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**Menopause Policy**

**Mae'r ddogfen hon hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg** / This document is also available in Welsh

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**Cardiff Metropolitan University**

**Menopause Policy**

1. **Policy Statement**
	1. Cardiff Metropolitan University is committed to providing an inclusive and supportive working environment in which colleagues can openly and comfortably instigate conversations, or engage in discussions about menopause.
2. **Scope**
	1. This policy applies to all staff and specifically women going through the menopause. It also applies to trans men and women who may suffer actual or pseudo menopausal symptoms as a result of treatment or treatment interruptions, intersex and non-binary people and also carers, spouses and partners of women going through the menopause who may be seeking support for issues they experience at home.
3. **Aims and Purpose**
	1. The policy seeks to raise awareness of the problems some people may have when experiencing menopausal symptoms.
	2. It is Cardiff Metropolitan University’s intention that it should have a culture where Menopause is not considered as taboo or ‘hidden’ and where its community can talk about menopause openly and without embarrassment.
	3. The University aims that this policy will enable those with menopause symptoms to feel confident to discuss this with their line manager or People Services representative and ask for support and any reasonable adjustments so they can continue to be successful in their roles.
	4. This policy sets out how the University will provide the right support to those who are managing menopausal symptoms at work.
	5. This policy is non contractual.
4. **Roles and Responsibilities**
	1. All members of the University community will deal with matters in relation to menopause sensitively and with due respect for the privacy of any individuals involved.
	2. Cardiff Metropolitan University will:
		* provide appropriate awareness raising, training and guidance to facilitate an understanding of the menopause within the University Community.
		* Ensure that this policy and any associated guidelines are clearly communicated.
		* Work collaboratively with staff networks, trade unions and student representatives in the best interests of all members of the university to share a more inclusive place to work and study.
	3. Employees will:
* Contribute to a positive, respectful and productive working environment where colleagues are treated with dignity and respect.
* Be open in conversations with managers, People Service and Occupational Health (OH) in relation to how their symptoms are affecting them at work and what support may help manage them.
	1. Managers will:
* Familiarise themselves with the Menopause Policy.
* Be willing to have open discussions about menopause, appreciating the personal nature of the conversation, and treating the discussion sensitively and professionally
* Agree and implement reasonable adjustments where applicable.
* Follow the employee’s lead and ensure ongoing dialogue and review dates should they ask for it.
* Where adjustments are unsuccessful, or if symptoms are proving more problematic, the Manager may:
* Refer the employee to Occupational Health
	1. Occupational Health will:
* Carry out a holistic assessment and provide advice and guidance in line with up-to-date research.
* Signpost to appropriate sources of help and advice.
* Provide support and advice to People Services Representatives and Managers in determining and agreeing reasonable adjustments, if required.
* Monitor the number of referrals that are made in relation to menopausal symptoms.
	1. People Services will
* Offer guidance to managers on the interpretation of this Policy and Guidance.
* Refer employees to Occupational Health Services when applicable.
* Support employees in securing an alternative route to support, for example, in situations where an employee does not feel comfortable about discussing the menopause with their line manager.
1. **Confidentiality**
	1. The policy seeks to ensure that employee matters relating to Menopause and associated outcomes such as absence will be dealt with sensitively and with due respect for the privacy of the individuals concerned.
	2. Employee personal data will be processed and stored in a secure location in compliance General Data Protection Regulation and Cardiff Metropolitan University procedures.
2. **Training**
	1. The University will make training available to all employees and others engaged to work at the organisation.
	2. All line managers will be appropriately sign posted to this training.
	3. Supporting information will be provided to all staff in order to raise awareness of the contents of this policy.
3. **Related University Policies**
	1. This policy should be read in accordance with other relevant University policies including the Equal Opportunities Policy, Flexible Working policy, Harassment and Bullying Policy and Procedure, Sickness Absence Policy and Leave of Absence Guidelines.
4. **Review**
	1. To ensure it is relevant and effective, this policy will be reviewed by the Equality and Diversity Delivery Group every three years or where there is a change in the University’s requirements, legislation or case law.
5. **Alternative Format**
	1. If you require this document in an alternative format, please contact Equality@cardiffmet.ac.uk or telephone 029 2020 5586.
6. **Support**
	1. Internal support can be found at:
* Occupational Health: occupationalhealth@cardiffmet.ac.uk
* With your People Service Business Partner
* Equalities Team: equalities@cardiffmet.ac.uk
* Women’s Staff Network: women@cardiffmet.ac.uk
* Trades Union Representatives: UCU@cardiffmet.ac.uk or unison@cardiffmet.ac.uk
	1. External support can be found at:
		+ - **GP Support:** If an employee is unsure whether they are experiencing menopause or would like further information about treatment of menopause symptoms then they should contact their GP.
			- **NHS Wales:** The NHS Wales website provides an overview of the menopause process, symptoms and treatments: <https://www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk/encyclopaedia/m/article/menopause/>
			- **Henpicked:** Henpicked has a wide range of resources regarding the menopause and the workplace: <https://henpicked.net/menopause-at-work/>
			- **Unison menopause webpage:** The menopause is a key issue for Unison and the website provides a range of resources that might be of use to both staff and line managers: <https://www.unison.org.uk/about/what-we-do/fairness-equality/women/key-issues/menopause/>
			- **UCU menopause guidance:** UCU has made women’s health in the workplace a priority issues in terms of their equality agenda and their guidance can be found here: <https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/9973/Supporting-menopausal-women-at-work---briefing/pdf/Supporting_menopausal_women_at_work.pdf>

