

Vira Health secures \$12 million in funding to improve older women's health through digital capabilities

Led by Octopus Ventures, with participation from Optum Ventures and existing investors, new funding will allow Vira Health to expand access to its menopause solutions and introduce new services such as telehealth and prescription medications

London, UK (Tuesday 15th March) – Vira Health, the company behind menopause app, Stella, has announced \$12 million in new funding to continue their mission of improving women's long-term health. The latest financing builds on a previous \$2 million funding round that drew investment from LocalGlobe, MMC, Amino Collective, among others.

The new investment will support growth of the Stella app in the US market, clinical trials and the addition of medication and telemedicine.

“Better menopause care is crucial in the fight for gender equity in the workplace,” said **Andrea Berchowicz, co-founder & chief executive officer of Vira Health**, “The Stella app offers women a highly personalised, completely private and always-on treatment option. It is designed for a diversity of companies wanting to expand their employee benefit schemes. Our focus is onboarding more employers to Stella this year.”

Stella is the first digital therapy product from Vira Health and was launched in the UK in 2021. It supports women by offering personalised menopause treatment plans based on their specific symptoms. Stella combines complex guidance around lifestyle and behaviour change into simple, easy-to-follow weekly lessons. It offers the ability to interact with trained experts and a range of additional resources, including guided meditations, educational materials, exercises, recipes, and online classes.

“Menopause is an enormous yet underserved and underfunded market,” said **Kamran Adle, health investor at Octopus Ventures**. “1 billion women, or approximately 12% of the global population, are expected to experience menopause by 2025, and we're excited to work with the Vira Health team.”

Menopause is increasingly becoming something companies care about. A study by Vodafone across five countries found that 60% of women dealing with menopausal symptoms said it impacted their work. In a UK study, 30% of women said they missed work due to their symptoms, while 11% passed up a promotion opportunity and 8% resigned from their positions

because of menopausal symptoms. Data shows that 75 percent of women who completed their Stella treatment plans experienced improved symptoms.

Julia Hawkins, General Partner at LocalGlobe and Latitude, said, “We are pleased to invest in Vira Health. There is a strong interest in menopause care right now and this is a phenomenal team committed to building what women want and need.”

In 2020, many workplaces showed an increase of menopause support, through writing new menopause policies, nominating ‘menopause champions’ to signpost employees to information and resources, improving the cut and fabric of uniforms, and more. As companies redefine their benefits more broadly in recognition of mental health and caring responsibilities that resulted from COVID-19, menopause is becoming a bigger part of the conversation. Vira Health is focused on making Stella available to more women through employer benefits in 2022.

“Menopause is a time point in a woman’s life where we can fundamentally change the trajectory of lifelong health,” said **Dr. Rebecca Love, co-founder of Vira Health**. “It is outrageous that we have not focused on menopause care more. Stella provides women the relief and support they need for symptoms such as sleep issues, incontinence, mood swings, hot flushes and many others, and helps set women up for better brain, bone and heart health in later life.”

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Editor’s Notes

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Images available on request.

Vodafone study –
<https://newscentre.vodafone.co.uk/press-release/new-global-employee-commitment-on-menopause/>.

UK study – <https://www.forthwithlife.co.uk/blog/menopause-in-the-workplace/>.

About Vira Health

Vira Health was founded in 2020 by [Andrea Berchowitz](#) and [Rebecca Love](#) with an aim to bring to market high-quality, personalised menopause care that is accessible to all women. The company’s mission is to extend healthy life expectancy for women by reducing the prevalence of later life conditions, such as osteoporosis, cardiovascular disease, diabetes and dementia.

Vira Health is a digital health company focused on improving women's long-term health by addressing female-specific conditions and improving the collection and use of female data in healthcare. The first product is Stella, a personalised app for menopause relief.

Founding team:

- Andrea Berchowitz was an Associate Partner at McKinsey & Company, working in women's health across the public and private sector, and led Middle East operations for the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Watch Andrea's TED Talk on "**The Link Between Menopause and Gender Inequality At Work**", which has nearly 1.5m views.
- Dr Rebecca Love holds a PhD in Medical Sciences from the University of Cambridge and has extensive experience in chronic diseases, as a trained behavioural epidemiologist. She has worked with the Mayor of London, the World Health Organisation and UNICEF advisory.

About Stella

Stella is an app by Vira Health that supports women through menopause with personalised treatment programmes backed by reliable science and support from our trained experts. It is recommended by general practitioners and menopause specialists across the country.

Each woman using Stella gets a personalised treatment plan based on her specific symptoms. For example, if she is dealing with sleep disturbances and urinary incontinence, her Stella plan would combine cognitive behavioural therapy, pelvic floor exercises and other guidance related to lifestyle and behaviour change.

In addition to the treatment plans, the Stella platform has articles, recipes, mindfulness meditations, exercise suggestions and access to virtual events such as yoga classes or Q&A with a gynaecologist. There is also the ability to set habits and track progress within the app.

It is now available on iOs in the UK, Ireland and the US as a subscription (£70/year), and through the US-based global benefits platform, BenefitHub.

About Octopus Ventures

At Octopus Ventures we invest in the people, the ideas and the industries that will help change the world. Our investment team is built to specialise in the five areas where we see the most potential for growth and innovation: health, fintech, deep tech, consumer and B2B software. Since 2008 we have backed the founding teams of more than 130 companies including Zoopla,

Secret Escapes, graze.com, tails.com, Swiftkey, Elvie, Depop, Sofar Sounds, Big Health, Bought By Many, ByMiles, OLIO and Cazoo, City Pantry, Simply Cook and HAS Technology.

About Optum Ventures

Optum Ventures is the independent venture fund of Optum, a leading information and technology-enabled health services business dedicated to helping make the health system work better for everyone. Optum Ventures invests in digital health companies that use data and insights to help improve consumers' access to health care services and how care is delivered and paid for, and that make the health care system more reliable and easier to navigate. For more information, please visit www.optumventures.com.

About LocalGlobe

LocalGlobe is a UK-based venture capital firm that focuses on seed investments. Seeding ambitious UK founders since 1999 including Transferwise, Zoopla, Improbable, Citymapper, Algolia and Robinhood. Visit <https://localglobe.vc/>.