

MENOPAUSE POLICY

EFFECTIVE DATE: 1 APRIL 2022

SUPERSEDES: NEW POLICY

APPROVED BY: XXXXXXXXXXXXX

SCOPE

All COMPANY NAME employees

This policy does not form part of any contract of employment and the Company is not contractually bound to follow the procedures except those required by law.

INTRODUCTION

COMPANY NAME is committed to supporting anyone affected by hormonal changes during their lives and it can happen for a number of reasons, including, pregnancy, fertility treatment, gender transitioning, conditions needing hormone treatment, and menopause. These can bring about symptoms which could affect a colleague at work.

This policy focuses on menopause and uses a few key terms defined below:

Menopause the point at which a woman's oestrogen levels decline, and she stops having periods. Menopausal symptoms are typically experienced for several years for it's best described as a 'transition' rather than a one off event.

Perimenopause this is the phase leading up to the menopause when a woman's hormone balance starts to change, and when she may begin to experience menopausal symptoms. For some women this can start as early as their twenties or as late as their forties.

WHO IS THIS POLICY FOR?

This policy is for:

- Employees who experiencing menopausal symptoms
- Line managers of employees who are menopausal symptoms and how they can support employees
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WHY IS THIS POLICY IMPORTANT?

The menopause is experienced by most women, usually between the ages of 45-55, though some women can experience it earlier than this, due to 'premature menopause' or surgery. Symptoms can manifest both physically and psychologically, are different for everyone, and for a quarter of women they are severely debilitating. Symptoms can have a huge effect on a woman's comfort and performance when working. This policy is there key to ensure COMPANY NAME provides an inclusive and supportive working environment at work and whilst working from home for women experiencing the menopause.

Symptoms vary greatly and commonly include, but are not limited to:

- Hot flushes
- Night sweats
- Anxiety
- Dizziness
- Fatigue

- Memory loss
- Depression
- Headaches
- Recurrent urinary tract infections
- Joint stiffness, ache and pains
- Reduced concentration
- Heavy periods

This policy sets out the support available to women before, during and after menopause. It is designed to ensure women suffering with menopause symptoms can feel empowered to ask for adjustments to each symptom without embarrassment. To enable them to carry out their daily routine in a safe working environment whether at home or at work. Also to support open discussions with colleagues and line managers so they feel part of the an inclusive work culture.

WHAT ARE THE DETAILS OF THE POLICY?

Minor adjustments to a colleague working environment can make a huge difference. If an employee is experiencing menopausal symptoms, the following options are available:

Desk Fans

When at work desk fans can be made available, if none are free then with line manager approval they can be ordered from the relevant COMPANY NAME office stationery supplier. Please do ensure the fan is electrical tested and approved before use.

Quiet/Cool Room

It can be helpful to take time out to help manage symptoms when work at home, however if you are at work then please make sure of a quiet room. This can either be a break area or a dedicated quiet room depending on your location. There is a Quiet Room (also the Prayer Room). If you need help identifying a quiet area at your place of work please reach out to the local workspace coordinator.

Occupational Health

A work place assessment can ensure that a colleagues physical environment, whether at home or in the office, is not making their menopausal symptoms worse. Colleagues in the UK can work with their line manager to submit a OH referral form, found in Manager Central on INTRANET Occupational Health Referral (sharepoint.com) or link with your GP. For colleagues in the rest of the cluster you can link with your doctor and if needed ask for a referral to our private medical provider for an assessment.

Working Flexibly

COMPANY NAME recognises that being able to work flexibly is the key to anyone suffering as a result of transition through the menopause and aims to be support wherever possible. COMPANY NAME has an established Flexible Working Arrangement policy that can be found on INTRANET that allows employees to request formal and informal changes to their working pattern.

However, should a colleague require a temporary flexible working change these arrangements can include:
More breaks and time away from the computer

Flexibility to work in other areas of the building when at work

Earlier start and finish times to avoid peak travel times when using public transport to travel to the office

- A request to reduce working hours on a temporary basis (please note usually if for more than 6 weeks then a permanent Flexible Working Agreement is required)
- Turning their camera off when on Teams calls

These should be discussed and agreed with colleagues line managers in advance and reviewed on a regular basis to ensure adjustments continue to meet the needs of the colleague.