**APPENDIX A: Definitions and Further Information about the Menopause**

**Definitions**

**Menopause** is defined as a biological stage in a woman's life that occurs when she stops menstruating, and reaches the end of her natural reproductive life. Usually, it is defined as having occurred when a woman has not had a period for twelve consecutive months (for women reaching menopause naturally). Women usually reach the menopause between the ages of 45 and 55 (the average age for a woman to reach menopause is 51), however, it can be earlier or later than this due to surgery, illness or other reasons. Most women experience the menopause for approximately 4 years, though a small minority will experience symptoms for up to 12 years.

**Perimenopause** is the time leading up to menopause when a woman may experience changes, such as irregular periods or other menopausal symptoms. This can be months or years before menopause.

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

**Premature Menopause** is defined as menopausal symptoms before the age of 45 due to ovarian failure. This can happen for natural reasons such as genetic reasons (a woman is more likely to experience early menopause if other women have in her family) or may be due to certain medical conditions (such as an autoimmune disease or certain infections). It is estimated that approximately 1 in 100 women will go through the menopause early.

**Medical or Surgically Induced Menopause** is defined as an immediate menopause caused by surgery (such as a hysterectomy) or certain medical treatments (such as some treatments for cancer).

**Symptoms and Treatment of Menopause**

It is important to note that not every woman will notice every symptom, or even need help or support. However, 75% of women do experience some symptoms, and 25% could be classed as severe.

Symptoms can manifest both physically and psychologically. For a list of symptoms, please refer to <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/menopause/symptoms/>

The treatment of the menopause will vary with each woman due to the range of symptoms and their severity. It has been shown that engaging in healthy lifestyle habits, such as exercise and healthy eating, can reduce the severity of symptoms. However each individual should reflect on their own unique menopause experience and seek support from their GP as necessary.

**APPENDIX B: Suggested Workplace Amendments**

Below is a list of amendments that staff and line managers may want to consider. These have been suggested by Occupational Health and it may be possible to make some of the amendments informally. However, if symptoms are severe and/or the role does not easily incorporate the amendments then a referral to Occupational Health should be made. It should also be noted that the menopause can last for several years, that each woman’s experience of menopause symptoms will be unique and this should be taken into account when making adjustments.

**Table 1: Suggested Workplace Amendments to Support Management of Menopause Symptoms**

| **Symptom** | **Factors that could worsen symptoms** | **Suggested amendments** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| * Daytime sweats, hot flushes, palpitations.
* Skin irritation, dryness and itching
 | * Lack of ventilation and unsuitable workplace temperatures
 | * Access to cold drinking water and washroom facilities.
* Thermal mapping – hot and cold spots.
* Ways to cool environment – fans, window, air conditioning
 |
| * Irregular or heavy periods
 | * Lack of access to adequate toilet facilities or ability to frequently access
 | * Ensure easy access to toilet facilities.
* Available sanitary products.
* Possible emergency cover (very heavy periods).
 |
| * Muscular aches and bone and joint pain
 | * Lifting, moving and handling
 | * Risk Assessment for MSD
 |
| * Depression, anxiety, panic attacks, mood changes, poor concentration, loss of confidence.
* Poor sleep.
 | * Excessive workload, unsupportive management and colleagues.
* Perceived stigma, bullying and harassment (often a joke is made of condition).
* Stress - negative impact on mental and physical health.
* Performance may be affected and/or workplace relationships.
 | * Stress risk assessment.
* Not penalised due to adjustments of workload, tasks or performance management targets.
* Ensure manager understand menopause.
* Flexible working where possible
* Counselling
* Quiet area
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