



Harvard Park Policies and Procedures:

Menopause Support

31. Menopause Support

Harvard Park is committed to fostering an inclusive, respectful and supportive working environment for all employees. This policy outlines the support available to those experiencing menopausal symptoms and aims to ensure that everyone feels understood and valued at work.

Menopause is a natural stage of life. While some individuals experience few or no symptoms, others may find that physical and emotional changes have a significant impact on their daily lives, including their work. At Harvard Park, we encourage open and informed conversations about menopause and aim to remove any stigma or embarrassment associated with discussing it.

In the UK, the average age at which menopause occurs is 51. With an increasing number of people aged 50–64 remaining in employment, many employees will experience the menopause transition during their working years. Menopause typically occurs between the ages of 45 and 55, as oestrogen levels decline.

Premature menopause refers to menopause occurring before the age of 45 and is sometimes described as premature ovarian insufficiency. In some cases, it can affect individuals in their 30s or even earlier. Research shows that many people feel reluctant to raise menopause-related concerns with their management team or to ask for support, which can lead to unnecessary difficulties in the workplace.

This policy provides guidance for both employees and managers on how to offer and access appropriate support. Our aim is to create a culture where colleagues feel confident discussing the menopause, and where reasonable adjustments can be made to help individuals continue to thrive at work.

Aims

- Create a workplace culture where colleagues feel comfortable initiating and participating in open discussions about menopause.
- Improve understanding of menopause, enabling staff to engage in informed conversations and understand the organisation's policy and procedures.
- Equip managers with knowledge of potential menopausal symptoms and provide guidance on how to support employees effectively.
- Ensure that employees experiencing menopausal symptoms feel confident seeking support and requesting reasonable adjustments to help them remain successful in their roles.
- Reduce absence related to menopausal symptoms.
- Demonstrate the organisation's commitment to supporting employees experiencing and during the menopause.
- Reinforce the organisation's responsibility to provide a safe, inclusive, and supportive working environment for all employees.

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). 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.

- For most women, the menopause starts between the ages of 45 and 55. Premature menopause happens when a woman's periods stop before the age of 45. This is known as premature menopause or premature ovarian insufficiency. For some women, it can be experienced at a much younger age, in their 20s, 30s or even younger. It can happen naturally, or as a side effect of some treatments such as radiotherapy.
- The NHS estimates that around 1 in 100 women experience the menopause before 40 years of age. 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 years before menopause. Post-menopause is the time after menopause has occurred, starting when a woman has not had a period for twelve consecutive months.
- 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, while 4 out of 10 women do not seek medical advice even though their symptoms are worse than they expected. (Menopause in the Workplace Literature Review 2025).
- Symptoms vary greatly, and commonly include (but are not limited to):
 - hot flushes
 - night sweats
 - anxiety
 - dizziness
 - fatigue
 - memory loss
 - depression
 - headaches
 - recurrent urinary tract infections
 - joint stiffness, aches and pains
 - reduced concentration
 - heavy periods

Each of these symptoms can affect an employee's comfort and performance at work. Symptoms can manifest both physically and psychologically.

Roles and Responsibilities

All staff are responsible for:

- Taking a personal responsibility to look after their health
- Being open and honest in conversations with their setting manager and/or managing directors.
- Contributing to a respectful and productive working environment where staff can talk openly about the menopause
- Being willing to help and support their colleagues
- If a member of staff is unable to speak to their setting manager, or if their setting manager is not supporting them, they can speak to a colleague or director.

All setting managers should:

- Familiarise themselves with the Menopause Policy and ensure that those who may be going through the menopause are aware of the policy.
- Have open discussions about menopause, treating the discussion sensitively and confidentially
- Record adjustments agreed, and any actions to be implemented – this can be on a risk assessment form or on a word document which is signed and dated by both parties and kept in the staff members file.
- Ensure ongoing dialogue and regular check-ins
- Ensure staff confidentiality always should the member of staff not wish to discuss anything with their colleagues until they feel comfortable enough to do so.

Deputy Manager and/or colleagues will:

- Offer guidance to managers on the interpretation of this policy.
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of this policy in respect of related absence levels and performance.
- When policy comes under review, offer support and valid comment on the effectiveness and if it could be implemented better.

All staff should:

- Identify early signs of low wellbeing, where feeling comfortable to, inform another colleague or higher member of staff such as a room leader or setting manager.
- Talk through the individuals concerns and find out about seeking further assistance.
- Make your feelings clear and known as to how you would like to be discussed should you need support during your working hours – remember to be open and honest.

- Signpost individuals to support as needed.

Support Temperature control in settings

The setting strives to achieve a comfortable working temperature for employees and will allow flexibility within its dress code where reasonable.

Data protection

We will process any personal data collected in accordance with its 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.

Further Information

- The National Health Service provides an overview of menopause www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Menopause/Pages/Introduction.aspx
- The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidelines 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
- The Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists offer further information www.rcog.org.uk/en/patients/menopause/
- The Daisy Network provides support to women, along with the families and partners, who have been diagnosed with Premature Ovarian Insufficiency (POI) www.daisynetwork.org/
- The Royal College of Obstetricians & Gynaecologists provide information for women, their partners and families about hysterectomies www.rcog.org.uk/en/patients/menopause/hysterectomy/
- The Menopause Charity's mission is to bust myths, overcome ignorance and make menopause symptoms history www.themenopausecharity.org/
- Menopause Matters provides information about menopause, menopausal symptoms and treatment options www.menopausematters.co.uk

This Policies and Procedures pack was adjusted by Harvard Park.

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Signed on behalf of the Directors and Proprietors

Nicki Saunders and Tracey Milstead