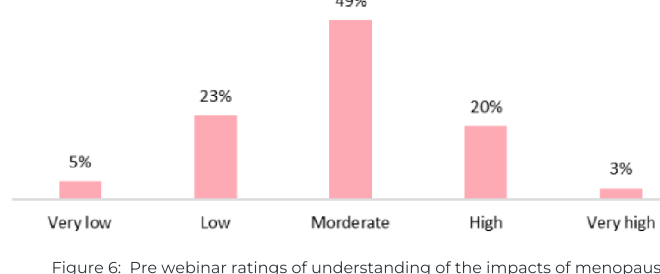


Figure 6: Pre webinar ratings of understanding of the impacts of menopause on sexual health and desire

### Significance of changes in knowledge and understanding

Analysis of the mean ratings of knowledge and understanding before and after the webinar are statistically significantly different and the effect sizes demonstrate that the increases in knowledge and understanding are moderate to high.

So, these findings indicate the people increased their knowledge and understanding of issues relating to menopause after attending the webinar. The information on the impacts of menopause on physical and mental health and wellbeing, and the impacts of menopause on women's employment and experiences in the workplace particularly resonated with people as the biggest increases in understanding were found for these two topics.

### Overall ratings of confidence

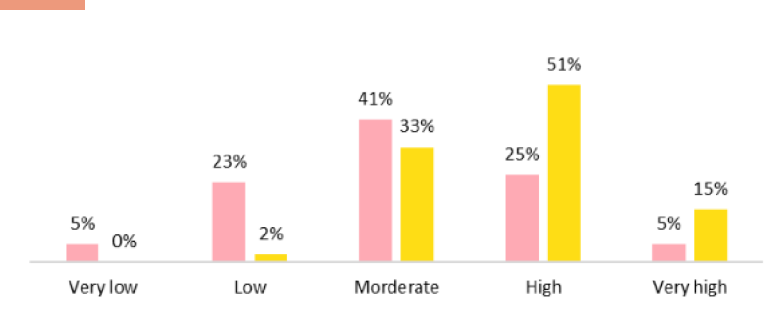


Figure 7: Pre and post webinar ratings of confidence to discuss menopause and its impacts with family, friends, health professionals and colleagues

Figure 7 shows that people typically felt more confident to discuss menopause and its impacts with family, friends, health professionals and colleagues after attending the webinar. Notable is the increase in the proportion of people who felt they had high confidence before and after the webinar and the decrease in the proportion of people who had low confidence.

### Significance of changes in confidence

Analysis of the mean ratings of confidence before and after the webinar was statistically significantly different and the effect size demonstrates that the increase, though small, was almost moderate. This is a great finding as it's hard to increase the confidence of people to discuss topics relating to SRH, particularly a topic such as menopause which is still relatively undiscussed and stigmatised.

### Key learnings and feedback

By far, the vast majority of people reported key learnings that related to learning the specifics of menopause. For example, many people discussed learning about the symptoms of menopause and for some, this was an enlightening experience that helped them to realise that they were not "going crazy" but rather, experiencing something quite normal. Some women pointed out that learning about the symptoms made them realise that they needed to stop feeling shame.

**Participant**

It is clear that more work is needed to ensure workplaces have policies and practices embedded to address menstruation and menopause.

**Participant**

There is still much work to be done in this sphere of gender equality.

**Participant**

Contraceptive, STI, gender identity and sexuality, pleasure, signs and symptoms.

**Participant**

The work that Mary has been doing over the years is amazing and something I didn't think existed. And having Jodie bringing in her personal experiences was very reassuring for me and my own struggles.

**Participant**

That I am not alone and change is coming.

**Participant**

Some of the symptoms were surprising and I am inspired by the push to remove shame from this time in life.

### Suggestions for future work

Most people discussed specific topics that could be targeted through education sessions. For example, several people discussed issues and education opportunities relating to the workplace.

- Raising more awareness of effects of menopause on women especially in the workplace.
- Advocacy for menstrual leave as part of gender equity plans.
- Sharing examples or case studies of workplaces implementing good practice. Policy examples/templates to share. A workshop for People and culture teams/leaders re good practice. Encouraging workplace wellbeing programs to include imitative/information session about menstruation and menopause and its potential impacts on work functioning. Encouraging council to consider include in strategies such as healthy aging action plans.
- Seminars in the workplace. Posters in the workplace pointing to support and also providing more awareness to the workplace.
- From personal experience GPs need a lot more education on menopause and the experiences of women.
- More forums and Q and A opportunities on this topic

### THE SOCIAL VALUE

WHISE is committed to demonstrating social impact in dollars using the Australian Social Values Bank, a rigorous, cost-effective approach to providing the social value of our work. Based on the survey data which track indicators on increased knowledge and confidence collected from attendees we illustrate the social value of this learning forum below. For further information on this tool – [www.asvb.com.au](http://www.asvb.com.au) or contact WHISE directly.

**Social Impact**  
Project: Hot topic - A public webinar on menopause and how to manage

**Net Social Benefit to Community**

**\$859,454**

\$7,203 per person social benefit for a cost of \$41 (adjusted for opportunity cost and optimism bias)

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**+120** Directly delivered to 120 participants with an estimated impact for 12 months

**176.58** Benefit Cost Ratio

Social Impact calculated through Australia Social Value Bank for Hot topic: A public webinar on menopause and how to manage.

The values used in this Cost Benefit Analysis have been derived using the Wellbeing Valuation method from data gathered through the HILDA (Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia) and Journeys Home surveys.

For further information contact Sexual & Reproductive Health Lead, Laura Riccardi [lr@whise.org.au](mailto:lr@whise.org.au)