DMEC
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CONFERENCE

2026 DMEC Annual Conference

Addressing the silent cost of menopause: A growing imperative for absence programs

Agenda

Introduction and Overview

Macro Context

Panel Discussion

Audience Q&A



Speakers



Matthew.Ceurvels?
Head of Absence Product and Digital Offerings, Guardian



Accai.Bailey?
Regional Absence Practice Leader, West, Guardian



Patty.Borst?
National Practice Leader, Total Absence Management, The Partners Group



Sarah.Egizio?
Registered Nurse, Medical Expert, Carrot

Menopause and the Workforce

Menopause impacts nearly 1 in 5 women in today's workforce, yet it remains one of the least understood and most stigmatized health transitions.

20% of the U.S. workforce is in menopause age range

Symptoms last **7–10+ years** and affect **80–90% of women**

Clear and direct business impact: **productivity loss ($1.8B annually)** and **higher healthcare spend ($24B+)**

Understanding the basics can make a huge difference in supporting colleagues and fostering morale, productivity and retention.



Why Menopause Matters for Employees

The impacts are more than financial, **they are multidimensional**:

- Mental: anxiety, brain fog, sleep disruption
- Physical: fatigue, chronic condition risk
- Financial: reduced earnings, workforce exit



What's changing?

Employees expect whole-person support (mental, physical, life-stage)

Employers shifting from reactive claims management to proactive workforce strategy

Growing demand for:

- Flexibility and accommodations
- Integrated health, absence and disability support
- More transparency and personalization

Why it Matters for Employers

1. Hidden driver of disability

- Mental health plus lack of sleep can increase FML/ADA and STD/LTD claims
- Often misdiagnosed/under-attributed

2. Increased absence plus utilization

- Missed work, intermittent leave
- More healthcare and specialty care

3. Productivity plus retention risk

- Presenteeism > absenteeism
- Mid-career women stepping back or exiting



The Opportunity

The opportunity is to integrate it into what we already do:

- Absence and disability management
- Women's health strategy
- Earlier intervention and access to care

Because when we do that, we can reduce claim duration, improve retention, and support a critical segment of the workforce.

Earlier support lower claims plus better retention



Panel Discussion



Questions?

