

Please note that this document has been anonymised by the use of pseudonyms to protect the identity of those concerned

Safer Lincolnshire Partnership Learning Briefing in respect of Carol Menopause Awareness

1. Carol

Carol was a white British woman in her mid-fifties when she died by suicide. Carol had been a successful and popular hairdresser in her local community. Over the years, Carol had reported controlling behaviour from her husband. Carol's mental health declined due to ongoing chronic pain which she had been living with for many years.

The Domestic Abuse Related Death Review pertaining to Carol's death will be available upon publication on the Lincolnshire County Council website [here](#). There is also a general learning briefing available to professionals, which highlights the main areas of learning identified within the review [available here](#).

This short briefing is specific to the following learning identified in the review: *All agencies should consider including a question about menopause within their needs assessments, and practitioners should be empowered to ask about menopause and know where to refer people presenting with menopausal symptoms and issues.*

Menopause, the final menstrual period, is preceded by many years of 'menopausal transition' associated with marked biological and hormonal changes which may have a negative effect on mental well-being.¹ These hormonal changes can lead to issues with sleep, cognitive decline, and depressive symptoms.

For the last few years of her life, Carol was also living with symptoms of menopause, which exacerbated - and were exacerbated by - her poor mental health, chronic pain, and experiences of coercive control. Carol met with a menopause specialist, who was not sure whether her symptoms were attributed to the menopause, or the chronic pain she was experiencing; whilst some of the services who were supporting Carol were unaware of her menopausal symptoms.

If agencies had asked about the menopause, this would have allowed a more holistic understanding of Carol's needs, and the risks they posed when these needs interconnected and exacerbated one another.

In October 2025, the UK Government announced that menopause would be included in routine NHS Health Checks for the first time.² NHS Health Checks are offered to individuals between 40 and 74 years of age, who do not have any pre-existing conditions. By making menopause part of the health checks, awareness will be raised of symptoms and women may feel confident in seeking help for these symptoms.

The following table provides general awareness for all agencies, to support enquiry around menopause and menopausal symptoms. These resources can be accessed to build confidence in professionals asking about menopause, to normalise the conversations about what is a routine health issue, and to recognise how menopause

¹ Riecher-Rössler, A. (2020). Menopause and mental health. In P. S. Chandra, H. Herrman, J. Fisher, & A. Riecher-Rössler (Eds.), *Mental health and illness of women* (pp. 147–173)

² [Major NHS update brings menopause into routine health checks - GOV.UK](#)

can affect mental state, sleep, cognition, emotional regulation, and in turn possibly the ability for women to engage with services.

Useful Resources and Services
<p>Signposting to the individual's GP Practice should be the first option. Primary Care can assess a patient's symptoms, discuss and prescribe Hormone Replacement Therapy, undertake blood tests, offer mental health support, and refer to NHS specialist menopause services – which are clinics with advanced, accredited expertise in menopause care supporting individuals who have complex menopause symptoms.</p>
<p><u>Peri-Meri Menopause Moments</u> A Lincolnshire-wide menopause support programme – delivered both online and face-to-face – offering support around symptoms, medication, mental health, diet and exercise. How Are You Lincolnshire Peri Meri Menopause Moments</p>
<p>“Conversations about menopause” – The Menopause Charity Conversations about menopause - The Menopause Charity</p>
<p>“Menopause Help and Support” – NHS Menopause - Help and support - NHS</p>
<p>“The Menopause Exchange” – Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists Home - The Menopause Exchange</p>