

FAMILYWELL ACADEMY • CURRICULUM

Menopause Behavioral Health Physician & Practitioner Certificate

MBH-PC • A continuing education certificate course for women's health clinicians

~4 hours total

CMEs • CE • CEUs

6 modules

Online, self-paced



ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Built for clinicians who care for women in midlife

The MBH-PC is a continuing education certificate course designed for physicians, nurse practitioners, midwives, and pharmacists who care for perimenopausal and menopausal patients.

The course takes approximately 4 hours in total and includes CMEs, CE, and CEUs. It is delivered on the FamilyWell Academy platform. On completion, you receive a certificate of completion.

WHO IT'S FOR

Audience

OB/GYN physicians and residents

Psychiatrists

Women's and family health clinicians (NPs, CNMs, and others with clinical prescribing scope)

Primary care physicians and internists managing perimenopausal patients

Pharmacists and pharmacy assistants who support medication management

Any clinician seeking CME credit in menopause mental health

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon completing the MBH-PC, you will be able to:

- 1 Explain the physiology of the menopause transition and its contribution to mood, sleep, and cognitive disruption.
- 2 Identify and differentiate mood disorders in perimenopause and menopause, including Major Depressive Disorder (MDD), anxiety, and bipolar disorder.
- 3 Apply a severity-based framework, spanning subclinical depressive symptoms to a Major Depressive Episode (MDE), to characterize depressive symptoms across the menopause transition and guide individualized treatment selection.
- 4 Select and sequence validated screening tools to identify and triage mood disorders in peri/menopausal patients.
- 5 Evaluate and individualize pharmacologic and behavioral treatment decisions, including antidepressants and menopause hormone therapy, and integrate them into a holistic, patient-centered care plan.
- 6 Implement a structured safety protocol for suicidality, including same-visit risk assessment, documentation, and appropriate escalation procedures.
- 7 Apply a team-based and integrated behavioral health (IBH) framework to determine the appropriate level of care for peri/menopausal mood disorders.

CURRICULUM AT A GLANCE

Six modules, ~4 hours

Total course time is approximately 4 hours, including the final assessment.

1	Introduction	Jessica Gaulton, MD, MPH	Clinical gap, workforce data, FamilyWell framework
2	Physiology of Menopause & Perimenopause	Melissa Sherman, MD	STRAW+10, HPO axis, hormone trajectories, VMS, sleep & cognition
3	Mood Disorders in Perimenopause & Menopause	Lindsay Lebin, MD	Epidemiology, symptom clustering, depressive symptom severity spectrum, anxiety, bipolar disorder
4	Antidepressants in Peri/Menopause	Lindsay Lebin, MD	Prescribing indications, dual-purpose agents, MDQ gate, CBT-I, individualized selection
5	Menopause Hormone Therapy and Nonhormonal Options	Melissa Sherman, MD	MHT indications, evidence for mood, layered care model
6	Screening Guidelines & Clinical Protocols	Jessica Gaulton, MD, MPH	PHQ/GAD/MRS/MDQ workflows, safety protocol, level-of-care framework, case vignettes, CME assessment

MODULE DETAIL

What each module covers

MODULE 1 · JESSICA GAULTON, MD, MPH

Introduction

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Describe the current clinical training gap in menopause mental health and its impact on patient care.
- Identify the well-woman visit as a key opportunity for mood screening and early intervention.
- Explain FamilyWell's two-part clinical framework: Screening Guidelines (Part 1) and MBH-PC (Part 2).

Physiology of Menopause & Perimenopause

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Define the stages of reproductive aging using the STRAW+10 framework.
- Explain hypothalamic-pituitary-ovarian (HPO) axis changes contributing to mood changes across the menopause transition.
- Describe the hormonal mechanisms underlying VMS, sleep disruption, mood, and cognitive symptoms.
- Articulate how hormonal shifts contribute to depressive symptoms across the full severity spectrum, from subclinical presentations to a Major Depressive Episode.

Mood Disorders in Perimenopause & Menopause

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Cite the epidemiological risk of new-onset and recurrent depression during the menopause transition.
- Identify PMDD, perinatal depression, and prior MDD as the strongest predictors of perimenopausal mood disorders.
- Apply a severity-based framework, grounded in DSM-5-TR criteria for a Major Depressive Episode, to characterize depressive symptoms from subclinical presentations to mild, moderate, and severe MDE.
- Recognize anxiety as a co-dominant presentation requiring concurrent screening.
- Identify clinical indicators of bipolar disorder in midlife women and explain the risk of undetected diagnosis prior to antidepressant initiation.

