

Livewell Southwest

Menopause at Work Policy

Version No 1.3

Review: June 2025
Expires: November 2025

Notice to staff using a paper copy of this guidance.

The policies and procedures page of LSW intranet holds the most recent version of this document and staff must ensure that they are using the most recent guidance.

Author: HR in partnership with JTUF and Devon STP

Asset Number: 609

Reader Information

Title	Menopause at Work Policy V.1.3
Asset number	609
Rights of access	Public
Type of paper	Policy
Category	Non clinical
Document purpose/summary	This policy sets out the guidelines for members of staff and managers on providing the right support to manage menopausal symptoms at work.
Author	HR in partnership with JTUF and Devon STP
Ratification date and group	Sept 2019 JCCN – Joint Committee for Consultation and Negotiation
Publication date	26 th February 2025
Review date and frequency (one, two or three years based on risk assessment)	Three years after ratification or earlier if minor changes are required.
Disposal date	The PRVG will retain an e-signed copy for the archive in accordance with the Retention and Disposal Schedule, all copies must be destroyed when replaced by a new version or withdrawn from circulation.
Target audience (who policy is applicable to)	All staff employed by Livewell Southwest (LSW)
Circulation List	Electronic: Livewell Southwest (LSW) intranet and website (if applicable) Written: Upon request to the Policy Co-ordinator at livewell.livewellpolicies@nhs.net Please contact the author if you require this document in an alternative format.
Stakeholders	All staff
Consultation process	HR Policy Group/JCCN/JTUF - Joint Trade union Forum
References/sources of information	Developed in partnership with Devon STP
Equality analysis checklist completed	No
Is the Equality and Diversity Policy referenced	No
Is the Equality Act 2010 referenced	No
Associated documentation	Sickness Policy
Supersedes document	All previous versions.
Author contact details	By post: Local Care Centre Mount Gould Hospital, 200 Mount

Document review history

Version No.	Type of change	Date	Originator of change (Name and job title)	Description of change
1	New Policy	September 2019	HR in partnership with JTUF and Devon STP	New Policy
1.1	Extended	September 2022	HR in partnership with JTUF and Devon STP	Extended
1.2	Extended	November 2023	HR in partnership with JTUF and Devon STP	Extended
1.3	Minor amend and extend.	February 2025	HR in partnership with JTUF and Devon STP	Extended, appendices replaced by links

Contents		Page
1	Introduction	5
2	Purpose	5
3	Definitions	5
4	Duties & responsibilities	6
5	Symptoms	7
6	Managing menopause in the context of the workplace	8
7	Training implications	8
Appendix A	Managers Guidance for colleague discussions	
Appendix B	Confidential Colleague Discussion Template	
Appendix C	Risk Assessment	
Appendix D	Menopause Advice Sheet	

Menopause at Work Policy

1 Introduction

- 1.1. Livewell Southwest is committed to providing an inclusive and supportive working environment for everyone who works here.
- 1.2. Menopause is a natural part of every woman's life, although for some individuals the transition can be difficult particularly in the context of the workplace. With the right support, it can be much better. Whilst every woman does not suffer with symptoms, supporting those who do will improve their experience at work and may improve organisational outcomes.
- 1.3. Menopause should not be taboo or stigmatised. We want everyone to understand what menopause is, and to be able to talk about it openly, without embarrassment. This is not just an issue for women, men should be aware too.
- 1.4. The changing age of the UK's labour market means that between 75% and 80% of menopausal women are in work. Livewell Southwest acknowledges that it is heavily reliant on the 41-60 year old female bracket of its workforce. Research shows that the majority of women are unwilling to discuss menopause-related health problems with their line manager, nor ask for the support or adjustments that they may need.
- 1.5. This policy sets out the guidelines for members of staff and managers on providing the right support to manage menopausal symptoms at work.

2 Purpose

The aims of this policy are to:

- 2.1. Foster an environment in which colleagues can openly and comfortably instigate conversations, or engage in discussions about menopause.
- 2.2. Educate and inform managers about the potential symptoms of menopause, and how they can support women at work.
- 2.3. Ensure that women suffering with menopause symptoms feel confident to discuss it, and ask for support and any reasonable adjustments so they can continue to be successful in their roles.
- 2.4. Reduce any absenteeism, presentism, performance issues and turnover that may arise due to menopausal symptoms.

3 Definitions

- 3.1 **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. Around 1 in 100 women experience the menopause before 40 years of age. This is known as premature menopause or premature ovarian insufficiency.
- 3.2. **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.
- 3.3. **Postmenopause** is the time after menopause has occurred, starting when a woman has not had a period for twelve consecutive months.

