

# MENOPAUSE AS A WORKPLACE ISSUE NOT A WOMENS ISSUE

## A PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR EMPLOYERS

### INTRO

Menopause is a natural human experience, a biological reality, and if your organisation isn't treating it as a workplace issue, you're missing out on a huge opportunity. Period.

Over 70% of the UK workforce is made up of women and people with cycles, meaning that this is an issue that will impact all businesses and employees at some point.

Losing talent because you're failing to support people through natural life stages? That's not just short-sighted, it's bad business.

Let's get stuck in!

### STEP BY STEP

Fostering an environment where menopause is openly discussed, just like the weather, creates a truly supportive environment. Education for everyone in the organization is crucial. Here's your action plan.:

#### PHASE ONE: KNOWLEDGE IS POWER

**Build a Health and Wellbeing Conversations Web Page:**  
(Pull content from [here](#))

**Action:** Every single HR member and manager must read this page. Highlight key sections, add it as part of training – do whatever it takes to ensure they've absorbed the information.

**Why:** This page should provide guidance on how to have sensitive conversations. It's like a cheat sheet for handling menopause-related discussions with empathy and professionalism.

**Acas Guidance:** Acas has laid out the groundwork for supporting staff through menopause. **Action:** share copies of [this guidance](#) to ALL employees, include it in new hire onboarding packets and make it easily accessible on your company intranet.

**Why:** This document outlines the legal and best-practice guidelines for supporting staff through menopause. It's essential for both employers and employees to understand their rights and responsibilities.

**Faculty of Occupational Medicine:** [This guidance](#) and infographic provide the hard facts and actionable steps you need to create a menopause friendly workplace. **Action:** HR team, create a one page 'Menopause at Work Facts and Tips' document or intranet page and distribute it widely.

**Why:** This provides the data-backed evidence as to why menopause support is crucial, along with actionable steps for improvement.

#### PHASE TWO: FLEXIBILITY IS KEY

**Flexible Working:** **Action:** HR team to review your current [flexible working policies](#). Are they truly flexible? Do they address the specific needs of employees experiencing menopause (e.g., flexible hours for medical appointments, adjustments to workload during difficult days)? Revamp your policies to be more inclusive and supportive. Promote these updated policies widely.

**Why:** Flexibility allows employees to manage their symptoms and maintain their work-life balance. It shows that you value their well-being and are willing to accommodate their needs.

#### PHASE THREE: WORDS MATTER

##### Internal Communication

**Campaign:** **Action:** Launch a company-wide campaign to destigmatise menopause. This could include:

- Blog posts on the company intranet featuring stories from employees (if they're willing to share) about their experiences with menopause.
- A dedicated Q&A session with a menopause expert.
- Posters and infographics raising awareness about menopause and its impact.

**Why:** Open communication creates a culture of understanding and support. It encourages employees to seek help when they need it.

**Manager Training:** Follow up on step one, this is critical. **Action:** Conduct mandatory training for all line managers on how to support employees experiencing menopause. Role-playing scenarios can be particularly helpful.

**Why:** Managers are on the front lines. They need the skills and knowledge to address menopause-related concerns with sensitivity and professionalism.

### GET IN TOUCH

Use these resources, start talking openly, and create a culture where everyone feels supported, valued, and empowered.

If you'd like further support, advice, tips or workshops, please do reach out:

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# (PERI)MENOPAUSE

## A QUICKSTART GUIDE

**Menopause is a natural biological process that marks the end of a woman or person with cycles reproductive years after 12 consecutive months without a menstrual period.**

This transition typically occurs between the ages of 45 and 55, with the average age being 51.

### Understanding the Stages

Menopause is not an abrupt event but rather a gradual transition with three main stages:

**Perimenopause:** This is the phase leading up to menopause, during which hormone levels start to fluctuate. It can last several years and is often marked by irregular periods and the onset of menopausal symptoms.

**Menopause:** This is the point when a woman or person with cycles has gone 12 consecutive months without a period. The ovaries stop releasing eggs, and estrogen production significantly decreases.

**Postmenopause:** This is the stage after menopause, lasting throughout the rest of a woman's life. While some symptoms may subside, others might persist.

### Common Symptoms

The changes in hormone levels during menopause can trigger a variety of physical and emotional symptoms, including:

**Vasomotor Symptoms:** Hot flashes, night sweats, and chills are common due to changes in the body's temperature regulation.

**Sleep Disturbances:** Difficulty falling asleep, staying asleep, or experiencing restless sleep can occur.

**Mood Changes:** Irritability, anxiety, depression, and mood swings are possible due to hormonal fluctuations.

**Cognitive Changes:** Some people experience memory problems, difficulty concentrating, and "brain fog."

**Urogenital Changes:** Vaginal dryness, painful intercourse, urinary incontinence, and increased risk of urinary tract infections can occur.

**Other Physical Symptoms:** Joint pain, muscle aches, fatigue, headaches, and weight gain are also possible.

**The severity and combination of symptoms vary greatly among people going through (peri)menopause. Here are some strategies to help manage them:**

**Lifestyle Changes:** Regular exercise, a balanced diet, stress management techniques (like yoga or meditation), and getting enough sleep can help alleviate symptoms.

**Hormone Therapy:** Hormone replacement therapy (HRT) may be an option for some people to relieve moderate to severe symptoms. However, it's essential to discuss the risks and benefits with your healthcare provider.

**Non-Hormonal Treatments:** Certain medications, such as antidepressants or gabapentin, could help manage hot flashes and mood changes. Again, it's essential to discuss the risks and benefits with your healthcare provider.

### Complementary Therapies:

Some people find relief through acupuncture, herbal remedies, or mindfulness practices, but it's important to consult a healthcare professional before trying any new therapy.

### Seeking Support

Menopause is a natural part of aging, but it can significantly impact a person's quality of life. If you or someone you know is experiencing bothersome symptoms, don't hesitate to seek support from a healthcare provider or a menopause specialist. They can help present options and develop a personalised management plan.

**Remember:** Every person's menopause experience is unique. Be patient, prioritise self-care, and don't hesitate to reach out for support when needed.

### INFORMATION AND SUPPORT LINKS

[Women's Health Concern Menopause Matters](#)  
[Daisy Network](#) for premature menopause  
[Menopause Café](#)  
[Queermenopause](#) for people who identify as LGBT+  
[Find a Menopause Specialist](#) via the British Menopause Society

**FIERCE!**  
**FOLKS!** 