

Menopause Policy

The Bristol Methodist District. (Charity Number 1134873)

First Issued	January 2025
Last review	January 2025

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This policy sets out the rights of employees who are experiencing menopausal symptoms and outlines the support currently available to them.
- 1.2 As a responsible employer we are committed to creating an open and supportive culture and we want you to feel comfortable speaking about how menopause-related symptoms may be affecting you at work and we want you to feel that you are able to ask for support to help you manage your symptoms.
- 1.3 This policy does not form part of your contract of employment, and we reserve the right to amend or withdraw it at any time.

2 Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to anyone working for us. This includes employees, workers, contractors, volunteers, and interns. In this policy, where we refer to the menopause, we also mean the perimenopause.

3 Definitions of menopause

- 3.1 The menopause is a natural event during which a person stops having periods and experiences hormonal changes such as a decrease in oestrogen levels.
- 3.2 The menopause usually occurs between the ages of 45 and 55 and typically lasts between four and eight years. However, menopausal symptoms can begin before the age of 40. Perimenopause, or menopause transition, begins several years before menopause. An individual may start to experience menopausal symptoms during the final two years of perimenopause.
- 3.4 While menopausal symptoms vary greatly, they commonly include hot flushes; night sweats; anxiety; dizziness; fatigue; memory loss; depression; headaches; recurrent urinary tract infections; joint stiffness, aches, and pains; reduced concentration; and heavy periods.

4 Our commitment

- 4.1 We are committed to ensuring that Line Managers are provided with adequate support so that they are able to support employees who are experiencing adverse menopausal symptoms.

5 Requesting support

- 5.1 If you are finding it difficult to cope with your work because of menopausal symptoms, we encourage you to speak to your Line Manager or a senior manager.
- 5.2 We urge you to be as open as possible about any particular issues that you are experiencing or adjustments that you need to ensure that you are provided with the right level of support.
- 5.3 Any health-related information disclosed by you during discussions with your Line Manager or senior manager will be treated sensitively and in confidence.

6 Working environment

- 6.1 If you feel that your working environment is exacerbating your menopausal symptoms, you should raise this as soon as you are able to do so with your Line Manager.

6.2 We will listen and work with you to see if there is anything practical that we can do to support you.

7 Tailored adjustment plan

7.1 On your request your Line Manager will work with you to complete a tailored adjustment plan for menopausal symptoms using our form MEPO2.

7.2 The purpose of the form is to record any adjustments that are agreed to support you in your work. It is available here or on request from our external Human Resources Business Partner.

8 Working flexibly on a temporary basis

8.1 For employees to request flexible working as a permanent change to working arrangements we have a separate process to consider this.

8.2 However, we do recognise that for anyone affected by menopausal symptoms, the option to work flexibly on a temporary rather than a permanent basis may be appropriate.

8.3 For example, temporary flexible working could include, working from home, changing your start and finish times, changes to work allocation or taking more frequent breaks. *This is not a definitive or an agreed list.*

8.4 If you feel that you would benefit from a temporary change to your working arrangement on an ad hoc basis because of menopausal symptoms, including for example sleep deprivation, or other symptoms that may be impacting on your performance, you should discuss these with your Line Manager.

8.5 We will try to facilitate temporary flexible working arrangements wherever this is possible and will continue to review these to ensure that they meet your needs.

9 Quiet place to work

9.1 If you need time out to relax, a short break to manage any symptoms or to take medication, or a quiet space to work, you should speak to your Line Manager who will try their best to accommodate this.

10 Sickness

10.1 There is no expectation on you to work if you are unwell because of menopausal symptoms and you should follow the procedure set out in your terms and conditions of employment.

10.2 You do not have to disclose your absence is related to the menopause if you wish to keep it private. However, we want you to feel that you can be open about the reason for your leave.

11 Occupational health

11.1 In some cases, we may refer you to an occupational health specialist so that they can advise on how your symptoms are impacted at work and make recommendations on the types of adjustments that may be appropriate. Occupational health may also signpost you to external sources of help and advice.

12 External sources of help

12.1 There are a number of excellent organisations that provide help and support on the menopause. We have included a few links below for information and support:

- Menopause Café: www.menopausecafe.net
- The Menopause and me: www.menopauseandme.co.uk
- The Menopause Charity: www.themenopausecharity.org
- Menopause support: www.menopausesupport.co.uk

13 Review

- 13.1 This policy may be reviewed at any time at the request of any member of staff, but it will be automatically reviewed two years after initial approval and thereafter on a biennial basis unless organisational changes, legislations, guidance, or non-compliance prompt an earlier review.

14 Definitions

- 14.1 The Bristol Methodist District ("we", "us", "our")
14.2 The Employee ("you", "your")

Document control box

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