4 Duties & Responsibilities

- 4.1 The **Chief Executive** is ultimately responsible for the content of all policies, implementation and review.
- 4.2 Line Managers should:
- Familiarise themselves with the Menopause at work policy
 - Attend menopause training events to gain a better understanding of the transition
 - Be ready and willing to have open discussions about menopause, appreciating the personal nature of the conversation, and treating the discussion sensitively and professionally
 - Provide employees with support and guidance and sign post them to the information provided at Appendices A and D.
 - Document conversations and record any actions/adjustments required using the form provided at Appendix 2
 - Undertake a work-based risk assessment utilising the checklist provided at Appendix C, documenting any actions/adjustments to be implemented
 - Ensure ongoing dialogue and review date
 - Ensure that all agreed adjustments are adhered to
 - Where adjustments are unsuccessful, or if symptoms are proving more problematic, the Line Manager may:
 - Discuss a referral to Occupational Health (OH) for further advice;
 - Review Occupational Health advice, and implement any recommendations, where reasonably practical;
 - Update the action plan, and continue to review.
- 4.3 All staff are responsible for:

- Taking personal responsibility to look after their health
- Being open and honest in conversations with managers/HR and Occupational Health
- If a member of staff is unable to speak to their line manager, or if they perceive their line manager is not supporting them, they can speak to HR, OH or their Union
- Contributing to a respectful and productive working environment
- Being willing to help and support their colleagues
- Understanding any necessary adjustments their colleagues are receiving as a result of their menopausal symptoms.

4.4 Occupational Health should (where applicable)

- Carry out a holistic assessment of individuals as to whether or not menopause may be contributing to symptoms/wellbeing, providing advice and guidance in line with up-to-date research
- Signpost to appropriate sources of help and advice
- Provide support and advice to HR and Line Managers in identifying reasonable adjustments, if required

4.5 Human Resources (HR)

- Offer guidance to managers on the interpretation of this Policy and Guidance
- Attend training sessions, and develop briefing sessions, for staff
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of this policy in respect of related absence levels and performance.

5 **Symptoms**

5.1 Many women will experience menopausal symptoms. Some of these can be quite severe and have a significant impact on their everyday activities including work life.

Common symptoms include:

- hot flushes
- palpitations
- headaches
- night sweats
- joint problems/osteoporosis
- insomnia
- difficulty sleeping
- skin irritation
- vaginal dryness
- low mood or anxiety
- depression
- problems with memory and concentration

Menopausal symptoms can begin months or even years before a woman's periods stop and last around four years after the last period, although some women experience them for much longer.

6 Managing menopause in the context of the workplace

- 6.1 The effects on a woman's physical and emotional health can significantly impact on how she undertakes her work and her relationships with colleagues. Furthermore some working conditions and environments may aggravate symptoms.
- 6.2 Livewell Southwest recognises its responsibility to take into account any difficulties women may experience during the menopause and to provide support and advice in this regard.
- 6.3 Furthermore it recognises that menopausal transition is a very individual experience and that people can be affected in different ways and to different degrees, and therefore different levels and types of support and adjustments may be needed.
- 6.4 Consequently Livewell Southwest will take a proactive stance and will promote a greater understanding of the menopause and seek to eradicate any exclusionary or discriminatory practices.
- 6.5 Livewell Southwest will work proactively to make adjustments where necessary to support individuals experiencing the menopause and to ensure the workplace does not make their symptoms worse.
- 6.6 Livewell Southwest will carry out risk assessments which take the specific needs of individuals into consideration (including stress risk assessments) and to ensure that the working environment will not make their symptoms worse. The risk assessment will assist in identifying any potential adjustments which may be required. Particular issues to consider include temperature, ventilation and the materials used in any uniform which is provided. Welfare issues (including toilet facilities and access to cold water) should also be considered (see Appendix C).

7 Training Implications

- 7.1 All staff to be made aware of this policy. Requirement for line managers and staff to attend menopause training events run by Livewell Southwest or external organisations to ensure a better understanding of the transition.

**All policies are required to be electronically signed by the Lead Director.
Proof of the electronic signature is stored in the policies database.**

**The Lead Director approves this document and any attached appendices.
For operational policies this will be the Head of Service.**

**The Executive signature is subject to the understanding that the policy
owner has followed the organisation process for policy Ratification.**

Signed: Director of People and Professionalism

Date: 10 September 2019