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“It was interesting hear others experience and advice from the doctor. Some questions or comments I wouldn’t think about, so it was beneficial. There was enough time for everyone to get their say.”

The Challenge

The Orpington PCN team decided to focus on menopause as they have a high demand for menopause appointments. They also have a menopause specialist GP in their PCN. Estates and space for hosting groups was limited, so they wanted wanted to host group clinics exclusively online.

Our Group Clinic Design

The team delivers 90-minute group clinics during extended hours (17.00 - 18.30) on weekday evenings for people with symptoms of menopause. When a patient presents to any of the 9 GP Surgeries at Orpington PCN with menopause symptoms, or their menopause-related medication needs to be adjusted, they are triaged by the practice and then booked into the next available group clinic. 5-7 people attend. The Senior Care Coordinator, Gwen, is the Group Clinic Coordinator. She calls patients before the clinic to explain the benefits and what will happen. Patients complete a survey in advance that records their blood pressure, BMI, and a menopause symptom checker. Jo, Lead Care Coordinator, facilitates the live group clinic. Dr. Ravi, the Menopause Clinician, joins at the start and listens in the background as participants, with Jo’s help, go through the Results and Topic board. Then she joins to lead the group discussion and conduct 1-1s. The team spends 30 minutes after each group clinic on review and improvement planning.

The team is looking at rolling out to other areas such as cancer, as they see that peer support is crucial to their patients.

Topic Board

Fatigue/brain fog/Poor sleep	Mood & mental health
Bleeding	HRT risks and benefits Testosterone
Aches and pains	Lost sex drive
Weight gain	Hot flushes/night sweats



What Changed & Improved?

Efficiency and Access

- On average, approximately 4 clinical appointments per week are freed up.
- Group clinics run to time and provide space to explain each topic thoroughly. Previously, 10 minute 1-1 appointments were squeezed in, rushed and often ran over.
- Group clinics delivered at a PCN level enable patients who may not have had access to expert menopause support in their own surgery to easily access it.
- The PCN group clinic has reduced the need for PCN member practices to refer patients to Secondary Care.

Clinical Impact

- Because there is more time, patients have greater clarity and a deeper understanding of their symptoms and make better informed decisions about treatment.
- Improved clinical outcomes – one patient had a blood pressure of 133/91 in their first group clinic review which went down to 128/76 in their second group clinic review. Their BMI also decreased from 35 to 33.
- So far, approximately 31 patients have taken up HRT following attending a group clinic.

Psycho Social Impact

- Bringing people together who are living with similar symptoms is powerful. Peers provide positive words of encouragement, and everyone sees that there is a light at the end of the tunnel, because others have been there, and they understand. The group clinic generates hope.
- People describe an improvement in their personal relationships because of attending a menopause group clinic and having a care plan to follow.

Experience of Care

- The patient experience is fulfilling, validating, and they feel listened to
- Jo, Group Clinic Facilitator finds it really fulfilling. It has been life-changing to be involved in direct patient care from her perspective as an administrator and so worthwhile.
- Dr Ravi says that it motivates her to learn more about menopause. It is very satisfying and fulfilling because the team is helping patients in a way that we wouldn’t normally be able to. And one person’s positive attitude can really help all of the others.

“We are supporting better outcomes for the patients and for the clinic” Dr. Ravi - Lead GP