
Menopause symptom care

#1 ranked opportunity to improve women's ob/gyn health

Evidence there is room for improvement

Where is the industry falling short today?

There is an untapped opportunity for stakeholders across the industry to improve women's menopause symptom care. With most women spending more than a third of their lives in peri- or post-menopause (perimenopause ranging between one and 14 years), many U.S. women would benefit from improved symptom care. We interviewed 16 healthcare leaders that shared opportunities for stakeholder groups to improve care for this condition with high chance of efficacy. And the opportunity to act isn't limited to providers. Health plans, digital health companies, pharmaceutical companies, and policymakers can also effect change in their spheres of influence.

- **84%** of midlife (age 40-65) U.S. women experienced symptoms and physical changes commonly associated with menopause, including vasomotor symptoms (hot flashes and night sweats), sleep disturbances, weight gain/slow metabolism, and reduced libido in 2022
- **46%** of Black women on average experience vasomotor symptoms, compared to 37% of white women, according to a 25-year cohort study
- **56%** of midlife U.S. women experiencing menopause symptoms did *not* discuss treatment options with their provider in 2022
- **65%** of midlife U.S. women said their healthcare provider did *not* talk to them about what to expect in menopause in 2022
- **7%** of postgraduate residents in family medicine, internal medicine, and obstetrics and gynecology at U.S. residency programs reported feeling adequately prepared to manage women experiencing menopause in 2017
- **15%** of large employers offered menopause benefits in 2023 or plan to in 2024
- **\$1.8 billion** is lost annually in the form of lost work productivity related to menopause symptoms experienced by U.S. women aged 45 to 60 years

The healthcare industry generally fails to enable women to effectively manage the menopause transition. Providers and health plans should educate women about peri- and post-menopause *before* they experience symptoms and physical changes. Providers should also engage women in shared decision-making on menopause treatment options such as hormone therapies, vaginal lubricants, and nonhormonal medications. Employers should offer women menopause-specific benefits and workplace flexibilities, including access to providers trained in menopause care and support groups. Employers should also cover a variety of menopause treatment options and allow temporary schedule adjustments and remote work options for those experiencing bothersome menopause-related symptoms.

Starting steps to enact change

No organization can solve women's health inequities on its own. But every organization has a role to play in dismantling inequities in women's care delivery. Below are some initial steps that organizations can take to improve menopause care for women.

Provider organizations

- **Facilitate provider education on menopause management.** Consider offering to pay exam fees for eligible clinicians on staff to attain the [Menopause Society Certified Practitioner \(MSCP\)](#) credential.
- **Encourage clinicians to diagnose menopause and educate patients on what to expect early.** Engaging women in their 30s and 40s allows them to better understand common symptoms and physical changes that occur during their menopause transition and beyond.
- **Adopt clinical decision support tools to improve adherence to clinical guidelines on menopause symptom management.** [UCLA](#) and [Mayo Clinic](#) have developed decision support tools that use advanced algorithms to enable evidence-based menopause symptom management.

Health plans

- **Diversify offerings with menopause solutions.** Menopause benefits are of growing interest to employers. Menopause solutions that cover therapies such as hormone therapy and nonhormonal medications (or remedies) can significantly improve [quality of life](#) and [productivity](#) for members experiencing symptoms.

Digital health companies

- **Create menopause solutions for health plans, providers, and employers.** Solutions can include personalized menopause care, clinical decision support tools, and digital communities for people experiencing menopause symptoms.

Case example

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan (2023)

- BCBSM provides health benefits to more than 4.7 million members residing in Michigan in addition to employees of Michigan-headquartered companies residing outside the state.
- BCBSM partnered with Maven Clinic to offer a digital care app to help members identify menopausal symptoms, explore treatment options, consult with experts, and connect with peers for communal support [starting July 1, 2023](#).
- Maven Clinic [reports](#) employers can expect between \$1,200 to \$2,100 in cost savings per member as a result of increased productivity associated with receiving their services.



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