



# Menopause Policy

## Spring 2024



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## 1. Introduction

The menopause is a natural event in most women's lives during which they stop having periods and experience hormonal changes such as a decrease in oestrogen levels. It usually occurs between the ages of 45 and 55 and typically lasts between four and eight years. However, each woman's experience will differ, and menopausal symptoms can occasionally begin before the age of 40. Perimenopause, or menopause transition, begins several years before menopause. Symptoms vary widely and can be cognitive, physical and psychological. Some of the more common symptoms are listed at Appendix A. Each of these symptoms can affect an employee's comfort and performance at work.

Further information, advice and guidance can be found at Appendix C.

We have a positive attitude towards the menopause. We recognise our duty in relation to equalities and health and safety, including the wellbeing of our staff and commit to making reasonable adjustments and ensuring additional support is available to those experiencing menopausal symptoms.

## 2. Aims

- To create an environment where staff feel confident enough to raise issues about their symptoms and ask for support and adjustments at work.
- To ensure that conditions in the workplace do not make menopausal symptoms worse and that appropriate adjustments and support are put in place, recognising there is no 'one size fits all' solution.
- To reduce sickness absence due to menopausal symptoms and retain valued staff in the workplace.

## 3. Roles and responsibilities

Menopause is not just a gender or age issue, as it can impact on all colleagues both directly and indirectly. It is everyone's responsibility to support individuals experiencing menopausal symptoms, or affected by them, and to treat them with dignity and respect. All staff will be expected to familiarise themselves with this policy and to attend awareness training.

**Employees** are encouraged to inform their line manager that they are experiencing menopausal symptoms at an early stage to ensure that symptoms are treated as an ongoing health issue rather than as individual instances of ill health. Early notification will also help line managers to determine the most appropriate course of action to support an employee's individual needs.

Employees who do not wish to discuss the issue with their direct line manager may find it helpful to have an initial discussion with a trusted colleague or another manager instead.

Employees should take and act on advice from their medical practitioner about measures they can take to support their health and wellbeing and engage in risk assessments in the workplace.

Employees can also raise the issue with HR if they need support.

**Line managers** will be provided with training and support. They will be open and ready to listen and act sympathetically, sensitively and appropriately. Line managers will be responsible for undertaking, monitoring and implementing risk assessments.

Confidentiality will always be maintained.

## 4. What actions we will take

4.1 A risk assessment will be undertaken with the employee to determine appropriate measures which can be applied to support the individual in the light of their specific symptoms. (See Appendix B)

4.2 Supportive measures/reasonable adjustment will be put in place wherever possible, which may include but are not limited to:

- Environmental adjustments such as temperature control and ventilation (e.g. leaving doors/windows open, adjusting room temperatures (having consideration for all users), providing fans/window coverings);
- Hygiene facilities – providing facilities and facilitating breaks for women who need to access toilet/washing/changing facilities, access to cold, fresh water;

- Flexible working - considering requests for changes to working arrangements (e.g. temporary reduction in hours, adjustments to working patterns);
  - Attendance – time off for menopause-related medical appointments and adjustment to normal absence triggers.
  - Procedures and processes - adjustments which support and avoid any detriment to menopausal women (e.g. recognising symptoms can affect concentration and performance).
  - Access to Occupational Health/Employee Assistance Programme/Counselling where applicable.
- 4.3 Where adjustments are unsuccessful, or if symptoms are particularly severe, a referral may be made to occupational health for further advice and support.

## Menopause facts

- Menopause usually occurs between age 45 and 55, the average age is 51 and one in 100 experience the menopause before age 40.
- Menopause usually lasts between 4 and 8 years but can last longer.
- Research undertaken by the Chartered Institute for Personnel and Development in 2019 found: Three out of five (59%) working women between the ages of 45 and 55 who are experiencing menopause symptoms say it has a negative impact on them at work. Of those who were affected negatively at work, they reported the following issues:
  - Nearly two-thirds (65%) said they were less able to concentrate
  - More than half (58%) said they experience more stress
  - More than half (52%) said they felt less patient with clients and colleagues.

### Common menopause symptoms

- hot flushes;
- night sweats;
- anxiety;
- dizziness;
- fatigue;
- memory loss;
- depression;
- headaches;
- recurrent urinary tract infections;
- joint stiffness, aches and pains;
- reduced concentration;
- mood swings;
- heavy periods.

# Annex B – Menopause Risk Assessment

**OFFICIAL SENSITIVE AND CONFIDENTIAL**

<b>Employee name:</b>	
<b>Role:</b>	
<b>Manager name and position:</b>	

This document is a living document and should be completed by the individual and manager together. It should be retained for as long as is necessary. During meetings between the individual and manager this document should be updated to reflect the current situation.

**Symptoms and solutions will vary considerably. The following template provides some points for consideration but must be adapted and tailored to the individual.**

<b>Symptoms (amend/add as required)</b>	<b>Considerations</b>	<b>Measures/reasonable adjustments agreed. Include responsibilities and timescales</b>
Temperature regulation/fluctuations	Environmental issues ? Ventilation Temperature	
Need for facilities – toilet breaks, washing, changing, sanitary products, refreshments	Toilet, washing and changing facilities? Access to cold water etc?	
Aches and pains, dizziness, lack of energy, headaches	Adjustments to environment ? Adequate breaks ? Will flexible working/adjustments to duties help and can these be accommodated? Medical advice sought and acted upon ? Is an OH referral appropriate?	
Mood swings, Irritability, Loss of Concentration/poor memory, Insomnia	Opportunity for breaks ? Will flexible working/adjustments to duties help and can these be accommodated? Can work be checked/supported ? Can reminders/prompts be provided? Outlet to talk?	
Add other		

**SIGNED EMPLOYEE**

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**SIGNED MANAGER**

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Review Dates</b>	

**This form must be placed in the restricted access section of the personal file.**

## Appendix C - Further information and support

The following link may provide further information and assistance, but please be aware that cannot take responsibility for the validity of the content of external websites or the validity of external organisations.

[Menopause - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](http://www.nhs.uk)

<https://www.acas.org.uk/menopause-at-work>

[Let's talk menopause | CIPD Guidance](#)

[The menopause at work: guidance for line managers | CIPD guides](#) – this also has some posters and flyers

[Menopause in the workplace: Menopause Matters](#)

The Daisy Network charity, provides support for women experiencing premature menopause or premature ovarian insufficiency;

[The Menopause Charity - Menopause Facts, Advice and Support](#)