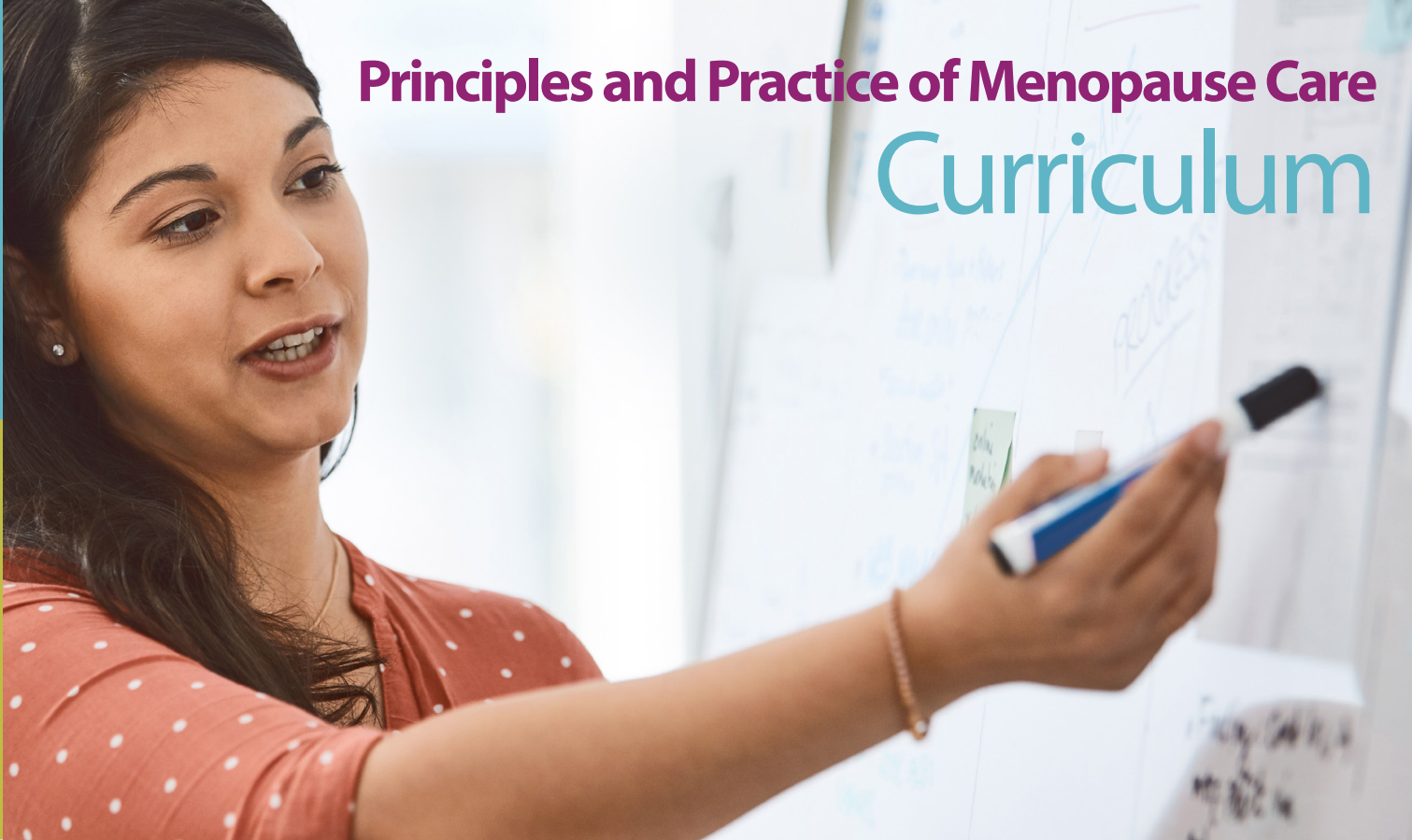


The specialist
authority for
menopause & post
reproductive health

A photograph of a woman with dark hair, wearing a red polka-dot shirt, pointing with a blue marker at a whiteboard. The whiteboard has some faint, illegible writing on it. The background is slightly blurred, showing what appears to be a classroom or meeting room setting.

