



Glossary

Definition of pain

Pain is defined internationally as *"an unpleasant sensory and emotional experience associated with, or resembling that associated with, actual or potential tissue damage"*. However, for respondents of this Inquiry, many diverse experiences of suffering were reported as pain. The Victorian Government and Inquiry into

Women's Pain Subcommittee acknowledge the much broader definitions held by the Victorian community. References to pain in the report include any experience of pain and pain care, treatment or service that women and girls have had over their lifetimes in Victoria. It also includes the experiences of healthcare

professionals who have worked with women and girls with pain, and carers who have supported individuals experiencing pain. This could be pain from an injury or trauma, dental pain, joint pain, or musculoskeletal pain. It can also be related to heart, neurological, reproductive, autoimmune or other health conditions.

Term	Definition
Complex regional pain syndrome (CRPS)	Complex regional pain syndrome is a pain condition that usually develops after an injury, surgery or other medical event. Persistent, often burning or throbbing pain is the usual symptom.
Contraceptive pill	Contraceptive pills, also known as 'the pill' or a 'birth control pill', are oral hormonal contraceptives used to prevent pregnancy or help treat other health conditions or symptoms.
Culturally and linguistically diverse communities (CALD)	Communities with diverse languages, ethnic backgrounds, nationalities, traditions, societal structures and religions.
Culturally safe	An environment that is safe for people, where there is no assault, challenge or denial of their identity and experience, of who they are and what they need.
Endometriosis	Endometriosis is a condition where cells similar to those that line the uterus grow in other areas of the body, especially in the pelvis and reproductive organs.
Fibromyalgia	Fibromyalgia is a condition involving pain in various parts of the body. The pain may come and go and is often accompanied with other symptoms such as tiredness, trouble sleeping and problems with concentration.
Gaslighting	Gaslighting is a form of manipulation using psychological methods that can make a person question their own sanity, reality, mental stability or powers of reasoning.

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Gender	Gender or gender identity is how we feel about being male, female, or somewhere in between. It's how we see ourselves. For a lot of people, gender identity will match their sex. This is called being cisgender.
Gender bias	Gender bias in a healthcare setting can lead to poorer health outcomes; Women's pain is often underestimated and inadequately treated. Cultural norms, language barriers, and stereotypes contribute to limited access and engagement with healthcare services.
General practitioner (GP)	A general practitioner (GP) is a doctor who is qualified in general medical practice. They treat a wide range of medical conditions and health issues.
Gynaecologist	A gynaecologist is a specialist doctor who helps prevent and manage conditions that affect the female reproductive system.
Healthcare	Refers to the improvement of health via the prevention, diagnosis, treatment, amelioration or cure of disease, illness, injury and other physical and mental ailment in people.
Hormone replacement therapy (HRT)	Hormone Replacement Therapy is medicine that contains oestrogen, progesterone and sometimes testosterone. It is primarily used to manage the symptoms of menopause when they interfere with your daily life.
Intrauterine device (IUD)	Intrauterine devices (IUDs) are small devices made of plastic and/or metal that are inserted into the uterus (womb) to prevent pregnancy or help treat other health conditions or symptoms.
LGBTIQA+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and gender diverse, Intersex, Queer, questioning and Asexual as an inclusive umbrella abbreviation of diverse sexualities, genders and sex characteristics. The LGBTIQA+ community is not a homogenous group; it encompasses a wide range of identities and experiences, and it's essential to recognise this diversity.
Lived and living experience	People with lived experience identify either as someone who is living with (or has lived with) a health condition or someone who is caring for or otherwise supporting (or has cared for or otherwise supported) a person who is living with (or has lived with) a health condition. People with lived experience are sometimes referred to as 'consumers' or 'carers'.
Long acting reversible contraception (LARC)	Long acting reversible contraception (LARC) is a group of contraception methods that are long acting, don't require you to do anything to prevent pregnancy every day or every time you have sex, and are immediately reversible when removed. LARC include intrauterine devices (IUDs) and contraceptive implants.
Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS)	The Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) is a list of all health services that the government subsidises.
Menopause	Menopause describes the stage of a woman's life when her menstrual periods stop permanently, and she can no longer get pregnant. Most women reach menopause between the ages of 45 and 55.
Menopausal Hormone Therapy (MHT)	Menopausal Hormone Therapy (MHT), formerly known as Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT), is medicine that contains oestrogen, progesterone and sometimes testosterone. It is used to manage the symptoms of menopause when they interfere with your daily life.
Model of care	Describes the design and delivery of healthcare services within the broader context of the health system.
National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)	The National Disability Insurance Scheme is a program that provides support to individuals with a disability. It is funded by the Commonwealth Government.

Obstetrician-gynaecologist	An obstetrician-gynaecologist is a specialist doctor who cares for women and specialises in pregnancy, childbirth and reproductive health.
Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS)	The Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme is a Commonwealth-funded program that helps cover the cost of some prescription medicines, making them more affordable.
Pelvic pain	Symptoms arising from the reproductive, urinary or digestive symptoms or from muscles or ligaments in the pelvis. Depending on the source, the pain maybe dull, sharp and constant.
Perimenopause	Perimenopause is the transitional period before a woman reaches menopause, characterised by fluctuating hormone levels, irregular periods, and various physical and emotional symptoms. It typically begins in the 40s and lasts on average 4 to 6 years, but can range from 1 to 10 years.
Polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS)	Polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS) is a complex hormonal condition that affects about 10% of women. Symptoms can include irregular menstrual cycles, excess facial and body hair, acne, heavier weight, reduced fertility, and increased risk of diabetes.
Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP)	Royal Australian College of General Practitioners
Safer Care Victoria (SCV)	Safer Care Victoria
Sex	Refers to the label given at birth – usually female, male, or intersex. Sex is assigned to a child at birth, based on the child's anatomy.
Sexually transmitted infection (STI)	Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) are infections which can be passed from one person to another during unprotected sexual intercourse or prolonged contact.
Telehealth	Virtual care (otherwise known as telehealth) allows consumers to access healthcare closer to home or in the home.
The department	Refers to the Victorian Department of Health.
Victorian Women's Health Advisory Council	The Victorian Women's Health Advisory Council is leading the rollout of the Victorian Government's investment in women's health. The council provides independent, expert advice on delivering the Women's Health and Wellbeing Program, including how to improve women's health outcomes, reduce gender health disparities, enhance research, and strengthen the safety and quality of care provided in our state. It is chaired by the Minister for Health, The Hon. Mary-Anne Thomas MP.
Woman	Any references to a woman, women or girls are intended to include anyone who may experience similar health issues or gender-based discrepancies in care. This includes those assigned female at birth and anyone who identifies as a woman, though they may have a different sex at birth.
Women's Health and Wellbeing Program	The Department of Health is leading the delivery of the \$153.9 million package over four years (2023/24 – 2026/27), to change the way women's health issues are treated. This expands upon the Victorian Government's current investment in women's health promotion services, access to information, support and advice, sexual and reproductive health services, public hospital specialist clinics, women's health research and initiatives aimed at healthcare recruitment and training.