



Menopause Policy

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Revision History

Revision Date	Version Control	Summary of changes
May 2022	V1	New policy
July 2022	V2	Amendments following feedback

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 Tamworth Borough Council (TBC) wishes to support colleagues' wellbeing at every stage in life. Women make up nearly half of the UK workforce and 45% of those people who are working are over the age of 50, so many of today's female workers will be working through the perimenopause and menopause and managing the symptoms at work.
- 1.2 54% of Tamworth Borough Council's employees are female. Of these, 52% or over the age of 50 and 76% are over the age of 40.
- 1.3 We know that many people feel uncomfortable talking about the perimenopause and menopause, which mean that some women suffer in silence whilst experiencing a wide range of symptoms that can affect their physical as well as mental health. It is time to stop viewing this as just a women's issue, rather as a workplace issue that we all have a role in supporting.

Purpose

- 2.1 The purpose of this policy is to raise wider awareness and understanding of the menopause and how this can affect employees and their work colleagues. Both managers and employees' responsibilities are set out in this policy to make clear the Council's expectations and to assure those experiencing symptoms of menopause that we, as an employer, are committed to supporting you in your role.

3 Perimenopause and Menopause as health conditions

- 3.1 The perimenopause is the period when the hormone levels start to change, women may start to notice new physical and/or mental health symptoms but are still experiencing periods. The perimenopause can last for several years and typically affects women between the ages of 45 and 54 although the age can vary from person to person.
- 3.2 A woman is described as in menopause when they have not had a period for one full calendar year or more. Menopause occurs when a person's ovaries no longer produce eggs and as a result the levels of three hormones, namely oestrogen, progesterone and testosterone fall.
- 3.3 The average age for a woman to undergo menopause transition is 51 but 1 in 100 women will experience it before the age of 40. That could be as a result of surgery, illness or treatment for other conditions such as chemotherapy. It could be for no reason at all. Perimenopause can start as early as in your twenties or as late as your forties. Therefore, assumptions should not be made about what an employee may or not be experiencing based on age.
- 3.4 While symptoms vary greatly, they can fluctuate and commonly include:
 - hot flushes;
 - night sweats;
 - sleep disturbance;
 - anxiety;

- dizziness;
- palpitations;
- fatigue;
- memory loss;
- depression;
- headaches;
- recurrent urinary tract infections;
- skin changes, dryness, itchiness;
- muscle and joint stiffness, aches and pains;
- reduced concentration
- irregular periods; and
- heavy periods.

3.5 Each of these symptoms can affect an employee's comfort and performance at work. TBC has a duty to provide a safe working environment for all employees and therefore commits to ensuring that adjustments and additional support are available to those experiencing menopausal symptoms.

3.6 If you tell your manager about your menopause transition, this will be kept confidential and won't be shared without your agreement, except where there are serious health and safety concerns.

4 Available Support

4.1 Tamworth Borough Council aims to facilitate an open, understanding working environment.

4.2 Employees are encouraged to inform their line manager that they are experiencing perimenopausal or menopausal symptoms at an early stage to ensure that symptoms are treated as an ongoing health issue rather than as individual instances of ill health. Early notification will also help line managers to determine the most appropriate course of action to support an employee's individual needs. They can also raise the issue with HR and/or Occupational Health if they need support on how the symptoms are likely to affect the employee's work and what adjustments can be made.

4.3 Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT) can help people to develop new techniques to tackle stress and manage anxiety. Physical symptoms such as hot flushes and trouble sleeping can also be helped by CBT. Our Employee Assistance Programme provider offers CBT therapy and are able to offer help and advice. In addition, Health Assured, our health insurance provider offers information on nutrition and medical fact sheets on their app.

4.4 Effective management of team members with menopausal symptoms that are impacting on work will help managers to improve team morale, retain valuable skills and reduce sickness absence. Good people management is fundamental to supporting employee health and well-being and spotting early signs of ill health or distress.

4.5 External sources of help and support for employees and managers include:

NHS at www.nhs.uk/conditions/menopause or www.nhs.uk/conditions/early-menopause

Menopause matters (www.menopausematters.co.uk), which provides information about the menopause, menopausal symptoms and treatment options;

the **Daisy Network** charity, (www.daisynetwork.org) which provides support for women experiencing premature menopause or premature ovarian insufficiency;

the **Menopause Café**, (www.menopausecafe.net) which provides information about events where strangers gather to eat cake, drink tea and discuss the menopause.

Meg's Menopause, (www.megsmenopause.com) information and advice dedicated to empowering women through an honest and frank discussion on all things menopause.

Women's Health Concern (www.womens-health-concern.org) the patient arm of the British Menopause Society.

Newson (<https://www.newsonhealth.co.uk/>) a clinical centre of excellence run by doctors totally dedicated to women's health and wellbeing.

5 Reasonable adjustments

5.1 There might be reasonable adjustments that can be put in place to help manage menopausal symptoms. These are likely to be temporary changes whilst an employee goes through menopause transition. A Wellbeing Action Plan will help to understand more about how symptoms might affect employees at work and the adjustments needed, see **Appendix 1**. This will identify how menopausal symptoms are impacting on work and can be used to discuss any changes needed. Examples include:

5.1.1 Temperature control

For example, sitting near to a window, providing a fan or access to fresh air.

5.1.2 Flexible working

TBC recognises that difficulty sleeping is a common symptom of the menopause. To reflect this, as well as the impact of other common symptoms, we aim to facilitate flexible working wherever possible. Requests for flexible working could include asking for:

- a change to the pattern of hours worked;
- permission to perform work from home;
- a reduction in working hours; or
- more frequent breaks.