Principles and Practice of Menopause Care Curriculum

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on behalf of the British Menopause Society
Medical Advisory Council

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Introduction

Principles and Practice of Menopause Care (PPMC) is a programme introduced in September 2020, based on the **BMS Vision for menopause care in the UK**.

www.thebms.org.uk/publications/bms-vision

What is the PPMC programme?

The PPMC programme comprises progressive theory and competency-based, practical training components in menopause care.

The programme is designed for registered healthcare professionals working in menopause care, including community, primary and secondary care. Trainees must be registered with a recognised professional body in the UK or Ireland.

www.thebms.org.uk/ppmc

Who should consider the PPMC programme?

BMS Management of the Menopause Certificate

This qualification is designed for registered healthcare professionals (doctors, nurses, pharmacists, physiotherapists, physician associates and paramedics). This comprehensive online menopause education should provide the HCP learner with everything that they need to treat 95% of patients, leaving only patients with complex issues to be referred for specialist care.

This is a complete online education package, there is no need to complete competency-based practical training with a BMS menopause trainer. Learners are not required to hold current BMS membership.

BMS Certificate in the Principles and Practice of Menopause Care

Registration for this qualification is now closed to **new** trainees. Trainees who are already registered should complete their competency-based training to achieve certification.

BMS Advanced Certificate in the Principles and Practice of Menopause Care

This qualification is designed for doctors, independent nurse prescribers and pharmacist independent prescribers who accept external referrals, manage complex cases and deliver specialist menopause care. This includes healthcare professionals working in hospital and community menopause services, GPs with an extended role in menopause (GPwER), and those leading menopause services in private healthcare organisations.

Trainees are required to complete both theoretical and competency-based practical training components to achieve this qualification and they must hold current BMS membership.

Please note: the BMS PPMC Advanced Certificate training is specifically designed for HCPs dealing with complex menopause cases, the 5% or so of patients who need specialist menopause care. There is no need to consider the BMS PPMC Advanced Certificate unless it is required for a specific job role.

What does the PPMC competency-based training comprise?

Following registration for the PPMC competency-based training, trainees will be provided with access to the PPMC e-portfolio.

Trainees must have completed a recognised theory component:

- **BMS Management of the Menopause Certificate**
- **BMS PPMC course** (to end of 2023)
- **RCOG/BMS Post Reproductive Health meeting** (to 1 June 2024)

Training can be undertaken in community, primary and/or secondary care under the supervision of an approved **BMS Menopause Trainer**. The **BMS Menopause Trainer** may delegate elements of the training to other healthcare professionals but will be responsible for ensuring that trainees achieve the required level of competency. A register of **BMS Menopause Trainers** is available from the BMS office.

Trainees registered for the **BMS Certificate in the Principles and Practice of Menopause Care** must demonstrate that they can act independently to offer specialist menopause care with access to support/advice for management of complex cases.

Trainees registered for the **BMS Advanced Certificate in the Principles and Practice of Menopause Care** must demonstrate that they can act independently to offer specialist menopause care, including management of complex cases. They should possess the knowledge and skills to lead and run a specialist menopause service.

Trainees will be expected to collect evidence in their e-portfolio that demonstrates they have met the requirements of the knowledge criteria and key skills for each module of the Curriculum.

Once the **BMS Menopause Trainer** has signed off the e-portfolio, trainees must email the BMS office to advise that the e-portfolio is complete.

Please contact the BMS office at ppmcsupport@bms-whc.org.uk.

PPMC Curriculum

Levels of supervision, competency and assessment of progress

Each of the five modules must be signed off using the five levels of supervision defined below.

Completion of the **BMS Certificate in the Principles and Practice of Menopause Care** requires achieving supervision at Level 4 in all modules of the Curriculum.

Completion of the **BMS Advanced Certificate in the Principles and Practice of Menopause Care** requires achieving supervision at Level 5 in all modules of the Curriculum. In addition, trainees completing the Advanced Certificate will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of the principles of setting up and running a menopause service and demonstrate the required leadership skills to do so as specified in Module 5 of the Curriculum.

