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The Menopause Society of Sri Lanka proudly marked a strong presence at the 10<sup>th</sup> Asia-Pacific Menopause Federation (APMF) Sessions - Page 02

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## WORLD MENOPAUSE DIARY

7<sup>th</sup> Biennial Academic Sessions of SAFOMS



WORLD MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS PROGRAMME – 17<sup>TH</sup> OCT 2025



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Committed to improve the post reproductive life of Sri Lankan woman

112, Model Farm, Road, Colombo – 08, Sri Lanka

TP / Fax: 0094 11 2699211

[menosoc.srilanka@gmail.com](mailto:menosoc.srilanka@gmail.com)

[www.menosocsl.lk](http://www.menosocsl.lk)

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## Editorial: Understanding Andropause — A Parallel Journey in Midlife Health

As we dedicate our efforts to advancing the care of women transitioning through menopause, it is equally important to recognise that midlife hormonal changes are not exclusive to women. In recent years, the concept of **andropause**, also referred to as late-onset hypogonadism, has drawn growing clinical interest. While its presentation is more gradual and often less clearly defined than menopause, its impact on men's physical, emotional, and sexual wellbeing is undeniable.

Andropause describes the age-related decline in testosterone accompanied by symptoms such as fatigue, reduced libido, mood disturbances, decreased muscle mass, and diminished vitality. Unlike menopause, where hormonal changes are abrupt and universal, the decline in testosterone varies widely among men. This variability often leads to under-recognition, delayed diagnosis, and unmet health needs.

For healthcare professionals, the conversation around andropause offers an opportunity to promote **holistic midlife care for both men and women**. By acknowledging the shared experiences of ageing, changes in metabolism, sexual health, bone density, cardiovascular risk, and mental wellbeing, we can encourage more inclusive, family-centred approaches to midlife health.

As the Menopause Society of Sri Lanka expands its scope of education and advocacy, it is timely to consider how we might better integrate the understanding of male hormonal ageing into our work. Raising awareness among clinicians and the public can help reduce stigma, foster timely health-seeking behaviour, and ensure evidence-based management that balances the benefits and risks of testosterone therapy.

Ultimately, recognising andropause is not about redefining menopause but about **broadening our perspective on ageing**. By doing so, we move closer to our mission of promoting healthy, informed, and empowered midlife living for every individual and every family.

**Dr. Sharada Jayalath**

Editor, Menopause Society of Sri Lanka



# Sri Lanka's Strong Presence at the 10<sup>th</sup> APMF Sessions



The Menopause Society of Sri Lanka proudly marked a strong presence at the 10<sup>th</sup> Asia-Pacific Menopause Federation (APMF) Sessions, held from 25<sup>th</sup>–26<sup>th</sup> July 2025, where six senior members represented the country. The congress brought together leading experts from across the region to discuss key developments in midlife women's health, and Sri Lanka contributed significantly through both scientific and leadership roles.

The delegation comprised:

- Dr. Harsha Atapattu
- Dr. Mangala Dissanayake
- Prof. Piyusha Atapattu
- Dr. Chinthaka Banagala
- Dr. Janaki Karunasinghe
- Dr. Shiromali Dissanayake



During the inauguration, **Dr. Harsha Atapattu**, President of the Menopause Society of Sri Lanka, addressed the gathering, highlighting the country's progress in advancing menopausal health, enhancing clinical services, and promoting research initiatives. His presentation offered a valuable platform to share national achievements, innovative practices, and future priorities with the wider Asia-Pacific audience.

Sri Lanka's scientific contribution was further strengthened through participation in a dedicated one-hour concurrent symposium titled "**Menopause and Pelvic Floor Dysfunction – The Overlooked Epidemic.**" The session explored the increasing burden of pelvic organ prolapse (POP), urinary incontinence, and other pelvic floor disorders affecting midlife women, conditions that remain under-recognised and inadequately managed across the region. The symposium emphasised the importance of early detection, multidisciplinary care pathways, and improving community-level awareness.