5.1.3 For heavy or irregular periods

- Provide easy access to washroom and toilet facilities;
- Allow for more frequent breaks to go to the toilet;

- Allow someone to temporarily work from home if they have very heavy bleeding and are able to work from home;
- Make it easier to request extra uniforms if needed.

Employees should discuss such requests with their line manager or HR. Depending on the circumstances, requests may be approved on a permanent or temporary basis.

Managers should also be mindful of holding meetings that are lengthy and should encourage regular breaks (even if the meeting is held remotely).

6 Data Protection

- 6.1 TBC will process any personal data collected in accordance with Data Protection legislation.

Data collected from the point at which the organisation becomes aware of the issue is held securely and accessed by, and disclosed to, individuals only for the purposes of providing the necessary support.

7 Equality

- 7.1 This policy uses the term 'women' to talk about people who may experience perimenopausal and menopause transition, we also know that it can impact trans or non-binary colleagues who don't identify as women in the same manner. TBC will support all colleagues experiencing perimenopause and menopause transition.

Appendix 1

Wellbeing Action Plan – Menopause

You can use a Wellbeing Action Plan to remind you what you need to stay well at work, and what your manager can do to support you.

You only need to give information that you are comfortable sharing and that relates to your role and workplace. This form can help you and your manager to agree together how to support you to address any health needs.

This form will be shared confidentially and not shared with anyone else without your permission. The only time we will break this confidentiality is if we are concerned that you or someone else is at risk of harm.

What helps you to stay healthy at work?
For example, getting some exercise before or after work, getting some fresh air at lunchtime, time to talk to your manager.
Are there any situations at work that can make your menopausal symptoms worse for you?
For example, having to stand for a long period, temperature changes
How might experiencing menopause symptoms impact you at work?
For example, low mood, difficulty concentrating, tiredness, needing to use the toilet more frequently, needing access to fresh air and water
What can your manager do to support you to manage any menopausal symptoms at work?

For example, changing your start time if you're experiencing disturbed sleep, making sure you've got access to cold water while you are working, making sure you have access to toilet facilities, making sure the temperature is comfortable, providing a fan or access to fresh air, giving you somewhere to store extra clothes during the day.

Is there anything else you would like to share?



Part 1 – Details	
What Policy/ Procedure/ Strategy/Project/Service is being assessed?	Menopause Policy
Date Conducted	October 2022
Name of Lead Officer and Service Area	Jackie Noble HR
Commissioning Team (if applicable)	N/A
Director Responsible for project/service area	Anica Goodwin
Who are the main stakeholders	Employees
Describe what consultation has been undertaken. Who was involved and what was the outcome	CMT TULG Members
Outline the wider research that has taken place (E.G. commissioners, partners, other providers etc)	
What are you assessing? Indicate with an 'x' which applies	A decision to review or change a service <input type="checkbox"/>

	A Strategy/Policy/Procedure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	A function, service or project	<input type="checkbox"/>
What kind of assessment is it? Indicate with an 'x' which applies	New	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Existing	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Being reviewed	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Being reviewed as a result of budget constraints / End of Contract	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part 2 – Summary of Assessment

Give a summary of your proposal and set out the aims/ objectives/ purposes/ and outcomes of the area you are impact assessing.

To provide guidance for employees and managers on support for menopausal symptoms.

Who will be affected and how?

All employees. Female employees experiencing symptoms and providing managers.

Are there any other functions, policies or services linked to this impact assessment?

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
If you answered 'Yes', please indicate what they are?			
All employees			
Attendance Management policy			

Part 3 – Impact on the Community

Thinking about each of the Areas below, does or could the Policy function, or service have a direct impact on them?

Impact Area	Yes	No	Reason (provide brief explanation)
Age	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The policy applies support to women undergoing the menopause. This is linked to age.
Disability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The policy applies consistent and fair treatment irrespective of disability and explicitly references reasonable adjustments
Gender Reassignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The policy applies consistent and fair treatment irrespective of gender reassignment
Marriage & Civil Partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The policy applies consistent and fair treatment irrespective of marital status
Pregnancy & Maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The policy applies consistent and fair treatment irrespective of pregnancy and maternity
Race	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The policy applies consistent and fair treatment irrespective of race
Religion or belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The policy applies consistent and fair treatment irrespective of religion or

			belief and explicitly references adjustments for religious observance
Sexual orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The policy applies consistent and fair treatment irrespective of sexual orientation
Sex	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The policy applies consistent and fair treatment irrespective of sex
Gypsy/Travelling Community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Not a factor
Those with Caring/Dependent responsibilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The policy applies consistent and fair treatment irrespective of those with caring responsibilities
Those having an offending past	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Not a factor
Children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Not a factor
Vulnerable Adults	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Not a factor
Families	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Not a factor
Those who are homeless	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Not a factor
Those on low income	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Not a factor
Those with Drug or Alcohol problems	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Not a factor
Those with Mental Health issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Not a factor
Those with Physical Health issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Not a factor
Other (Please Detail)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Part 4 – Risk Assessment

From evidence given from previous question, please detail what measures or changes will be put in place to mitigate adverse implications

Impact Area	Details of the Impact	Action to reduce risk

Disability	A lengthy menopause could meet the threshold for Equality Act discrimination.	Reasonable adjustments are put in place
Gender and age	Female employees have the perimenopause and menopause symptoms	Support is provided

Part 5 - Action Plan and Review

Detail in the plan below, actions that you have identified in your CIA, which will eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and/or foster good relations.

If you are unable to eliminate or reduce negative impact on any of the impact areas, you should explain why

Impact (positive or negative) identified	Action	Person(s) responsible	Target date	Required outcome
n/a				

Date of Review (If applicable)

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