Antidepressants in Peri/Menopause

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- State the indications for antidepressant therapy in peri/menopausal mood disorders.
- Apply principles of individualized agent selection among evidence-based dual-purpose options (for example, escitalopram, venlafaxine, paroxetine) based on symptom profile, prior treatment response, and patient preference.
- Apply the MDQ as a mandatory screening step before initiating any SSRI or SNRI.
- Identify the CYP2D6 interaction risk with paroxetine and fluoxetine in tamoxifen users.
- Select and sequence evidence-based behavioral interventions, including CBT-I, CBT-Meno, and psychodynamic approaches, matched to the patient's predominant symptom burden.

Menopause Hormone Therapy and Nonhormonal Options

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- State appropriate indications for MHT initiation, including VMS and sleep disruption.
- Explain MHT dosing options based on route of administration and metabolic risk profile.
- Summarize the evidence for MHT's effect on mood, including mixed-but-real evidence for a direct mood benefit that is most consistent when concurrent VMS are present.
- Construct a layered, individualized care plan combining MHT, pharmacotherapy, and behavioral interventions.
- Describe the role of neurokinin receptor antagonists as a non-hormonal VMS option and their indirect mental health benefits for women who cannot or prefer not to use MHT.

Screening Guidelines & Clinical Protocols

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Sequence the core screening tools (PHQ-2/GAD-2, PHQ-9/GAD-7, MRS, and MDQ) into an efficient visit workflow, and interpret MRS domain scores to determine the next step.
- Apply the MDQ as a mandatory gate before initiating an SSRI or SNRI, and describe the correct response to a positive screen.
- Interpret PHQ-9 item 9 and distinguish passive ideation from active ideation with plan or intent.
- Execute the same-visit safety protocol, including warm behavioral health handoff versus emergency escalation, and apply documentation standards.
- Apply the level-of-care framework to choose among in-house management, IBH co-management, and psychiatric referral.
- Apply the full clinical sequence, from screening through safety check to level-of-care decision, to a representative case.

YOUR INSTRUCTORS

Meet the faculty

MODULES 1 & 6

**Jessica Gaulton,
MD, MPH**

Founder & CEO, FamilyWell

Dr. Jessica Gaulton is FamilyWell's Founder and CEO, with 15+ years of clinical experience as a board-certified Neonatologist and Pediatrician. Alongside the FamilyWell team and several medical advisors, she led the development of FamilyWell's menopause screening guidelines and co-created the collaborative care (CoCM) model for integrated behavioral health for women in the menopause transition.

Dr. Gaulton received her MD from the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine and her MPH from the Harvard School of Public Health, and completed Pediatric Residency at Boston Children's Hospital / Harvard Medical School. She is a mother of two who experienced postpartum depression, and is currently entering the menopause transition.

MODULES 2 & 5

**Melissa J. Sherman,
MD, FACOG**

Obstetrician-Gynecologist ·
FamilyWell Medical Advisor

Dr. Melissa Sherman is an obstetrician-gynecologist at Essex County OB/GYN in Massachusetts and a FamilyWell Medical Advisor. Board-certified in obstetrics and gynecology and in addiction medicine, with specialized certification in perinatal mental health, she is a champion of menopause mental health care. Seeing the great need for integrated information in this area, she led the curriculum development for the FamilyWell Menopause Behavioral Health Certificate.

Dr. Sherman is a Clinical Instructor of Obstetrics & Gynecology at Boston University School of Medicine and was named Community Clinician of the Year in 2023 as Medical Director of the Compass Moms Do Care program.

MODULES 3 & 4

Lindsay Lebin, MD

Assistant Professor of Psychiatry,
University of Colorado

Dr. Lindsay Lebin is an Assistant Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Colorado and a reproductive psychiatrist focused on women's mental health across the lifespan, including perinatal mental health, infertility, pregnancy loss, premenstrual dysphoric disorder, and mood and anxiety disorders in perimenopause.

She provides evidence-based, patient-centered care and is committed to making the evidence behind treatment decisions accessible to every patient.