Sri Lanka's active engagement at the 10th APMF Sessions underscored the Society's commitment to regional collaboration, evidence-based practice, and elevating standards of care for women transitioning through menopause. With its dedicated team of representatives, the country contributed meaningfully to shared learning, scientific dialogue, and strengthened partnerships across the Asia-Pacific region.



# Sri Lankan Team Publishes New Research on Postmenopausal Health

The Menopause Society of Sri Lanka is pleased to highlight a significant academic achievement by **Prof. Chanil Ekanayaka** and his research team, who have successfully published an original research article in the *Journal of Midlife Health*. Their study, titled "**Health Issues of Postmenopausal Women in Sri Lanka: A Community-based Pilot Study in Selected Public Health Midwife Areas**," offers valuable insights into the lived experiences, health challenges, and unmet needs of postmenopausal women across different communities in the country.

This pioneering pilot study provides an evidence-based understanding of the physical, psychological, and social issues faced by midlife and older women, particularly in underserved areas. By conducting field-level assessments in selected Public Health Midwife (PHM) divisions, the research highlights gaps in service delivery, underscores the importance of improving access to menopausal care, and reinforces the crucial role of primary healthcare workers in addressing women's midlife health concerns.



The Council formally **congratulated Prof. Chanil Ekanayaka and his team**, recognising their dedication, scientific rigor, and contribution to advancing menopausal health research in Sri Lanka. Their work not only strengthens the national evidence base but also elevates Sri Lanka's visibility within the regional and international academic community.

This publication stands as a commendable milestone and an inspiration for further research aimed at improving the wellbeing and quality of life of postmenopausal women across the country.

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**ORIGINAL ARTICLE**

**Health Issues of Postmenopausal Women in Sri Lanka: A Community-based Pilot Study in Selected Public Health Midwife Areas**

Ekanayake, Chanil Deshan; Atapattu, Piyusha<sup>1</sup>; Dissanayake, Mangala<sup>2</sup>; Akmeemana, Sanath<sup>3</sup>; Perera, Hemantha<sup>4</sup>; Gunaratne, M. D. P.<sup>4</sup>; Weerasooriya, Saumya<sup>5</sup>; Dissanayake, Shiromali<sup>6</sup>; Nelson, Champa<sup>6</sup>; Akmeemana, Dasanthi<sup>3</sup>; Jayalath, Sharada<sup>7</sup>

[Author Information](#) 

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# WORLD MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS PROGRAMME 17<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2025

## Mental Health Day 2025 Successfully Celebrated in Colombo

The Sri Lanka College of Psychiatrists, in collaboration with the Colombo South Teaching Hospital, Kalubowila, the Ladies Forum of the Sri Lanka College of Obstetricians & Gynaecologists, the Menopause Society of Sri Lanka, and the Leo Club, successfully organised Mental Health Day 2025 on 17th October 2025. The event took place at the Samson Rajapaksa Auditorium, SLCOG House, Colombo 08, from 9.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m.

This collaborative initiative brought together professionals, students, and members of the public to highlight the importance of mental wellbeing across all age groups. The programme reflected a commitment to strengthening public awareness, reducing stigma, and promoting early intervention in mental health concerns.



## A Multi-Organisational Effort for Community Wellbeing

Mental Health Day 2025 was a prime example of how inter-institutional collaboration can drive meaningful community engagement. Each partnering organisation contributed its expertise and outreach capacity to deliver a rich, supportive, and informative programme aligned with global mental health priorities.

The event emphasised the importance of recognising mental health as an essential part of overall wellness, especially during a time when psychological challenges are increasingly prevalent across society.

## Highlights of the Event

Throughout the morning, participants engaged in awareness sessions, interactive discussions, and educational activities designed to promote emotional resilience and psychological wellbeing. Key themes

included stress management, early identification of mental illness, and adopting healthy lifestyle habits that support long-term mental health.