Levels of supervision

Level	Descriptor
Level 1	Entrusted to observe
Level 2	Entrusted to act under direct supervision: (within sight of the supervisor)
Level 3	Entrusted to act under indirect supervision: (supervisor immediately available on site if needed to provide direct supervision)
Level 4	Entrusted to act independently to offer specialist menopause care with access to support / advice for management of complex cases
Level 5	Entrusted to act independently and to lead and run a specialist menopause service

Levels of competency

Certificate in the Principles and Practice of Menopause Care

Able to independently offer specialist menopause care but expected to access support/advice for management of complex cases. This is confirmed by achieving supervision Level 4 in all modules of the Curriculum

Advanced Certificate in the Principles and Practice of Menopause Care

Able to independently offer specialist menopause care including management of complex cases. Able to lead and run a specialist menopause service. This is confirmed by achieving supervision Level 5 in all modules of the Curriculum

It remains the responsibility of the clinician to practice within their own areas and levels of expertise and to seek further advice from other relevant specialists as required

All clinicians are expected to work within their expertise and knowledge to the core standards in respect of:

- Clinical governance
- Quality improvement
- Audit
- Ethical and legal issues
- Clinical pathways
- Local and national guidelines
- Sources of both written and web-based information
- Evidence based practice
- Unlicensed use of licensed medications in accordance with GMC/NMC guidelines.

Module 1: Assessment of women presenting with menopausal symptoms

Knowledge criteria

- The short-term and medium-term sequelae of the menopause:
 - Menstrual disorders, including heavy menstrual bleeding, premenstrual symptoms (PMS and PMDD)
 - Vasomotor symptoms, incidence and aetiology
 - Insomnia and sleep disturbances
 - Migraine
 - Mood disorders
 - Urogenital atrophy (effect on female urethra, bladder, vagina and pelvic floor muscles)
 - Cognitive symptoms including impaired memory and concentration
 - Sexual changes & sexual dysfunction
 - Lack of energy and fatigue
 - Connective tissue effects including skin and hair.

Key Skills

Takes a relevant medical and lifestyle history and assessment

Applies an understanding of the pathophysiology of the menopause and be able to explain this to the woman presenting with menopausal symptoms

Clinical Competency

- Takes appropriate history and assessment relating to menopause
- Formulates a differential diagnosis
- Provides relevant health and lifestyle advice
- Is able to address ethnic and trans-cultural issues
- Is able to assess the impact of symptoms and prioritise the woman's needs.

- Performs appropriate assessment with the minimum of distress to the patient
- Demonstrates an understanding of the principles of psychosexual evaluation
- Takes a sexual history including dyspareunia, vaginismus, psychosexual dynamics and libido
- Identifies and refers the women with psychosexual problems
- Understands the indications for carrying out a clinical examination determined by assessment of presenting symptoms
- Able to perform the relevant examination or if the practitioner does not feel able to conduct then appropriate referral should be made
- Able to discuss contraceptive requirements in peri-menopausal and menopausal women and contraceptive options in women on HRT.

Evidence to inform decision

- Mini-CEX
- CbD
- Reflective practice
- Log of cases
- Observation of consultations
- Management of consultations
- Team Observation forms
- IMPART e-learning module

Module 2: Understanding the benefits and risks of HRT and alternative therapies

Knowledge criteria

- The place of estrogen, progestogen, and testosterone in managing menopausal symptoms
- The routes of delivery for medication and circumstances when these are indicated
- Types of HRT available and different combinations
- Side effects associated with estrogen, progestogen and testosterone intake
- Contraindications, risks and adverse effects of different preparations
- The implications and management options, and the role of conventional and complementary therapies, for the woman with:
 - breast cancer
 - gynaecological malignancy, e.g. ovarian, endometrial and cervical
 - endometriosis
 - fibroids
 - cardiovascular disease
 - neurological disease, e.g. migraine, epilepsy, Parkinson's disease, Alzheimer's disease, multiple sclerosis
 - gastrointestinal disease, e.g. Crohn's diseases, disorders of the gall bladder and liver, lactose intolerance
 - endocrine, e.g. diabetes and thyroid disease
 - autoimmune disease, e.g. rheumatoid arthritis, SLE
 - HIV
- The importance of lifestyle and environment on risk
- Bone physiology including genetics, peak bone mass, and contributing factors (environment, exercise, anorexia/bulimia)
- Methodology for investigating and screening bone density, including DEXA and ultrasound densitometry
- Bone markers and their relevance
- Fracture risk assessment tools (e.g. FRAX, QFracture, Garvan)
- The role and place of HRT and pharmaceutical alternatives, e.g. bisphosphonates, SERMs
- The predisposing factors for cardiovascular risk, e.g. obesity, diabetes, blood pressure, thrombotic risk
- The effect of estrogen on lipid profile, coagulation factors, insulin sensitivity and weight distribution
- Epidemiological studies and distinction between primary and secondary prevention.
- Understanding of basic lipid profile and cardiovascular risk markers
- Understanding of the indications for referral for cognitive assessment in menopausal patients
- Effects of estrogen on the central nervous system
- Estrogen receptor sites and neurotransmitters
- Effects on cerebral blood flow
- Different types of dementia
- Non-modifiable and lifestyle risk factors for breast cancer.
- The role of HRT in women with benign breast conditions and the different levels of risk in these groups
- Principles of the NHS breast screening programme and the indications for imaging in symptomatic women
- The referral guidelines for women with breast symptoms and diagnostic triple assessment
- Principles of adjuvant endocrine therapy for breast cancer and chemoprevention in women at high risk of breast cancer in order to advise patients appropriately
- The risks of treatment and non-treatment.