Sickness Leave

A colleague may feel unwell and unfit for work due to menopausal symptoms and if so sickness absence support is available. Details of our Sickness Absence policies are available on INTRANET under HR Resources, they vary depending on the country the colleague is contracted to so please do check the details for the relevant country. However all terms are generous and aimed at supporting paid absence where needed.

A colleague can simply inform their line manager they are unfit for work, however we also hope they can be open about the reason for their menopause related absence with their line manager without fear of being discriminated against.

Support

COMPANY NAME aims to facilitate an open, understanding working environment. We encourage employees to inform their line manager that they are experiencing menopausal symptoms at an early stage to ensure that the necessary support can be arranged. Employees who do not initially feel comfortable discussing the issue with their direct line manager may find it helpful to have a confidential conversation with:

- Human Resources
- Employee Assistance Programme
- A trusted colleague

Counselling

Employees suffering from menopausal symptoms may find it most useful to speak to someone who is specially trained in this specific condition. COMPANY NAME therefore recommends speaking to one of the specialist organisations recommended under the 'Where' section below. COMPANY NAME also provides access to a confidential counselling service via Employee Assistance Programme, which can be found on INTRANET. The service offers support, expert advice and counselling. It is free and easy to access and is available online or on the telephone 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

HOW DO YOU NOW GO ABOUT THINGS?

The following identifies our responsibilities as employees, colleagues, line managers and COMPANY NAME.

Employees are encouraged to:

- Educate themselves about menopause and become familiar with the terms of this policy. Understand what information is available and seek advice and guidance when needed.
- Be as open and honest as possible with line managers – reviewing and working through the available options together to ensure appropriate measures that support your needs are in place, which also allows their line manager to make any necessary arrangements.
- Agree to keep their line manager and COMPANY NAME informed to ensure that the right support is being provided.
- If unable to speak to their line manager, or if their line manager is not supportive, speak to one of the people mentioned in the 'Support' section (above).

Line Managers are encouraged to:

- Ensure they are aware of the support COMPANY NAME provides and the terms of this policy.

- Ensure all members of their team are aware of this policy and know where to find information and seek support.
- Ensure they listen to the needs of each employee individually and are open and willing to have discussions around the menopause, ensuring confidentiality where requested by the employee
- Work together with the employee to ensure that the right support is provided that satisfies the employee and COMPANY NAME's needs.
- Ensure check-ins are in place to review any support and make any necessary adjustments to an employees working environment or patterns that are required form both COMPANY NAME and the employees perspective. These regular check-ins are particularly important when working remotely, as it can be harder to spot when an employee is suffering.

COMPANY NAME will:

- Ensure it reviews its health and wellbeing policies and practices on a regular basis.
- Ensure its health offerings have provisions to support employees experiencing the menopause.
- Listen to and work with employees to support and drive change in relation to the menopause.

WHERE CAN YOU GET RELATED INFORMATION?

UK

Menopause matters, which provides information about the menopause, menopausal symptoms and treatment options <https://www.menopausematters.co.uk/>

The Daisy Network charity provides support for women experiencing premature menopause or premature ovarian insufficiency <https://www.daisynetwork.org/>

The Menopause Café provides information about virtual events where strangers gather to eat cake, drink tea and discuss the menopause [The Menopause Cafe Tickets, Multiple Dates | Eventbrite](#)

Henpicked an online community that gives women a place to have their say, promote healthy debate and bring about positive change. They also provide lunch and learn vidoes with industry wide experts [Home - Henpicked](#)

Megs Menopause an 'honest and frank' look at all things menopause [MegsMenopause - #1 Women's Health Platform - A Woman Is Forever](#)

CIPD Practical Guide for People Managers offers guidance on supporting employees going through the menopause including ways to approach conversations appropriately and sensitively. [A guide to managing menopause at work: guidance for line managers \(cipd.co.uk\)](#)

We are always looking to build our list of useful resources for staff. Please do let us know if you find an organisation or website not already included helpful.