



Menopause at work

Guidance for colleagues and line managers

We are committed to encouraging a supportive and inclusive culture where all colleagues feel respected and valued. We're passionate about the health and wellbeing of our colleagues and about creating an environment where everyone can reach their full potential.

We are an inclusive employer and this guidance recognises that colleagues of all genders and gender identities can experience hormonal changes.

We want to make sure menopause is a subject we're all comfortable with talking about openly, so we can offer the right support to those who need it. Some people don't discuss menopause-related health problems with their line managers, but this can mean they aren't getting the support they may need. We want to make sure all of our colleagues feel they can turn to us for support if menopause is affecting them at work.

Importantly, menopause awareness is for all colleagues, not just those experiencing symptoms.

This guidance document is for all colleagues and line managers. It doesn't form part of your terms and conditions of employment and may be amended at any time.

What is menopause?

Menopause is defined as the biological stage when menstruation stops. Menopause is classed as having reached menopause when periods have stopped for 12 consecutive months.

Perimenopause is the time leading up to menopause, symptoms may be noticeable as the balance of hormones changes. This can be years before menopause.

Postmenopause is the time after the menopause has been reached.

The facts about menopause

The average age of reaching the menopause is **51**. It's usually between the ages **45-55** but can be much earlier than this either naturally or due to illness or surgery.

While not everyone experiences symptoms, **3 in 4** do, and **1 in 4** experience severe symptoms. Providing support for those experiencing symptoms can make a significant difference to their work and personal life.

Symptoms of menopause

There's a range of symptoms, both physical and psychological, and the ones most commonly reported to have an affect at work include:

- Hot flushes during the day or night
- Difficulty sleeping, insomnia or fatigue
- Low mood, depression or changes in mood

- Nervousness, worry or anxiety
- Reduced ability to concentrate or focus
- Problems with memory recall
- Migraines or headaches
- Aches and pains
- Irregular and/or heavy periods
- Urinary issues, e.g. increased frequency

Menopausal symptoms may begin during the perimenopause stage which can be years before menopause.

Everyone experiences menopause differently, symptoms can vary in length and could also change over time. That's why it's important we understand how to support our colleagues individually.

Understanding menopause means also thinking about long-term health too. As hormone levels change, overall wellbeing can be affected, in particular their heart and bone health.

Let's talk about menopause

Menopause is not something that only those going through it need to know about. All colleagues and managers, have a part to play in creating a positive and inclusive environment. We want to support everyone's wellbeing, providing a safe and positive workplace. Everyone has a part to play.

Company	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raising awareness and understanding of menopause, its potential symptoms and the need to think about long-term health. Enabling it to be talked about openly. • Training and supporting managers to understand menopause and what workplace adjustments may help
Line partners / managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating a positive environment where colleagues feel able to discuss menopause and be open to talk about it. • Understanding the facts about menopause and how to support a colleague experiencing menopausal symptoms, including what workplace adjustments may help. • Being open to have conversations with colleagues about menopause and understanding the need for confidentiality. • Provide the right support for a colleague experiencing menopausal symptoms.
Colleagues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactively managing their own health and wellbeing and seeking medical advice, if needed, as soon as possible. • Highlighting any menopausal symptoms which are affecting them at work to their line manager. • Requesting workplace adjustments, if needed, to help manage any symptoms. • Showing respect and understanding towards other colleagues experiencing menopause symptoms and supporting them where possible.

Support for managing menopausal symptoms

If menopausal symptoms are affecting a colleague at work, it's important they ask for help and support. All conversations will be treated seriously and are in confidence.

GP	<p>We would always recommend colleagues see their GP if they're experiencing menopausal symptoms. A GP can give advice on options including lifestyle changes, natural and medical treatments.</p> <p>Here are some tips on How to talk to your GP about menopause.</p>
Line managers	<p>A colleague should talk to their line manager if menopause is affecting them at work. They can discuss what support they can provide including workplace adjustments.</p> <p>As symptoms can vary over time, so will the need for adjustments, so these are all likely to be temporary and should be regularly reviewed. Workplace adjustments will be agreed on a case-by-case.</p> <p>If you want to talk to your manager about symptoms relating to the menopause or how it's affecting you at work then it's best to set up a meeting in advance to give you both time to prepare.</p>
Menopause champions	<p>Our 'Menopause Champions' are an informed group of colleagues who feel passionately that women should feel supported throughout the menopause. They will be able to talk to you about what help is available to you within the firm and also signpost you to external resources.</p> <p>A list of our Menopause Champions can be found on theHub.</p>
Lifeworks Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)	<p>Our EAP provider has a helpful menopause toolkit available via their website.</p>

	<p>Lifeworks is a totally confidential service and is available to all colleagues 24/7. It gives useful advice and counselling on a wide range of issues that may be affecting a colleague at work or at home. Lifeworks have a free telephone service on 0800 169 1920.</p> <p>Resources are available online at login.lifeworks.com using your user specific email and password.</p>
Additional support/resources	<p>Yoga/Massage – these can be useful for managing symptoms and are provided by the firm in each office.</p> <p>Westfield Health – if you are signed up to Westfield Health you can access CBT and therapy treatments including homeopathy and acupuncture which can help with the management of some symptoms.</p> <p>Mental Health First Aiders – we have trained MHFAs in each office who can provide support and signpost anyone suffering from mental health related symptoms.</p>
Related Policies	<p>Dress for your Day</p> <p>Respect & Inclusion</p> <p>Dignity at Work</p> <p>Absence Management</p> <p>Time off (other)</p> <p>Flexible Working</p>

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