



Liberty Academy Trust

Menopause Policy and Guidance

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Key Information

Trust Menopause Ambassador

Dr Nic Crossley, Chief Executive Officer

If you would like to contact Nic about a matter relating to menopause or perimenopause, please email: nic.crossley@libertytrust.org.uk

Trust Wellbeing Partner

Schools Advisory Service

SAS provide a comprehensive health and wellbeing support programme, including advice on matters relating to menopause. Resources are available via the app (search 'School Wellbeing' on Google Play or the Apple App Store); or contact the Wellbeing team to explore further by email to nurse@uk-sas.co.uk or call 01773 814403.

Further Information

Wellbeing of Women.



Liberty is proud to part of the Menopause Workplace Pledge. The Pledge is promoted by the charity Wellbeing of Women. A wealth of information about the menopause and other health issues can be found on their website via this [link](#).

1 Introduction

- 1.1 At Liberty, we are committed to the wellbeing of all employees as well as providing an inclusive and supportive workplace. We recognise that employees can experience significant life events during their career with us, one of which being the menopause.
- 1.2 Research by the UK Parliament's Women and Equalities Committee found that three in five menopausal women were negatively affected at work and that almost 900,000 women in the UK left their jobs over an undefined period of time because of menopausal symptoms. This means that too many women are leaving employment "at the peak of their experience." This is impacting on the number of women in the workforce – and in leadership roles, thus reducing diversity at executive levels.
- 1.3 This policy is intended to support those undergoing peri/menopause by aiming to:
- Recognise that the menopause is not a one-off event, but a stage of a person's life and should not be a taboo
 - Promote awareness to all employees
 - Provide guidelines on how we will support employees during peri/menopause
- 1.4 We have signed up to the Menopause Friendly Accreditation Programme, and to the Menopause Workplace Pledge. We will continue to work to high standards of support and guidance for all.

2 Scope

- 2.1 This policy aims to set out how we generally intend to support employees in the workplace during perimenopause and menopause. It does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and it may be amended at any time.
- 2.2 Within the document we use the term 'symptoms'. In doing so, we recognise that, on the one hand, perimenopause and menopause are not medical conditions; but on the other hand, some find that these changes have an impact on their quality of life.
- 2.3 Colleagues should note that we all have a responsibility in promoting equality and dignity in the workplace, and to avoid discrimination. Accordingly, the policy should be read in conjunction with our Code of Conduct and our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy. The policy also forms part of our compliance with the Equality Act 2010, the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, and other relevant regulations.

3 Understanding Menopause

- 3.1 The menopause is a natural health event for most women and some trans men, non-binary and intersex people, that usually takes place in-between 40 and 55 years of age (the average age in the UK is 51), during which they have not had a period for 12 months and experience hormonal changes. It can also happen earlier or later. For many people, symptoms usually last about four years, but in some cases can last longer, sometimes up to 12 years.

- 3.2 The menopause is preceded by the perimenopause, during which the body prepares itself for menopause. The perimenopause can also last several years and can involve similar symptoms to the menopause itself. Perimenopause is not the same as premature menopause. For the purpose of this document, any reference to the menopause includes the perimenopause (and the expression 'peri/menopause' is sometimes used.)
- 3.3 Premature menopause is when an individual experiences menopause early, either naturally or through surgery or illness. Post-menopause is the time after menopause. A person who is post-menopausal may still experience menopausal symptoms for years to come.
- 3.4 Many who experience menopausal symptoms will have mild symptoms, but for others, symptoms can be severe and can greatly impact their day to day lives. While symptoms vary and each person's experience will differ, they can commonly include:
- Hot flushes or night sweats
 - Sleep disturbance, tiredness or low energy
 - Psychological symptoms that may be associated with menopause (eg anxiety, low mood, lack of confidence, difficulty concentrating, forgetfulness, brain fog)
 - Physical symptoms that may be associated with menopause (eg heart beating quickly or strongly, sore joints and bones, heavy or unpredictable menstrual bleeding)
 - Cultural (eg menopause-related beliefs, attitudes and feelings such as shame and embarrassment)
- 3.5 According to NHS Employers (2021), three out of four people get symptoms; one in four experience symptoms troublesome enough to affect day to day life. The physical and emotional impact of the menopause can be far reaching due to the symptoms outlined above, and may have a significant impact in the workplace.
- 3.6 Some individuals who are experiencing these symptoms may find their job more challenging, which in turn may affect their wellbeing, confidence, and performance. It is important that colleagues across the Trust work together to reduce the stigma around the menopause, increase our understanding and awareness of the topic and offer appropriate support while individuals go through this period in their lives.