Key Skills

Able to evaluate the need for and prescribe the appropriate medical therapy and route of delivery

Aware of alternative treatments

Able to undertake clinical assessment of osteoporosis risk and make appropriate recommendations

Able to risk assess and advise women with personal and/or familial cardiovascular risk factors

Able to undertake clinical assessment of breast cancer risk

Clinical Competency

- Creates an individual benefit (e.g. osteoporosis and cardiovascular) / risk (e.g. breast, VTE, stroke endometrial) ratio for HRT based on personal and family risk profile and patient choice and understands how this is affected by route of delivery
- Counsels a woman with specific pre-existing medical conditions on the management of the menopause.
- Demonstrates familiarity with the long-term effects of HRT on bone health
- Is able to advise on the long-term effects of HRT on the cardiovascular system, cognitive function and dementia, and on the breast
- Discusses changes in memory and cognitive function in menopausal women and the potential benefits of HRT.

- Counsels on the efficacy and safety of pharmacological alternatives for managing menopausal symptoms.
- Counsels on the efficacy of cognitive behavioural therapy for managing menopausal symptoms.
- Counsels on the efficacy and safety of complementary therapies for managing menopausal symptoms.

- Correctly identifies patients with risk factors for osteoporosis
- Discusses lifestyle and therapeutic interventions with women at risk of osteoporosis and those with established disease
- Applies knowledge of the role of calcium and vitamin D supplementations in menopausal women at risk of osteoporosis
- Recommends appropriate investigations, e.g. DEXA
- Interprets bone density assessment findings
- Conveys the findings to the patients to enhance understanding without unnecessary alarm
- Liaises with osteoporosis/radiologist specialist.

- Discusses cardiovascular benefits and risks of HRT
- Discusses risk of VTE and stroke with HRT and the effect of different routes of estradiol administration and type of progestogen
- Makes appropriate recommendations regarding therapeutic choices in patients with pre-existing cardiovascular disease
- Liaises with haematology specialist where appropriate.

- Identifies and refers women with breast problems/cancer risk.
- Offers management options for menopause symptoms/ low bone density in women with previous breast cancer and those at an increased risk due to a family history, including those who have undergone prophylactic risk-reducing surgery, and women using chemoprevention.

Evidence to inform decision

- Mini-CEX
- CBD
- Reflective practice
- Team Observation forms
- IMPART e-learning module

Module 3: Diagnosis and management of women with premature ovarian insufficiency (POI)

Knowledge criteria

- The physiology, epidemiology and demography of the climacteric to include:
 - Endocrine changes
 - Aetiology, diagnosis and investigation of ovarian insufficiency
 - Primary and secondary ovarian failure & surgical menopause
- The role of AMH in assessing ovarian reserve and its potential role in the assessment of women with POI where the diagnosis is inconclusive
- Genetics of the menopause and the role of genetic screening and auto-antibody screening in women with POI
- The differences between HRT, COC as well as the difference between COC containing ethinyl estradiol and COC preparations containing estradiol
- The fertility implications of POI and the options available to women with POI seeking a pregnancy including the role of egg donation
- The role, pros and cons of fertility preservation and oocyte freezing in women at risk of POI
- The role of HRT in treating low bone density
- The limitations and reservation regarding the use of bisphosphonates in women with POI.

