


PURTON PARISH COUNCIL	MENOPAUSE GUIDELINES FOR EMPLOYEES' POLICY
APPROVED BY COUNCIL: ...12.../...06.../...23... <i>This policy will be reviewed once every 5 years unless there is a significant change in legislation or staffing requirements</i>	
Signed by Clerk: 	Dated: 13/6/23

Introduction

At Purton Parish Council, creating a place to work where our staff are safe, well and happy is a priority for us. This means supporting our employees to be at their best to be able to do their best while at work.

We want menopause to be talked about openly and without embarrassment. Menopause will be a natural part of every woman's life at some point, and it isn't always an easy transition, but with the right support it can be much better.

Whilst every woman does not suffer with symptoms, supporting those who do will improve their experience at work and in their personal lives. The changing age of the workforce means that more menopausal women are in work.

Research shows that most women are unwilling to discuss menopause-related health problems with their line manager or ask for the support or any adjustments that they may need. We want to change that. Menopause isn't just an issue for women, men need to know about it too, so they can support colleagues, friends and family.

This policy is to explain more about menopause to help you understand what support we can offer to our staff and have open conversations about it.

What is menopause?

Menopause is the stage in a woman's life when she stops menstruating and reaches the end of her natural reproductive life; usually considered as having occurred when a woman has not had a period for 12 consecutive months (for women reaching menopause naturally).

The average age for a woman to reach menopause is 51, but it can be earlier or later than this, either naturally or due to surgery or illness.

Perimenopause is the time leading up to menopause when a woman may experience changes, e.g. irregular periods or other menopausal symptoms. This can start years before menopause.

Postmenopause is the time after menopause has occurred, starting when a woman has not had a period for 12 consecutive months.

What are the symptoms?


Every woman is different.

Not every woman will experience every symptom and some may not notice any at all. However, three out of four will, and one in four could experience severe symptoms.

Symptoms can be both physical and psychological, including hot flushes, night sweats, sleep disturbance, headaches or worsening migraines, poor concentration or memory problems, depression, anxiety, panic attacks and mood changes, weight and skin changes, urinary infections, and joint pain.

Managing symptoms

There are several ways to manage any symptoms, from the medical approach to natural remedies, including dietary and lifestyle changes.

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For advice on managing their symptoms women are advised to make an appointment with their GP as they will be able to recommend what's right based on the individual's medical history and personal preference.

Talking to your manager

If you feel you are experiencing symptoms which make it difficult for you to do your work, you may want to talk to the Clerk to see what adjustments can be made to help you.

You can request:

- An appropriate time to meet, allowing enough time for the conversation
- Find a room that will keep your conversation confidential
- Explore the best ways you can be supported (see reasonable adjustment below)
- Agree on any actions or adjustments and how they can be implemented
- Ask for a follow-up meeting if needed

If in the longer term you feel you need further help or support, you may want to speak to your GP and/or request a referral to the Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing Service.

Assessing any reasonable adjustments


Reasonable adjustments will be made on a case-by-case basis. Many will be simple and won't involve any cost and may vary in the time they are needed for. During your meeting, discuss with the Clerk what your symptoms are, how they are affecting you at work, what you are doing to manage your symptoms and what could your manager do to help.

If you do not feel comfortable talking to your line manager about your symptoms you may need to request a discussion with a different manager or request a referral to the Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing Service.

Review how the adjustments are working and if they're still needed

After the adjustments have been agreed and put into place, it's important to monitor their effectiveness and agree a time for a follow-up meeting to discuss. It may be necessary to change.

Hot Flashes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temperature control for their work area. This could include offering a desk fan • Permanent access to fresh drinking water • Access to a quiet room for breaks if their work involves long periods of standing or sitting, or a quiet area if they need to manage a severe hot flush
Heavy Periods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to washroom facilities • Make sure sanitary protection is available in toilets
Headaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have access to fresh drinking water • Consider if there's a quieter space to work • Have time out to take medication if needed
Difficulty Sleeping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider flexible working arrangements to arrive later for work and options to make up time should they need to leave earlier • Consider if working from home is an option on the days when its not feasible to come in – must liaise with the Clerk to ensure they can cover services
Low Mood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct them to the Occupational Health services and recommend seeing their GP

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage them to speak out openly in their workplace with colleagues
Loss of Confidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular one-to-one discussions • Have protected time to catch up with work
Poor Concentration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjust working hours where feasible to fit times of the day when concentration is better • Review task allocation and workload • Provide list books, note board or other memory-assisting equipment • Offer quieter space to work if feasible • Reduce interruptions if possible • Have protected time to catch up with work
Anxiety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct them to the Occupational Health and their GP
Panic Attacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree time out, if required. Direct them to the Occupational Health and their own GP

Keep notes of all your discussions, including what you've both agreed to do as a result and any necessary follow-ups.

Keep these conversations and agreements confidential unless the colleague involved chooses to disclose them to other colleagues.

However, relevant staff should understand any necessary adjustments their colleagues are receiving because of their menopausal symptoms.

Below are some useful numbers and links relating to support services and information about menopause.

- National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidelines. These explain how a GP will determine what types of treatments and interventions they can offer www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng23/ifp/chapter/About-this-information
- National Health Services. This provides an overview of menopause www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Menopause/Pages/Introduction.aspx
 - Getting the best from a GP appointment <https://henpicked.net/how-to-talk-to-your-gp-about-menopause/>
 - Menopause information. This provides an overview of menopause. www.rcog.org.uk/en/patients/menopause/
- Premature Ovarian Insufficiency (POI). POI information and support on early menopause. www.daisynetwork.org.uk
 - Information on hysterectomy. This provides an insight into surgically induced menopause as a result of having a hysterectomy www.hysterectomy-association.org.uk
 - Henpicked. This provides information on managing menopause and an insight into women's stories. <https://henpicked.net/menopause/>

Date 12-6-23	Creation of New Policy to be adopted	12-6-23