

The Education Authority is committed to ensuring that all individuals are treated fairly and with dignity and respect in their working environment.

It is also committed to ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of all our colleagues.

The new workplace policy recognises that some people may need additional consideration, support and adjustments before, during and after the menopause.

The development of the Menopause Workplace Policy was a commitment in the EA Gender Action Plan 2019 - 2022.

The Education Authority values the contributions all our employees make to delivering better outcomes for children and young people. EA will support staff in work by having a positive attitude to the menopause, informing line managers and working proactively to make adjustments where necessary to support those who need it.



Aim of the policy

Make managers aware of their responsibility to understand the menopause and related issues and how they can affect staff.
To raise wider awareness and understanding amongst employees
To outline support and reasonable adjustments that are available

The EA aim to create an environment where staff feel confident enough to raise issues about their symptoms and ask for reasonable adjustments at work, if necessary. The EA will promote a greater understanding of the menopause and seek to eradicate any exclusionary or discriminatory practices. The policy is intended to provide clarity on how staff should deal with menopause related issues, either for individual colleagues experiencing the menopause or those who are affected indirectly for example partners, colleagues or line managers.

Definitions

The menopause is part of the natural ageing process, it refers to the point in time when menstruation has ceased for twelve consecutive months and a person has reached the end of their reproductive life. It usually happens between 45 and 55 years of age, although can happen any time up until mid 60s or a premature menopause can occur before the age of 45.

The peri-menopause, which is the period of hormonal change leading up to the menopause, can often last for four to five years although for some it may continue for many more years or for others last just a few months. During the time of the peri-menopause many may begin to experience symptoms due to changes in their hormone levels. These symptoms may vary in degree between different individuals from mild to very significant.



Key principals

It is recognised that the menopause is a very individual experience and that people can be affected in different ways and to different degrees, therefore different levels and types of support and adjustments may be needed. As menopausal symptoms are typically experienced for several years, it will be treated as a 'transition' rather than a one-off event. Appropriate information/support will be provided to all staff with regards to the menopause. Any adjustments will be considered and acted on appropriately within an appropriate timescale .

The EA supported by Trade Unions and those affected welcome the workplace policy and hope that it goes a way to addressing and alleviating staff experiences during the menopause.

A personal menopause assessment template is included at the back of the policy and can be carried out by a member of staff before approaching their line manager about adjustments to working conditions (but this is absolutely not a requirement and can also be used as a self help tool).

Awareness raising sessions will be provided over the lifetime of the policy for line managers and staff. Support can be given by the Health and Wellbeing Team or the Equality & Diversity Unit.

For more information contact: equality.unit@eani.org.uk
Or visit the HealthWell Hub: healthwell.eani.org.uk