

How to support menopause - a non medical intervention



Abstract

Millions of women are going through menopause. A large proportion of which are slipping under the radar as a medical diagnosis is not always practical. Primary care may not refer them to specialist care leading to patient dissatisfaction with their GP surgery, or their workplace doctor. Plans are in place in the UK to develop specialist menopause clinics in hospitals but the focus is on a diagnosed medical condition. The majority of women fall outside this remit. There are no current pathways open to address this. Could a non-medical intervention be considered? A non-medical intervention provides support through a downloadable programme of audio and video information in a safe and secure environment specifically aimed at this sector. As the name suggests, there is no medical diagnosis. A non-medical intervention could be a valuable pathway choice for patients in primary care with the added value of savings to the NHS through the reduction of face to face GP consultations and reduced prescriptions. Patients would be self-serving through an online service. It must be pointed out the fact that GP's have not received specialist menopause training at medical school creating a vacuum. Match this against the current number of women experiencing menopause and it is clear that women are being poorly served. A non-medical intervention is a viable pathway to address this dilemma. Other factors to consider are that the patient's way of life may be changing, she may have everyday practical problems, financial difficulties, or her relationship may be hitting a bad patch. All this can be covered in a non-medical intervention. During a UK study by the Kings Fund (3) patients were asked to reflect on their response to their medical appointment, many asked for more listening time. The many aspects of menopause that need to be brought to bear in order to understand and support women better at this critical time is not being met as GP time cannot provide a full service. Recommendations are made for an overview to be made available to the GP surgery menopause lead to refer patients to access the non-medical intervention.

Kathryn Colas

SimplyHormones, UK

Biography

Kathryn Colas has had a passion for raising awareness of menopause and to supporting women on a general, non-medical basis since experiencing her own debilitating symptoms, (including depression and wanting to end her own life), since 2008. Her passion has not been diluted and her service now includes offering advice to workplace personnel on symptom awareness and absenteeism management. Kathryn's expertise, knowledge and experience has been recognized by EMAS, RCOG and BMS as a speaker relaying her own personal journey, speaking with medical professionals with a view to broadening the medical outlook and encouraging a change in conversation. She has built a model that works across public and private sectors using a methodology that evaluates progress and measures success. She does all this through her business SimplyHormones. This approach can engage with all stakeholders enabling new support pathways to be created. In 2020, Kathryn published the first of her trilogy on menopause.

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