



Menopause Policy

As a company we want to support our employees through their life be that becoming parents, a carer for a relative, having a serious or disabling condition, personal life changes or through the life's natural changes such as going through the menopause. Each of these brings challenges for the individual at work and home and this awareness policy should be read alongside our flexible working, sickness absence maternity, adoption and parental leave policies.

The individual experiences of the menopause may vary greatly and it is important that those who find it a difficult time are respected. We must ensure they are treated with dignity and understanding.

The menopause is a natural part of women's life and marks the end of the reproductive cycle. Unfortunately, it is sometimes treated as a taboo subject so by explaining here the stages and some of the side effects we hope to bring greater understanding and have a culture where those affected by it can seek help from their line manager.

There are three stages:

Perimenopause. This is the stage leading up to the menopause and can start several years before the menopause. At this stage women may experience irregular periods, fatigue and other symptoms.

Menopause. Although the average age for this is 51 years it can occur earlier and can be brought on by medical treatments or illness. The average time for the menopause to be complete is five years.

Post menopause. This is the time after the individual has not had a period for 12 consecutive months.

Symptoms

Not all women will experience every symptom however medical research found that 75% of women do experience some symptoms and 25% experience severe symptoms. The list below is not exhaustive but an indication of some of the most common effects.

Physical effects

- Hot flushes and night sweats. The latter can disturb sleep not just for the individual but their partners.
- Headaches
- Fatigue
- Joint aches and pains
- Palpitations
- Anxiety and panic attacks
- The effect of the reduction in oestrogen can trigger osteoporosis/chronic arthritis
- Obesity/diabetes
- Heart disease



Psychological effects:

- Low mood/mood swings
- Poor memory and concentration sometimes described as brain fog by women.

Reasonable adjustments

We hope that anyone experiencing problems will speak to their manager and to encourage this below are some ideas of reasonable adjustments that we can make.

Many GP surgeries now run menopause clinics and we will support time off for the individual to attend any associated medical appointments.

Changes in body temperature can be alleviated by sitting by a window or having a fan by the workstation.

Having an additional set of work uniform

Looking at the individual's role if concentration and fatigue are an issue.

We hope with this policy all our employees will support each other through what can be a difficult phase.

This policy is authorised by;

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M A Rana', is shown within a light blue rectangular box.

M A Rana
Director