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1. Introduction

- 1.1. Atos is committed to providing an inclusive and supportive working environment for all employees.
- 1.2. For the purposes of this document Atos will refer to 'woman' or 'women' or 'her' however Atos recognises that people may identify with different genders and still experience Menopause or Menopausal symptoms.
- 1.3. Menopause affects every woman and whilst it is possible for Menopause to occur at any age it typically affects women aged between 45 and 55 in the majority of cases. For approximately 80% of women who go through the menopause, the transition can be a difficult one with noticeable symptoms that can vary from mildly disruptive to debilitating. With the appropriate support, Menopause can become easier to manage.
- 1.4. Menopause is not a taboo subject. As an organisation Atos understands the impact Menopause can have on a person, and recognises that to be able to talk about it openly, without any embarrassment or judgement is key to ensuring our employees feel able to continue their work in a supportive and inclusive environment.
- 1.5. The changing age of the UK's workforce means that a large and increasing proportion of Atos employees are working whilst experiencing Menopausal symptoms.
- 1.6. The menopause affects all women as well as some transgender, intersex and non-binary individuals. It can also often indirectly affect their partners, families and colleagues. Research shows that most employees don't feel comfortable discussing menopause-related health problems with their line manager and are reluctant to ask for the support or adjustments that they may need.
- 1.7. This policy provides clarity of what menopause is and sets out the guidelines for all employees on providing suitable support to manage menopausal symptoms at work.

2. Purpose

2.1. The purpose of this policy is to:

- 2.1.1. Ensure that all employees know and understand what the Menopause is
- 2.1.2. Foster an environment in which colleagues can openly and comfortably initiate conversations, or engage in discussions around the Menopause
- 2.1.3. Encourage an environment where people who are experiencing the Menopause and suffering symptoms, know they are supported by their line manager and colleagues; and understand how to discuss and request reasonable adjustments so that they can continue being successful in their roles.
- 2.1.4. Support in reducing absence due to symptoms of the Menopause by working with Atos employees to provide reasonable adjustments to enable their continuance of work.
- 2.1.5. Ensure where relevant that unavoidable absences due to the Menopause are accurately recorded and not mis-recorded as absence for other reasons.
- 2.1.6. Provide insights and support to managers of what Menopause symptoms are and how they can support menopausal employees in the workplace.
- 2.1.7. Assure all employees that we are a responsible employer, committed to supporting needs during menopause.

3. Scope

3.1. This policy applies to all UK&I employees. An employee may be directly or indirectly affected by menopause in one or more of the following ways;

- Personal experience of the menopause
- As a line manager with menopausal employees
- As an employee with menopausal colleagues
- Through a close family member or friend experiencing menopause.

4. What is the Menopause?

4.1. Definitions:

- 4.1.1. **Perimenopause** is the time leading up to menopause when changes begin to occur. The ovaries begin to shut down and whilst functional still they can behave unpredictably leading to irregular periods and heavy bleeding when menstruation does occur. It is possible for women experiencing the Perimenopause to still become pregnant because their ovaries remain active. Perimenopause can occur up to 4 years before the body reaches a Menopause state. It is during the Perimenopause stage that the typical Menopause symptoms (see Section 5 of this document) commence.
- 4.1.2. **Menopause** is defined as having occurred when a woman has not had a period for twelve consecutive months. The typical Menopause symptoms continue to be felt by most women who have reached Menopause and during their Post Menopause state.
- 4.1.3. **Post menopause** is the time after menopause has occurred, starting when one has not had a period for twelve consecutive months. Menopause symptoms often continue for at least two years after Menopause has occurred though recent medical evidence suggests that more women than initially thought, continue to experience Menopausal symptoms throughout their lifetime after the Menopause has occurred.
- 4.1.4. **Post-Surgical Menopause** is a state where a woman has undergone the surgical removal of the ovaries for medical purposes. In such cases women will immediately enter into the Menopause irrespective of whether they were in a Perimenopausal state prior to the medical undertaking. An example of such surgery would be 'complete hysterectomy' or an 'oophorectomy'.
- 4.1.5. **Chemical Menopause** is a state where a woman has undergone a complete shutting down of the ovaries through chemical injection for medical purposes. In such cases women will immediately enter into the Menopause irrespective of whether they were in a Perimenopausal state prior to the medical undertaking.