Key Skills

Able to diagnose POI

Able to discuss the short-term and long-term sequelae of POI and its management

Able to discuss management of low bone density in women with POI

Clinical Competency

- Applies an understanding of the physiological changes in FSH levels, inter-cyclical variations and the role of FSH in the diagnosis of POI
- Is able to diagnose POI and discusses differential diagnosis.

- Counsels on the impact of POI on bone, cardiovascular and cognitive health and is able to discuss the role of HRT / combined hormonal contraception (COC) in minimising the long-term health sequelae associated with POI
- Discusses the role of HRT for symptom management.
- Is able to demonstrate understanding of contraceptive needs/options in women with POI.
- Able to discuss the fertility implications of POI and the options available to women with POI seeking a pregnancy.

- Screens for bone density, e.g. DEXA and bone turnaround markers and understands their relevance.
- Discusses lifestyle modifications, the role of weight-bearing exercise, calcium and Vitamin D supplementations.

Evidence to inform decision

- Mini-CEX
- CBD
- Reflective practice
- Team Observation forms
- IMPART e-learning module

Module 4: Assessment and management of abnormal bleeding in peri- and post-menopausal women and unscheduled bleeding in women on HRT

Knowledge criteria

- The difference between sequential and continuous combined HRT regimens and the bleeding patterns expected with both
- The causes of abnormal bleeding in peri-menopausal and post-menopausal women and those of unscheduled bleeding in women on HRT, and the principles of assessment in such cases
- The management options for women with unscheduled bleeding on HRT including modifications of their progestogen intake including changing dose, duration of intake or the progestogen preparation used within the HRT regimen.

Key Skills

Able to recognise and investigate abnormal endometrial bleeding

Clinical Competency

- Assesses bleeding pattern and recognises abnormal bleeding.
- Interprets ultrasound and endometrial histology results
- Chooses appropriate HRT regimen according to bleeding pattern and uterine status
- Modifies HRT regimen if bleeding or progestogenic side effects
- Discusses the risk of endometrial cancer with HRT.

Evidence to inform decision

- Mini-CEX
- CBD
- Reflective practice
- Team Observation forms
- IMPART e-learning module

Module 5: Provision of menopause care

Knowledge criteria

- Understands principles of clinical governance in the domains of:
 - Clinical effectiveness
 - Patient safety
 - Patient experience
- Understands formulary principles and criteria for off licence prescribing
- Understands the links with primary and secondary care
- Understands ethical issues related to clinical decision making and legal responsibilities
- Understands definition and conduct of audit e.g. benchmarking, audit cycle, closing the loop.

Key Skills

Understanding of clinical governance, service and formulary principles

Clinical Competency

- Demonstrate an understanding of clinical governance principles including audit and guidelines and their application in clinical practice
- Is aware of available sources of both written and web-based information
- Demonstrates an understanding of the criteria proposed by the GMC, NMC and MHRA on prescribing an unlicensed medicine or using medicines outwith their product licence.

In addition, trainees completing the Advanced Certificate in the Principles and Practice of Menopause Care will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of the principles of setting up and running a menopause service and demonstrate the required leadership skills to do so. This will require achieving the following:

Knowledge criteria

- To provide clinical leadership with respect to clinical governance in the domains of:
 - Clinical effectiveness
 - Patient safety
 - Patient experience
- Understands principles of setting up and maintaining a formulary
- Understands organisational structure of CCGs/Trusts (or the equivalent local management structures) and funding issues
- Understands the principles of data analysis and collection related to outcomes within the local clinical setting
- Demonstrates leadership skills required in clinical organisation.

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Key Skills	Clinical Competency
Clinical governance and service development requirements	• Demonstrates involvement in quality improvement. • Carry out an audit project • Understands the role of management teams and CCGs (or the equivalent local management structures) • Demonstrates understanding of service financial considerations • Understands the principles of data analysis and collection related to outcomes within the local clinical setting • Establishes and/or enhances local clinical pathways.
Formulary and prescribing aspects	• Demonstrates an understanding of relevant formulary processes including the principles of applying to introduce a new medication on the local formulary.
Evidence to inform decision	
• Mini-CEX • CBD • Reflective practice • Team Observation forms	Advanced Certificate in the Principles and Practice of Menopause Care: • Perform audit/quality improvement project • Develops/understands the principles of developing local clinical pathways