

Menopause Policy

1. Scope

- 1.1 This policy applies to all Salaried staff and Hourly Paid Workers.

2. Aim of policy

- 2.1 This policy is designed to assist the company to recognise the importance to understand and support colleagues through all factors relating to menopause.
- 2.2 Creating an environment in which all our colleagues feel informed about menopause and are comfortable and confident talking about its impact.
- 2.3 Ensuring the company are better positioned to raise wider awareness and understanding.
- 2.4 Identifying and minimising menopause-related sickness absence and encouraging the retention of menopausal colleagues to preserve a skilled and experienced workforce within the company.

3. What is Menopause?

- 3.1 Menopause is a biological process that signals the end of a woman's ability to conceive a child. It usually happens between the ages of 45 and 55, but it can be earlier or later. Some women can also experience medical surgical menopause which is caused by specific medical conditions and or treatments.
- 3.2 Menopause produces a range of physical and psychological symptoms that can affect many aspects of life and may continue for a number of years. Everyone is different and will not be affected in the same way or to the same extent.
- 3.3 Common symptoms may include;
 - Irregular periods - Heavier or Lighter
 - Hot Flushes
 - Skin changes (dryness, acne, general itchiness)
 - Headaches
 - Poor concentration and Memory
 - Low Mood or Anxiety
 - Lack of Confidence
 - Palpitations
 - Weight Gain
 - Fatigue
 - Joint and Muscle Pain
 - Reduced Libido

4. Key Terms

Perimenopause - The time leading up to menopause when menopausal symptoms can be experienced. Symptoms can start a few months or even years before periods stop.

Menopause - Refer to clause 3.1

Premature Menopause - Approximately 1 in 100 affected people will experience menopause before 40 years of age (naturally or as an effect of a medical condition or treatment).

Post Menopause - The time after the last period.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 *Company Responsibilities*

- 5.1.1 Ensuring that menopause becomes a normal part of health and wellbeing conversations.
- 5.1.2 We fully accept our responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and we have zero tolerance to discrimination, bullying or harassment of any kind.
- 5.1.3 Ensuring any risks are appropriately managed in line with our Health and Safety Policy and Procedures.
- 5.1.4 To build a culture of openness, trust, sensitivity, and respect around what is for many a challenging time in their lives.
- 5.1.5 Become familiar with this policy in addition to any other policy which may link to this or the situation, including but not limited to; Sickness and Absence, Bullying and Harassment, and Diversity Policy.
- 5.1.6 It is important to recognise the symptoms of menopause to ensure the affected colleagues are treated fairly. Often certain adjustments need to be made to a colleague's role, working environment or working day.

5.2 *Employee Responsibilities*

- 5.2.1 All employees have a responsibility in promoting equality and dignity in the workplace and not to discriminate unfairly or harass colleagues, nor encourage others to do so or tolerate such behaviour.
- 5.2.2 Employees are encouraged to challenge any unacceptable behaviours should they either witness or experience them directly. Disciplinary action, including dismissal, may be taken against an employee found guilty of unfair discrimination, harassment and/or victimisation.
- 5.2.3 To take reasonable care and responsibility for their own health and well-being.
- 5.2.4 Be open to having conversations with their line manager, a member of HR or a well-being champion about how menopause is impacting them.
- 5.2.5 To ensure all staff are treated with dignity and respect.

6. Helping you through the menopause

- 6.1 We recognise that for those undergoing menopause, it may be reasonable to adjust the role and working environment. We will work with the employee to understand their needs and discuss with the client if applicable, the employee may wish to seek medical advice from a medical professional. Things to be considered could include:
- Putting in place relevant equipment to assist in the management of the employees' symptoms.
 - Making a room available for rest
 - Making a quiet working space
- 6.2 Workplace adjustments will be made on a case-by-case basis and will not determine how other cases will be supported.

7. Workplace support

- 7.1 We offer support to both the employee and their manager to help manage the Menopause whilst at work.
- 7.2 We recognise that Occupational Health can play a key part in ensuring the health and well-being of an employee in the workplace. We may recommend an Occupational Health referral, or we may seek advice from the employees' GP to understand what reasonable steps may be required going forward.
- 7.3 We offer an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) that gives the support that they need to help them manage their health and well-being issues effectively. Health Assured offer a confidential counselling service for our employees and their family members who live with them. Health Assured can be contacted 24 hours a day on **0800 030 5182**.

The EAP service can also provide line managers with guidance to help them support their employees in the workplace. The website provides information and advice relating to depression, anxiety, and physical health you can find this here <https://healthassuredeap.co.uk/>

8. Risk Assessment

- 8.1 As part of our health and safety responsibilities, we ensure that our risk assessment takes account of those going through menopause. Any significant hazards and risks identified will be assessed and the findings recorded in writing. A risk assessment will be sent to you once you have contacted your manager or HR.

9. Resources

- The NHS website has some good, basic information about menopause
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/menopause/>
- The British Menopause Society
<https://thebms.org.uk>
- Women's Health Concern
<https://www.womens-health-concern.org>

10. Approval

10.1 Policy approved by the Managing Director October 2022