

Petitioner submission of 4 October 2023

PE2012/E: Remove need for follicle-stimulating hormone (FSH) blood tests before prescribing Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT)

Since my last submission of evidence, I have received the following update from Person A.

Person A (43) – Due to constantly being let down by my GP, I saw no option but to approach a private clinic. I knew this would cost a substantial amount, but both my physical and mental health depended on getting the correct treatment. After paying just over £200 for a consultation, I was prescribed HRT based solely on my symptoms. The menopause specialist was disgusted that I had been left so long without it. The prescription cost £118 and my follow up appointment was included in the cost of my initial appointment. The clinic wrote to my surgery with my treatment plan and asked them to take over the care. I made the appointment with my GP, and I was faced with the same issues as before, “I still think you are too young”, “This goes against our guidelines”, “What about the blood test?” “Are you sure it isn’t just anxiety?” “If your blood pressure is high, we can’t give you HRT as it could lead to a stroke”. Their information is outdated as transdermal HRT does not carry an increased risk of stroke, and is safe for those with high blood pressure to take. They gave me one month of HRT and said I can only get it after this if I pass their tests, and they are reluctant to believe what the menopause clinic are saying.

Person A is just one example of what women are up against when attending their doctor for menopause treatment and support. Outdated information, following local instead of national guidance, reliance on an unreliable blood test, age discrimination, and sheer ignorance are stopping women from getting the help that they need. Many surgeries do not have anyone who is trained and specialises in menopause. Training is optional when it should be mandatory. Change is needed urgently.

Further information regarding transdermal HRT safety is available from the British Menopause Society in this guide: <https://thebms.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/HRT-Guide-160516.pdf>

Thank you for considering the petition and the evidence provided.