



Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committees on Community Affairs
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

16 February 2024

RE: Issues related to menopause and perimenopause

Women in Super has prepared this submission in response to the Senate Community Affairs References Committee's inquiry into the issues related to menopause and perimenopause, with particular reference to the economic consequences of menopause and perimenopause, including but not limited to, reduced workforce participation, productivity, and retirement planning.

WOMEN IN SUPER

Women in Super (WIS) is a national advocacy and networking group for women employed in the superannuation and wider financial services industries. WIS advocates to improve women's retirement outcomes and access to superannuation.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Provide funding to the Office for Women to measure and report on the extent to which menopausal symptoms impact women's employment, super balances, and retirement outcomes.

OVERVIEW

As outlined in the Australian Institute of Superannuation Trustees' 2023-24 Pre-Budget Submission,¹ based on data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics, as of June 2022, there are 839,365 women in the 50-54 age bracket.² Of these, 694,143, or 83%, were actively involved in the workforce in some capacity by November 2022.³ According to the Government's own estimates, 28% of menopausal women are expected to experience symptoms significant enough to affect their engagement in the workforce.⁴ When considering these figures collectively, it suggests that 194,360 women in the 50-54

¹ Australian Institute of Superannuation Trustees, 2023. [2023-2024 Pre-Budget Submission to the Assistant Treasurer and Minister for Financial Services.](#)

² Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2023. [Statistics about the population and components of change \(births, deaths, migration\) for Australia and its states and territories.](#)

³ Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2023. [Detailed monthly and quarterly Labour Force Survey data, including hours, regions, families, job search, job duration, casual, industry and occupation.](#)

⁴ Federal Government, 2022. [Women's Budget Statement.](#)



age range are currently facing disruptions in their professional lives due to menopausal symptoms. This could result in a potential annual economic loss of \$15.2 billion in earnings and superannuation.

This equates to a cumulative deficit of over \$112.2 billion in lost earnings due to premature retirement (occurring 7.4 years earlier) caused by a natural biological process that requires the need for improved health, social, and workplace support.

WIS strongly urges the Government to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the health and economic impacts of menopause on women's workplace participation and retirement decisions.

CONTACT

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Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'JK', is positioned above the contact information for Jo Kowalczyk.

JO KOWALCZYK

Chief Executive Officer

Women in Super

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