



CAROLYN HARRIS MP
STANDING UP FOR SWANSEA EAST



February 2023 Monthly Update

Menopause Revolution

February was a massive month for my campaign for better support, treatment and awareness of the menopause.

500 days on from my Private Members Bill, the Government finally announced they will implement the annual Pre-Payment Certificate (PPC) for HRT on April 1st. In Wales, HRT along with other prescriptions are of course free, thanks to our Welsh Labour Government. However, in England, HRT is costing women a fortune as women chop and change products due to shortages. The PPC is a single annual charge of £18.70 for a year's supply that can be collected flexibly and will save women hundreds.

Thousands of women up and down the country had this day ear marked as a day of celebration for women's health. But this celebration was spoilt by the Government choosing to make the announcement the day after hundreds of menopausal women forced the Minister responsible for women's health to admit that one of the most popular HRT products, utrogestan, was now in short supply.

Thanks to new research, we know that GP practices in the least deprived areas spend 3x the amount on HRT per patient compared to those practices in the most deprived areas. Bearing this in mind and considering that the Government are now bringing legislation in to make HRT more accessible than ever with the PPC, women in deprived areas across England and Wales are more fearful than ever that due to the postcode lottery of women's health and HRT shortages intensifying again, they may face further months of anxiety and stress sourcing vital treatment.

Former DCMS Minister supports further Gambling regulation

During a session of the Home Affairs Select Committee, former Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Tech and the Digital Economy, Chris Philp MP, showed encouraging signs of support for greater regulation of the gambling industry ahead of the long-awaited White Paper.

WOMEN'S HEALTH
Let's take action

FROM 1 APRIL

WOMEN IN ENGLAND WILL ONLY HAVE TO PAY THE COST OF TWO SINGLE PRESCRIPTIONS FOR HRT MEDICINES OVER 12 MONTHS,

REDUCING THE COST TO LESS THAN £20 A YEAR

Patients will need to apply for a HRT prescription pre-payment certificate from 1 APRIL 2023





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The current Minister for Crime, Policing and Fire told me that vested interests within the Betting and Gaming Council ‘would tell me “if you regulate gambling more you will drive it underground” and you and I didn’t agree with that, did we? We thought you should regulate it more toughly in order to protect vulnerable people’.

I and fellow members of the Gambling Related Harm APPG were encouraged by Minister Philp’s comments and we hope that he will continue to pressure Government to publish the White Paper on Gambling Related Harm in full.

Visits outside Westminster

On a lighter note, I was fortunate enough to go on lots of lovely visits this month. I spoke at a conference, hosted by Standard Chartered and the Financial Services and Skills Commission, to over 100 senior industry leaders from across the UK's Financial Services sector. I told them just how important it is to be considerate of what some women will go through during menopause and that if they needed any guidance then look no further than what we have put on in Swansea!

I took that message all the way home with me, along with the MenoVest, as I visited Neath Port Talbot Council to talk about the menopause. It was a pleasure to discuss with councillors and staff what more they could be doing to support employees and what initiatives they could run to raise awareness of the menopause in Neath Port Talbot. I always find the MenoVest a really powerful tool in getting men to understand what it can be like for women. It’s not often you get a politician lost for words but Councillor Jeremy Hurley sure understood what a hot flush felt like after trying the MenoVest!

The pick of the bunch this month was meeting the lovely ladies of Birchgrove’s Women Institute. It was privilege to talk about what it is like to campaign for and represent your hometown as a woman in politics. They meet every third Thursday at Birchgrove RFC should you wish to join them.

