

UNDERSTANDING AND EMBRACING (PERI) MENOPAUSE - COMMUNITY EDUCATION SESSIONS

Rational

Menopause and perimenopause are important wellbeing issues for many women. These life stages can cause physical, emotional and psychological symptoms, including sleep disturbances, anxiety, mood changes, fatigue and reduced concentration, which may impact quality of life, relationships, community participation and workforce engagement.

For women living in rural and regional communities, barriers such as limited access to specialised healthcare services, geographic isolation and a lack of reliable information can make navigating menopause more challenging. Many women report feeling unprepared for the changes they experience and may delay seeking help due to stigma, misconceptions or a belief that symptoms must simply be endured.

These community education sessions were delivered as part of Mallee Community Wellbeing Week to address identified information and support needs, improve access to trusted health information and create opportunities for discussion around menopause and perimenopause. Sessions also contributed to broader community wellbeing by promoting more open and supportive conversations about women's health.

Objectives

The objective of these sessions was to increase community understanding of menopause and perimenopause and their impacts on women's physical, emotional and social wellbeing. Through expert-led education delivered by Nurse Practitioner Nicole Strom, participants were provided with evidence-based information about hormonal changes, common symptoms, treatment options and strategies to support wellbeing during this life stage.

Sessions aimed to strengthen health literacy, increase confidence in seeking information and support, and empower women, their families and support networks to make informed decisions and better navigate the menopause journey.



Nicole Strom - nPower Health

What We Did

To meet the project objectives of improving community wellbeing awareness, engagement, and access to support, extensive planning and partnership development were undertaken over a six-month period as part of Mallee Community Wellbeing Week. Collaboration with key local stakeholders enabled identification of community wellbeing needs and priorities, informed by previous community feedback and local consultation processes. Findings from the previous year's wellbeing event highlighted a need to focus specifically on women's wellbeing, which informed the selection of session topics and speakers.

At A Glance

- Five organisations collaborated to deliver the initiative
- 44 community members attended free education sessions
- 93% reported improved knowledge of menopause and support services
- 100% felt safe and included
- Mallee Community Wellbeing Week reached an estimated 800 people

Partnerships were established with Mildura Rural City Council (MRCC), The Mental Health and Wellbeing Local, Northern Mallee Leaders, Mallee Track Health & Community Services and other wellbeing organisations to deliver a coordinated week of community wellbeing activities between 17–22 May. Expert speaker Nicole Strom was engaged following strong community interest and positive feedback received at a previous local event.

MRCC supported delivery through venue provision, catering, promotion, and in-kind contributions, aligning activities with the objectives of the 2025–2029 Municipal Community Health and Wellbeing Plan. A communications campaign funded by the MRCC Social Inclusion Action Group promoted participation across the region. To further support community members, limited one-on-one consultations with a certified practitioner were offered. Evaluation was undertaken through written and QR code surveys, with findings compiled by MRCC to inform future wellbeing initiatives.

Outcomes

- **Improved Knowledge and Awareness -** Increased understanding of menopause and perimenopause, with 93% of respondents reporting improved knowledge and awareness of support services.
- **Safe and Inclusive Environment -** Created a welcoming space where 100% of respondents felt safe, included, and comfortable to participate.
- **Stronger Community Connections -** Reduced isolation and strengthened peer support through shared experiences, discussion, and connection.
- **Increased Help-Seeking -** Encouraged proactive health action, with 40 symptom surveys completed and multiple support enquiries made.
- **Demonstrated Community Demand -** Engaged 44 participants and contributed to the wider success of Mallee Community Wellbeing Week, which reached an estimated 800 people.

Lessons learned

- **Strong Partnerships Drive Success**
Collaborative planning and delivery between partners strengthened project reach, coordination, and community impact.
- **Aligning with Existing Events Boosts Reach**
Integrating activities into broader community initiatives increased visibility, attendance, and overall engagement.
- **Earlier and Broader Promotion is Needed**
Longer lead times and expanded digital promotion could further increase awareness and participation.
- **Sustainable Resources Extend Impact**
Recording sessions would provide ongoing access to information and support beyond the event.
- **High Demand for Personalised Support**
Strong interest in follow-up consultations exceeded available capacity, highlighting the value of personalised support and the need for increased availability of these opportunities.



Your Wellbeing Matters: Understanding and Embracing (Peri) Menopause

Next Steps

The Mallee Community Wellbeing Week (MCWW) will continue as an annual collaborative event between LMPHU, MRCC and other key partners.



June 2026