4 Support for Individuals

- 4.1 At Liberty, we are fostering an environment in which colleagues can, if they want to, have open conversations about the menopause. We expect everyone to be supportive of colleagues who may be affected by the menopause in the workplace.
- 4.2 We're committed to taking all reasonable steps to make sure that we:
- Listen to you if you tell us about your perimenopause or menopause symptoms
 - Keep information about your health confidential

- Support you if you're experiencing menopausal symptoms, making reasonable adjustments where needed
 - Treating you with respect, not making judgements or assumptions about you based on your age or because you've told us that you're in menopause transition
 - Treat any issues of bullying and harassment in relation to health issues associated with the menopause seriously
- 4.3 Anyone affected by the menopause is encouraged to speak to their line manager or School Menopause Ambassador about their symptoms and the support they may need to reduce the difficulties the menopause can cause them at work. Early notification, where possible, will also help managers to determine the best course of action to support an individual's needs.
- 4.4 While many who go through the menopause will be able to carry on their working lives as normal, we recognise that others may benefit from adjustments to their working conditions to mitigate the impact of menopausal symptoms on their work. If you believe that you would benefit from adjustments or other support, you should speak to your line manager in the first instance.
- 4.5 Experiencing menopausal symptoms can be a sensitive and personal matter and as such, some colleagues may not wish to discuss with their manager initially. In these circumstances, please speak in confidence to your HR advisor or a trusted colleague instead. As set out above we also have a Trust Menopause Ambassador, and provide access to external support - more information is provided in Section 5.
- 4.6 Each situation will be dealt with on a case by case basis. Reasonable adjustments we can make will depend on your circumstances, but the types of changes that might help could be:
- Access to cold water while you're working
 - Easy access to toilet and washroom facilities
 - Making sure the temperature is comfortable, eg with a fan or access to fresh air
 - Adjusting your work wear requirements
 - Somewhere to store extra clothes or to change clothes during the day
 - Changing your start time if you're experiencing disturbed sleep
 - Work breaks
 - Working from home (see our Homeworking Policy for more information)
 - Time off to attend medical appointments
- 4.7 Colleagues should discuss requests with their line manager in the first instance. Depending on the circumstances, informal and/or temporary changes could be put in place to support in the short term. There is also the option to make a formal flexible working request relating to a permanent change to your working arrangement. See our Flexible Working Policy for more information.

- 4.8 In some instances, a referral to our occupational health providers may be appropriate to ensure that an individual's working environment is not making their menopausal symptoms worse, and to inform us of any further adjustments that should be considered - especially in the instances where the menopause is causing significant sickness absence or where it is directly affecting performance.
- 4.9 We are committed to ensuring the health and safety of all our staff and will consider any aspects of the working environment that may worsen menopausal symptoms. This may include identifying and addressing specific risks to the health and well-being of those going through the menopause.
- 4.10 It is also acknowledged that there may be colleagues who have partners who are having a difficult time, and may benefit from advice on how best to support their partner during the menopause. All available resources are open to all colleagues regardless of reason so please do make use of the available support and resources.

5 Support for Line Managers (and Other Colleagues)

- 5.1 The relationship between a member of staff and their line manager is key to us achieving our goals. We recognise that everybody benefits from a culture where everybody feels encouraged, wellbeing is valued, and people are able to discuss concerns in a supportive context. These general principles also apply to situations where colleagues are experiencing peri/menopause.
- 5.2 We acknowledge that these issues can be difficult for line managers, and in turn we want to ensure that they are supported in fulfilling this role. We have produced our Menopause Awareness – Support Pack for Managers, which can be found on the intranet [here](#). Further advice is provided below. Your local HR advisor can also help.
- 5.3 Line managers, and all other colleagues, are encouraged to complete the Certificate in Menopause Awareness accessed via National College [here](#) (54 mins).

What you should do:

- To assist you in your role as manager in enabling people to flourish and succeed, you should develop an understanding of peri/menopause; make use of internal and external support materials and resources, and available training.
- Try to help breakdown the stigma and embarrassment some people feel about this topic; support efforts to raise awareness, and be prepared to challenge appropriately behaviours that might detract from an inclusive environment.
- Create an environment where individuals feel comfortable disclosing health issues, ie make conversations about wellbeing standard in your monthly support and supervision meetings.
- Be open to having discussions about the menopause, ensuring confidentiality where requested; listen to people, and treat each person on a case by case basis – people don't experience menopause in the same way or need the same support.