A special lecture on the **Importance of Menopause** was delivered by **Dr. Sharada Jayalath**, Consultant Obstetrician and Gynaecologist at Base Hospital Mahaoya. Dr. Jayalath highlighted the physical, psychological, and social changes experienced during the menopausal transition and emphasised the link between menopausal symptoms and mental wellbeing. His session underscored the need for greater awareness, early recognition of symptoms, and supportive healthcare interventions, contributing an essential women's health perspective to the day's programme.

Another informative session was conducted by **Dr. Darshana Abeygunawardhane**, President-Elect of the Menopause Society of Sri Lanka, on **Lifestyle Modification in Menopause**. Dr. Abeygunawardhane emphasised the importance of healthy habits, such as balanced nutrition, regular exercise, stress reduction, and proper sleep, in improving quality of life during midlife. He explained how lifestyle interventions not only alleviate menopausal symptoms but also reduce long-term health risks including osteoporosis, cardiovascular disease, and metabolic disorders. His session provided practical, evidence-based guidance empowering women to take charge of their health.



## A Step Forward for Mental Health Advocacy in Sri Lanka

The success of Mental Health Day 2025 highlighted the growing national commitment to improving mental health services and awareness. By uniting experts from psychiatry, obstetrics and gynaecology, women's health, and youth leadership, the programme fostered a holistic approach to wellness and empowered communities to speak openly about mental health.

The organisers expressed their appreciation to all participants and partner institutions for contributing to a meaningful and impactful event—one that has strengthened the momentum for mental health advocacy across Sri Lanka.

# 7<sup>th</sup> Biennial Academic Sessions of SAFOMS and the Annual Academic Sessions of the Menopause Society of Bangladesh 2025

The 7<sup>th</sup> Biennial Academic Sessions of the South Asian Federation of Menopause Societies (SAFOMS), held in conjunction with the Annual Academic Sessions of the Menopause Society of Bangladesh 2025, took place as a landmark regional gathering that strengthened scientific exchange and collaboration in midlife women's health. Hosted in Bangladesh, the event brought together clinicians, researchers, educators, and public-health advocates from across South Asia, creating a dynamic platform for shared learning and advancement of menopausal care in the region.



The combined sessions showcased a rich and diverse scientific programme. Delegates engaged in plenaries, symposia, workshops, and free-paper presentations that addressed the full spectrum of menopausal health concerns. Key topics included updates in hormone therapy, evidence-based non-hormonal interventions, metabolic health in midlife women, osteoporosis prevention, mental-health considerations during the menopausal transition, and advanced approaches to pelvic floor dysfunction. Speakers highlighted the growing burden of non-communicable diseases in postmenopausal women and emphasised the need for integrated care models that address cardiovascular, endocrine, and skeletal health concurrently.

The SAFOMS biennial programme further facilitated high-level policy discussions and collaborative planning. Multidisciplinary panels explored opportunities for harmonising menopausal care guidelines across South Asia, increasing research productivity, and enhancing the training of healthcare providers through regional workshops and digital platforms. The sessions also highlighted the importance of advocacy, encouraging member countries to raise public awareness and promote healthier ageing for women through national campaigns and partnerships.



Among the distinguished delegates, **Dr. (Mrs.) Janakie Karunasinghe** and **Dr. Darshana Abeygunawardhane** represented **Sri Lanka**, contributing actively to both scientific discussions and regional networking. Their presence underscored Sri Lanka's ongoing commitment to strengthening menopause care across South Asia. Dr. Karunasinghe participated in academic exchanges highlighting clinical challenges and service gaps in midlife health, while Dr. Abeygunawardhane, in his capacity as President-Elect of the Menopause Society of Sri Lanka, engaged in strategic discussions on workforce development, regional collaboration, and future joint initiatives. Their contributions helped reinforce Sri Lanka's leadership role within SAFOMS and deepened the country's partnerships with neighbouring menopause societies.