4.2. Background:

- 4.2.1. The menopause usually occurs between the ages of 45 and 55. In the UK, the average age is 51, but it can happen much earlier. Many experience the menopause before 45 (**early menopause**) and around 1 in 100 experience the menopause before the age of 40 (**premature menopause**).
- 4.2.2. Some non-binary, transgender and intersex people may also experience menopausal symptoms. Due to a variety of factors, the experience of the menopause may be different for those within these communities. Experiences and perceptions of the menopause may also differ in relation to disability, race, religion and sexual orientation. Some men can experience similar symptoms to the menopause because of changes in hormones or other medical conditions. It is important to recognise that for many reasons; individual experiences of the menopause may significantly differ.

5. Symptoms of the Menopause

5.1. It is important to note that not everyone will notice every symptom, or even need help or support. However, 80% of those going through menopause do experience some symptoms, and 20% could be classed as severe.

5.2. Whilst all experiences of the menopause will be different, most can expect to experience some of the following physical and psychological symptoms (but not limited to):

5.2.1. **Hot Flashes/night Sweats** - hot flushes are experienced by most and described as a sudden feeling of heat, starting in the face, neck or chest, before spreading throughout the whole body. Most flushes last only a few minutes but during this time there can be sweating with the face, neck and chest becoming red and patchy. For some, these can be occasional, but others may have many on a daily basis – and though generally harmless, these can be uncomfortable, disruptive and embarrassing.

5.2.2. **Sleep disturbances/difficulties sleeping** – such as insomnia and sleep-disordered breathing, sometimes due to hot flushes and/or night sweats, though it may also be as a result of the anxiety felt during menopause. This can, in turn lead to fatigue and lethargy.

5.2.3. **Mood fluctuations** - including low mood and increased susceptibility to anxiety, which can also lead to tiredness, tearfulness and an inability to focus.

5.2.4. **Poor concentration** – and or loss of memory.

5.2.5. **Headaches and migraines**

5.2.6. **Hair Thinning/Hair Loss**

5.2.7. **Heavy/light periods** – including clots, and some periods may last longer. Periods are usually irregular and harder to prepare for.

5.2.8. **Flooding** – different to a heavy period, Flooding is a significant and sudden loss of blood which cannot be contained by traditional sanitary products. Flooding occurs without warning and potentially also lasts for an extended time. Flooding can be embarrassing to the person affected as it is a noticeable issue to other people nearby and furthermore if it continues can lead to other medical complications such as anaemia.

5.2.9. **Loss of confidence**

5.2.10. **Lack of Libido**

5.2.11. **Anxiety/panic attacks/palpitations** – loss of breath and more noticeable heartbeats.

5.2.12. **Skin irritation**

5.2.13. **Urinary problems – ranging from urinary incontinence and** recurrent urinary tract infections or the need to visit the toilet with more urgency.

5.3. Other important facts of note concerning Menopausal symptoms

5.3.1. Symptoms can occur without warning and can vary in their severity and frequency.

5.3.2. Symptoms cannot always be easily controlled or managed

5.3.3. Whilst this document provides an overview of the common Menopausal symptoms each person will have a different experience.

6. Responsibilities

6.1. All employees are responsible for:

- Familiarising themselves with the Menopause Policy and applicable training as available
- Ensuring an open and respectful working environment
- Support their colleagues going through menopausal symptoms

All employees experiencing Menopausal symptoms are responsible for:

- Taking time to look after their health and wellbeing
- Having open and honest discussions with their line manager should they feel they require further support; or if that is not possible, reach out to HR or an Atos Menopause ambassador for support and guidance.

6.2. All line managers should:

- Understand and utilise the Menopause policy along with any other supporting materials
- Be prepared and approachable to engage in open conversations about menopause
- Appreciate the personal nature of the discussions with employees about menopause, and doing so in a professional, confidential and sensitive manner
- Use the guidance in the Appendix, recognising and reviewing together, before agreeing how best the employee can be supported, and any adjustments that may be required
- Clearly record adjustments agreed, and any supportive actions to be put into place
- Regularly review any adjustments and maintain ongoing discussions and review

6.2.1 Where adjustments are ineffective, or if symptoms are proving more challenging, where the line manager is unable to support, managers should:

- Discuss and agree if an Occupational Health referral is appropriate for further advice, seeking to implement any recommendations in line with the OH process
- Update the action plan, and continue to review

6.3. HR can:

- Offer guidance to managers on the explanation of this policy and guidance
- Attend training sessions and webinars to better understand and then effectively distribute to employees
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of this policy

