

Guidance document

Menopause – supporting our employees

Information for All Staff including Guidance for Managers

Author: HR Directorate (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion)
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1. Purpose

- 1.1. This guidance document has been produced to provide information for staff on how the University will support employees as a Menopause Friendly employer. It raises awareness about menopause and provides guidance for managers to ensure employees feel supported and respected.

2. Introduction

- 2.1. The University of Hull is committed to providing an inclusive and supportive working environment for all employees.
- 2.2. Menopause is defined as a biological stage in a person's life that occurs when they stop menstruating, and reach the end of their natural reproductive life. Usually, it is defined as having occurred when a person has not had a period for twelve consecutive months (for individuals reaching menopause naturally).
- 2.3. The average age for a person to reach menopause is 51, however, it can be earlier or later than this due to surgery, illness or other reasons.
- 2.4. Perimenopause, is the time leading up to menopause when a person may experience changes, such as irregular periods or other menopausal symptoms. This can be years before menopause.
- 2.5. Post menopause, is the time after menopause has occurred, starting when a person has not had a period for twelve consecutive months.
- 2.6. The changing age of the UK's workforce means that between 75% and 80% of menopausal individuals are in work.
- 2.7. The symptoms of perimenopause & menopause vary greatly and can include:
- Hot flushes
 - Night sweats
 - Insomnia
 - Anxiety
 - Dizziness
 - Fatigue
 - Memory loss
 - Depression
 - Headaches
 - Recurrent urinary tract infections
 - Joint stiffness, aches and pains
 - Reduced concentration; and
 - Heavy periods.
- 2.8. Not everyone will suffer with symptoms related to the menopause, but for some the transition (perimenopause) can be difficult.



2.9. Each of these symptoms can affect an employee's comfort and performance at work. Those experiencing perimenopause or menopausal symptoms should feel confident in discussing their needs, to ask for support and for any reasonable adjustments to be put in place, so they can continue working and play a full part in University life.

3. Our aim is to be a Menopause Friendly employer

3.1. Becoming a Menopause Friendly employer requires that,

- We work to change mindsets and attitudes towards perimenopause and menopause. Making it as easy to talk about as the weather.
- Everyone understands what perimenopause and menopause is and be able to talk about it openly. This is not just an issue for the individual, everyone needs to know so they can support colleagues, friends and family.
- Those experiencing perimenopause or menopause symptoms feel confident to discuss it and ask for support if they need it to continue being happy and successful at work and
- All managers understand menopause, can confidently have good conversations, and know how to help.

4. Commitment and progress towards our aim

4.1 The University has established an internal Menopause Network which has organised a number of events and activities. These include seminars on relevant topics including; Menopause symptoms and how to manage them; Bone density and the menopause and Menopause and the workplace. An active Teams channel and chat group has been set up and a SharePoint site is being developed. The Menopause Network is linked to other external groups notably *Menopaus'ull* and the *Menopause Cafe*.

4.2 The Network is keen to ensure that its expertise and experience informs our approach as an employer of choice to supporting women as they contend with the diverse impacts of the menopause.

4.3 The content in this document has been provided by the Menopause Network and has been endorsed (as recommended by our Lifestage Inclusion Subgroup), by the University's Social Justice and Inclusion Board (SJIB).

4.4 We now have a level 2 Menopause Friendly employer membership, to find out more about what that means follow <https://menopausefriendly.co.uk/about-us/membership-options/>. Our Menopause Friendly Accreditation provides a raft of benefits and resources to support improvements in our approach.



Managers' Guidance

5. Managers' role in supporting our aims

5.1. Our managers have an important role in our commitment to becoming a Menopause Friendly Employer and are therefore expected to:-

- Foster a working environment in which colleagues feel confident to instigate conversations, or engage in discussions about perimenopause or menopause.
- Encourage all employees to understand what perimenopause or menopause is, and the impact symptoms can have on the individual both physically and mentally.
- Ensure you have access to information in order to understand the potential symptoms and how you can support employees at work.
- Ensure anyone feels confident to discuss their needs, ask for support and reasonable adjustments so they can continue to be successful in their role.

6. Available Support

- 6.1. Every employee can ask to work flexibly. Please refer to the University's flexible working policy.
- 6.2. The University supports the Menopause Network, open to all colleagues with an interest in, or going through, perimenopause or the menopause.
- 6.3. The Healthy Hull SharePoint site contains Information and resources to support the individual to self-manage symptoms.
- 6.4. Line managers should familiarise themselves with the support and guidance available on the Healthy Hull SharePoint site.
- 6.5. Line managers are encouraged to engage in open and honest conversations in order to help and support individuals requiring adjustments in order to reduce the negative impacts of perimenopause and menopause symptoms in the workplace.
- 6.6. Occupational Health Services should be made available where appropriate via line managers and Human Resources.

7. Reasonable Adjustments

- 7.1. All employees should be treated with dignity and respect and this should be uppermost in mind during conversations about perimenopause and menopause.



7.2. Individuals should take personal responsibility for their health and seek support where need arises.

7.3. Reasonable adjustments should be considered on a case by case basis, dependent on the nature of the symptoms experienced by the individual and the needs of the University.

7.4. Reasonable adjustments could include:

- Desk fans
- Moving near to a window or away from a heat source
- Easy access to drinking water
- Adaption of prescribed uniform
- Additional uniform items
- Access to washroom facilities
- Storage spaces for a change of clothing
- Agile working arrangements
- Quiet rooms
- Noise reducing headphones
- Sanitary product provision in washrooms
- Buddy network
- Opportunities to participate in wellbeing activities

Please contact your HR Partner team [details available here](#) if you have any queries or require further assistance.

8 Confidentiality and General Data Protection Regulation

8.1 All collected data will be managed and processed in accordance with the [University's Data Protection Policy](#) and retained in line with the [University Retention Schedule](#).

8.2 Data will be securely stored within the MyHR system and physical records maintained within the individuals central HR file. In cases where deemed necessary, data may also be securely stored within relevant departments. Access to this data is restricted to staff whose responsibilities necessitate the use of such information for the execution of their roles.

8.3 For further details regarding the handling of your data, please refer to the [University's Staff Privacy notice](#) or contact the Data Protection team - dataprotection@hull.ac.uk

9 Version Control record

Version number	Summary of changes including paragraph numbers	Changes made by [name]
V2	Content onto new template. Statutory right removed at 6.1	