The **7th Biennial Academic Sessions of SAFOMS**, together with the **Annual Academic Sessions of the Menopause Society of Bangladesh 2025**, concluded with a renewed regional commitment to strengthening evidence-based practice, advancing research, and fostering cross-border cooperation. The event successfully reaffirmed South Asia's collective dedication to raising the standards of menopausal healthcare and ensuring healthier, empowered ageing for women across the region.

Expert Insights  
on HRT and  
POI Take  
Centre Stage at  
SLCOG  
Congress 2025



## Symposium Highlights: Advancing Knowledge in Midlife Women's Health

The Menopause Society of Sri Lanka successfully conducted a focused scientific symposium featuring three expert-led lectures that enriched participants' understanding of key areas in menopause care.

This special session was held as part of the **Annual Scientific Congress 2025 of the Sri Lanka College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (SLCOG)**, providing a valuable platform for sharing updated evidence and fostering collaboration among clinicians, researchers, and trainees dedicated to women's health. The inclusion of this symposium further strengthened the Congress programme by highlighting crucial aspects of midlife care and the evolving landscape of menopausal medicine.

**Dr. Sharada Jayalath** delivered an insightful session on "**HRT Use in Cancer Survivors**," outlining current evidence, clinical considerations, and practical decision-making strategies when managing menopausal symptoms in women with a history of cancer. Her presentation emphasized individualized care, multidisciplinary collaboration, and the importance of balancing symptom control with long-term safety.

**Dr. Chinthaka Banagala** presented an "**Update on POI Diagnosis and Treatment**," providing a comprehensive overview of modern diagnostic approaches, the evolving understanding of aetiology, and advancements in management strategies for Premature Ovarian Insufficiency. His talk highlighted the role of early detection and tailored hormone therapy to optimize long-term health outcomes.

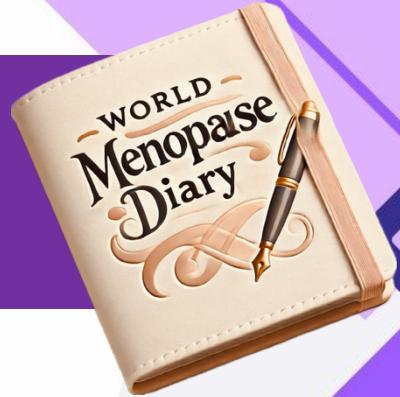
**Dr. Janakie Karunasinghe** concluded the symposium with "**Tibolone vs Conventional HRT – A Comprehensive Comparison**." The lecture offered a detailed analysis of the pharmacological profiles, clinical benefits, and risk considerations of each therapy, helping clinicians make evidence-based choices for diverse patient needs.



The sessions were expertly chaired by **Dr. M.D.P. Goonerathne** and **Dr. T.B. Dissanayake**, whose guidance ensured smooth proceedings and engaging discussion throughout the event.

This symposium marked another important step in the Society's ongoing efforts to promote continuous professional development and enhance the quality of menopause care delivered across Sri Lanka.

# WORLD MENOPAUSE DIARY



- BMS 35<sup>th</sup> Annual Scientific Conference
  - Dates: June 25–26, 2026 (in-person), with on-demand access from July 7–October 7, 2026
  - Location: Chesford Grange, Kenilworth, UK (in-person)

## 35<sup>th</sup> Annual Symposium on women's health

Access on demand from  
**8 December 2025 to 8 February 2026**

#whcsymp25  
Education for  
healthcare  
professionals



- 20<sup>th</sup> IMS World Congress on Menopause
  - Dates: September 29–October 3, 2026
  - Location: Rio de Janeiro, Brazil



- **28<sup>th</sup> Australasian Menopause Society Annual Congress**
  - **Dates:** September 11–13, 2026
  - **Location:** Sydney, Australia



- **31<sup>st</sup> National Conference of the Indian Menopause Society (IMSCON 2026)**
  - **Dates:** February 27 to March 1, 2026, in Bhopal, India.
  - **Location:** Courtyard by Marriott, Bhopal.



***Theme: 2<sup>nd</sup> Innings - Playing on the Front Foot***