- Be aware that some individuals may seek to downplay symptoms, so encourage an open and honest discussion where appropriate. Equally, you may find a colleague chooses not to initially discuss their symptoms with you; try not to take this to heart and remain open to a discussion when/if they feel ready to talk.
- If an individual does inform you that they are suffering with menopausal symptoms, work with them to find the right way to support them. Check-in regularly to review the effectiveness of any support measures put in place.
- Treat all conversations about the menopause sensitively and handle all information disclosed confidentially and in accordance with our Data Protection Policy.

What you shouldn't do:

- Shy away from talking about the menopause.
- Make assumptions about the menopause and how this may be affecting the individual; treat each colleague as an individual, on a case by case basis.
- Make decisions for the individual; instead signpost relevant help and agree together how to move forward.
- Provide medical advice, or personal advice where it is not wanted.
- Share personal information that has been disclosed to you without consent.

6 Further Support and Resources

Support Provided by the Trust

- 6.1 We have made a free and confidential wellbeing support service available to all staff. Schools Advisory Service (SAS) provide a comprehensive health and wellbeing support programme, including advice on matters relating to menopause. Resources are available via the app (search 'School Wellbeing' on Google Play or the Apple App Store); or contact the Wellbeing team to explore further by email to nurse@uk-sas.co.uk or call 01773 814403. Find out more about our wellbeing provision [here](#).
- 6.2 We have a Trust Menopause Ambassador. The role is currently held by our Chief Executive, Dr Nic Crossley. Nic is happy to receive emails from colleagues who wish to contact her about their experience of peri/menopause in the workplace. We have a dedicated page relating to this topic on our intranet, accessed via this [link](#).

Medical Advice

- 6.3 In situations where symptoms are particularly troubling, we encourage you to seek medical advice from your GP to determine if you are experiencing the menopause, and to explore any treatment or medication options that may be suitable for you.
- 6.4 In some instances where menopause symptoms are causing particular difficulties at work, we may seek occupational health advice to help us make suitable adjustments.

External Support (specialist agencies and charities)

Wellbeing of Women

This charity promotes the Menopause Workplace Pledge initiative, and a wealth of information about the menopause and other health issues can be found on their website via this [link](#).

Faculty of Occupational Medicine

Part of the Royal College of Physicians, this [website](#) provides guidance for women going through the menopause and experiencing an impact on working life.

Menopause Matters

An award-winning, independent website providing up-to-date, accurate information about the menopause, menopausal symptoms and treatment options. Access the website [here](#).

Balance

Provided by a third-party healthcare company, the [Balance](#) website provides a comprehensive range of guidance on the menopause. There is an app available, too.

Henpicked

The Henpicked website aims to provide a community for women to share advice. Their informative menopause resource hub can be found [here](#).

Menopause Café

Menopause Café is a charity raising awareness through pop-up café events. Find out about their events or even find out how to host one, via their [website](#).

Daisy Network

The Daisy Network is a charity more specifically for women experiencing Premature Ovary Insufficiency (POI). Find their website [here](#).

7 Data protection

- 7.1 Liberty will process any personal data collected in accordance with our Data Protection Policy. Data collected from the point at which we become aware of the issue is held securely and accessed by, and disclosed to, individuals only for the purposes of providing the necessary support.

8 Review of Policy

- 8.1 This policy is reviewed regularly by the Trust, to ensure it remains effective, and in line with good practice. This version was published in January 2025.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q Where can I find information about menopause and perimenopause?

A Some information is provided in Section 3 of this policy. Medical information can be found on the [NHS](#) website. A wide range of guidance materials and advice can be found on the internet – see the resources identified on Page 8 above, for example.

Q Can I get access to advice about menopause and perimenopause?

A We have a free and confidential health and wellbeing support service available, from Schools Advisory Service (SAS), including advice on matters relating to menopause. You can contact their Wellbeing team by email to nurse@uk-sas.co.uk or by calling 01773 814403 to discuss the support and advice they can provide.

Q Can the organisation help me if I find that peri/menopause affects my work?

A There are various possible adjustments we can work with you to consider: from physical adjustments to make your workplace more comfortable; to changes in your work pattern if that helps. See Section 4 of this policy for more information.

Q Is there anybody I can discuss concerns around peri/menopause at work with?

A Your line manager should be able to talk to you, if you want to ask us to consider adjustments to your work, or even just to discuss concerns. And/or, Nic Crossley is our Trust Menopause Ambassador, and she welcomes hearing about the experiences of people managing menopause symptoms at work, which might inform our efforts to continually improve the support we provide for people.

Q I'm a line manager, and I'm worried that I haven't got the knowledge or confidence to support colleagues in relation to menopause. What help is available to me?

A Some advice for line managers is provided in Section 5 above. We have a Support Pack for managers on our intranet [here](#). Also, consider doing the Certificate in Menopause Awareness accessed on the National Colleague [here](#).