

Red House Legal Briefing

Menopause Policy



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According to the latest survey by CIPD, only around a quarter (24%) of employees surveyed said their organisation has a menopause policy or support measures in place. This leaves a substantial 43% of employees surveyed that do not have a policy with the remaining third of employees unaware.

Furthermore, CIPD found that when it comes to menopause support, less than half of the organisations had menopause support networks.

Even fewer (32%) were found to provide support through occupational health or counselling and fewer still provide planned flexible working (26%), the ability to control local temperature (25%) and last minute unplanned late starts after sleep disturbances (10%). These last 3 forms of support were raised by those interviewed as the most helpful in managing menopausal symptoms at work.

Menopause is not just an issue for women. All staff should be aware of menopause so that they can support those experiencing it or otherwise affected by it.

Menopause symptoms may well impact an employee's performance, and outdated attitudes and assumptions about it could adversely affect how those employees are treated at work.

Unfortunately there are no employment laws specifically addressing menopause. However employees can use unfair dismissal and discrimination laws (eg age, disability and sex) to protect their legal rights. In fact as menopause is becoming a more widely discussed issue within the workplace, the number of employment tribunal claims is on a steep increase.

While many who experience menopause are able to carry on their working lives as normal, employers should recognise that others may benefit from adjustments to their working conditions to mitigate the impact of menopausal symptoms on their work.

Recommendations and action

1. Develop a supportive framework and ideally have a bespoke policy in place.
 - This should include clear guidance about what support is available, such as changes to working patterns and temperature.
2. Change office culture and try to break down the taboo by allowing a conversation to start using inclusive language.
3. Rethink your flexible working policy in order to better support your workforce.

4. Ensure your absence management policies are updated, that they are fair and flexible so they do not penalise anyone suffering from menopausal symptoms.
5. Educate and train line managers to ensure staff are adequately supported.

If you have any questions about this topic or need a review of any existing policy, please let us know.

Best regards

Stephen