6.4. Occupational Health are there to:

- Carry out a complete assessment of employees as to whether or not menopause may be contributing to their symptoms and wellbeing
- Provide advice and guidance in line with current research
- Suggest appropriate sources of help and advice (see section 9)
- Provide support and advice to HR and Line Managers in determining and agreeing reasonable adjustments, where necessary
- Monitor referrals due to menopause symptoms, and provide additional signposting

- 6.5. Legal & General's (via Health Assured) EAP service will:
- Provide access to 24/7 telephone counselling and face-to-face counselling for all employees; Employee Assistance helpline on **0800 316 9337 (freephone) or Republic of Ireland - 1800 936 071** or online at www.legalandgeneral.com/eap using login: worklife and password: worklife
 - Provide on-line advice sheets and sources of support in addition to what can be found within this policy

7. Links to other Atos policies

7.1. Flexible Working

- Flexible Working incorporates a wide variety of working practices. All employees are entitled to make a request for Flexible Working arrangements in line with company policy, for consideration by management. Part time or shift working are two common Flexible Working arrangements.

7.2. Emergency Time Off

- The policy confirms the types of time off which employees may be eligible for, if it is paid and the authorisation process.

7.3. Access to Work

- Access To Work (ATW) is a UK government scheme run by Jobcentre Plus that covers the financial cost of providing solutions that would otherwise not be considered a 'reasonable adjustment'.

7.4. Occupational Health (OH), Wellbeing & EAP Programme - Suite of Information

- The Occupational Health (OH), Wellbeing and EAP Service provide advice and support to managers and employees on work related health problems and health problems that can affect work.
- Occupational health advice can assist organisations to include rehabilitation programmes, disability adjustments and the management of existing work-related health problems.

7.5. Sickness absence

- Supporting employees through their illness, sickness absence and to return to work.
- Recurrent (short term) sickness absence that is impacting on an employee's ability to carry out their role effectively to the required standard.
- Long term Absence (Long term sickness absence is defined as any period of linked sickness absence lasting longer than 4 weeks).
- For UK&I employees: All sickness absence should be reported to and recorded on the OHIO system by telephoning 0330 660 0365.
- Dr@Hand provides secure video and telephone GP consultations and a suite of healthcare management tools. This means you can access the service from wherever you are in the world and receive expert medical advice to ensure you remain healthy. Whether you are feeling under the weather before you go to bed, are too busy to leave the office, or are away on business or leisure, Dr@Hand makes it simple for you to book a same-day appointment with a Dr@Hand GP using your computer or mobile device via their web, iOS and Android apps.

7.6. Dignity at Work

- Atos will not accept harassment or bullying in the workplace and is committed to maintaining a work environment where everyone is treated with dignity and respect.
- Every employee carries responsibility for ensuring that no member of the team suffers as a result of undignified, embarrassing or unwanted behaviour which would have a damaging effect on the individual and would be detrimental to the performance of the team and to the professional image of the organisation as a whole.

7.7. Health, Safety and Environment Suite

- Atos and its employees have both a moral and legal responsibility to ensure the safety at work of employees and others who may be affected

by our acts or omissions. It is for these reasons that the Company has a Health, Safety and Environment Policy in place, along with a number of new procedures and put it into a Health, Safety and Environment Management System.

7.8. Stress management

- To conduct an Individual Stress Risk Assessment, the Line Manager should complete the assessment with the employee. Employees should also be encouraged to use the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) when stress is identified or the Stronger Minds helpline available through AXA Private Medical, if the employee is eligible.

Copies of all of the policies referenced above can be found on the MyHR library accessed via the Alpha home page.

8. Self-help and guidance

8.1. Don't Suffer in Silence...

Consider the following:

- Discussing symptoms and seeking support from your line manager. If you don't feel able to talk to your direct line manager, at least initially, you can talk to another manager or colleague in your department, your local MyVoice representative, a Menopause Ambassador or the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) EAP by contacting Legal & General (see section 6.5 for contact details).
- Consulting your GP on managing the menopause and to ensure the symptoms are not the result of anything else
- Getting a referral to a Menopause Specialist via your AXA private medical insurance, if you're eligible. (You can identify beforehand a local Menopause specialist in your area before contacting AXA by viewing the 'British Menopause Society' website)
- Utilising the experiences of others through discussions with the Menopause Ambassadors, associated forums (notices of which will be published in Atos Bulletins) and colleagues.

9. External links to support

Employee Assistance Programme - All employees can access a **free confidential service of specialist counselling and support** through EAP by contacting the Legal & General's helpline (via Health Assured) on **0800 316 9337 (freephone) or Republic of Ireland - 1800 936 071** or online at www.legalandgeneral.com/eap using login: worklife and password: worklife

Henpicked - This site provides information on managing menopause, and an insight into the experience of others - see <https://henpicked.net/menopause/>.

National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidelines. These explain how your GP will determine what types of treatments and interventions they can offer you. You can find out more information by using the following link <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng23/ifp/chapter/About-this-information>.

Menopause information, providing up-to-date, accurate information about the menopause, menopausal symptoms and treatment options can be found at <http://www.menopausematters.co.uk/>

The Daisy Network provides insight into **Premature Ovarian Insufficiency (POI)** information and support on very early menopause - <https://www.daisynetwork.org.uk>.

Information on Hysterectomy. The NHS provides an insight into surgically induced menopause following a hysterectomy – see <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/hysterectomy/considerations/>

The Faculty of Occupational Medicine (FOM) has produced guidance on menopause and the workplace. PDF can be found via the following link <https://www.som.org.uk/sites/som.org.uk/files/Guidance-on-menopause-and-the-workplace.pdf>

The Menopause Exchange sends out a **free quarterly newsletter with useful impartial help and support on coping with the menopause** using Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT), prescribed medicine alternatives to HRT, complementary therapies and medicines as well as self-help lifestyle tips – see <http://www.menopause-exchange.co.uk/>

The National Sleep Foundation covers sleep **issues and the menopause** – see <https://www.sleepfoundation.org/articles/menopause-and-sleep>

Simply Hormones - Menopause: **A Guide for Men provides information to help men understand more about the menopause**, including some “helpful hints” - <https://simplyhormones.com/mens-page/>

What you eat can affect your symptoms through the menopause, this guide shares what foods to eat and why foods to avoid when it comes to **alleviating menopause symptoms** - <https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/menopause-diet>

Hormone replacement therapy (HRT) is a treatment used to relieve symptoms of the menopause. The NHS have provided a useful overview of HRT – see <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/hormone-replacement-therapy-hrt/>

The British Menopause society is a list of UK accredited gynaecologists who are Menopause experts in your area <https://thebms.org.uk>

Appendix 1 – Guidance for Menopause discussions between Line Managers and Employees

Atos recognises that everyone is different, and it is, therefore, not feasible to set out a structured set of specific guidelines. The contents as stated herein are suggested recommendations for points of discussion.

If an employee would like to speak about their symptoms, or just to talk about how they are feeling (they may not recognise themselves that they are symptomatic), or if an employee requests to speak about a family member, please ensure that you:

- Allow adequate time to have the conversation
- Find an appropriate room to maintain confidentiality
- Encourage an open and honest discussion
- Ask simple, open and non-judgemental questions
- Show empathy and understanding
- Avoid making assumptions or being prescriptive
- Suggest ways in which they can be supported
- Agree actions, and how to effectively implement them (use the Appendix 1a template to record the meeting, so that all parties agree what has been discussed, and the next steps, before the meeting ends). Ensure that this record is treated as confidential, and is stored securely
- Agree if other team members should be informed, and who by
- Ensure that follow up meetings are arranged. Do not rely on quick queries during chance encounters

Finally, discuss whether the employee has visited a medical practitioner, depending on the discussion, this may be the next step suggested.

If they have visited a medical practitioner, and are being supported by them, but still require further support it may be useful at this point to make an Occupational Health referral to give specific advice regarding the workplace.

It may also be beneficial to advise around the support that can be provided via Dr@Hand, which provides secure video and telephone GP consultations and a suite of healthcare management tools. You can access the service from wherever you are and receive expert medical advice to ensure you remain healthy. Whether you are feeling under the weather before you go to bed, are too busy to leave the office, or are away on business or leisure, Dr@Hand makes it simple for you to book a same-day appointment with a Dr@Hand GP using your computer or mobile device via their web, iOS and Android apps. Access the service via MyHR library, accessed from the Alpha home page.

Appendix 1a – Confidential Menopause Discussion Template

Employees details:			
Name:		Job Title:	
Das ID:		Division/Location:	

Present at meeting:	
Date of discussion	

Summary of Discussion:

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Agreed Actions/Adjustments:

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Date of next review meeting.....

Signed (Employee).....

Signed (Manager).....