



Information Governance Team

Postal Address:
Coventry City Council
PO Box 15
Council House
Coventry
CV1 5RR

www.coventry.gov.uk

E-mail: infogov@coventry.gov.uk

Phone: 024 7697 5408

28 March 2023

Dear Sir/Madam

Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA)

Request ID: FOI493182780

Thank you for your request for information relating to menopause.

You have requested the following information:

1. Do you have a menopause friends' group?

Yes.

2. Do you have a menopause champion?

Yes.

3. Do you have a menopause policy?

Yes. Please see attached.

4. Do you record peri/menopausal sickness absences?

No.

5. If the answer to 4 is yes, how many people have taken sick leave in the last 2 years, because of peri-menopause related symptoms?

6. What is the average length of the sickness absence referred to at 5 above

7. Is this absence recorded as sickness absence or is it treated as a disability related absence and/or a reasonable adjustment?

8. What, if any, support is given on the employee's return to work?

For Questions 5 to 8, these are not applicable. Please refer to Question 4.

9. If you do not record peri/menopausal sickness absence, please explain why?

There are too many other influences on sickness absence to be able to identify what is menopause related.

10. Are managers required to attend menopause training? If so, is it mandatory?

Menopause training is available and has been rolled out to managers which is not mandatory.

11. Do leavers have an exit interview? If so, how many employees have left because of peri/menopausal symptoms?

No employees have declared that they have left the Council due to the menopause.

12. How many people do you employ?

4,751

13. How many women do you employ?

3,260

14. How many women do you employ over the age of 40?

2,282

15. How many women do you employ over the age of 50?

1,519

16. How many women do you employ over the age of 60?

471

17. Are reasonable adjustments offered to employees experiencing peri/menopausal symptoms? If so, what adjustments?

Yes, they vary from person to person depending on what the symptoms are, what the job is and any other health conditions which need to be taken into account.

18. Finally, If NCC have put support in place for people experiencing symptoms, has this

reduced sickness absence? If yes, by how much?

We do not hold the requested information and are advising you as per Section 1(1) of the Act.

The supply of information in response to a FOI/EIR request does not confer an automatic right to re-use the information. You can use any information supplied for the purposes of private study and non-commercial research without requiring further permission. Similarly, information supplied can also be re-used for the purposes of news reporting. An exception to this is photographs. Please contact us if you wish to use the information for any other purpose.

For information, we publish a variety of information such as: [FOI/EIR Disclosure Log](#), [Publication Scheme](#), [Facts about Coventry](#) and [Open Data](#) that you may find of useful if you are looking for information in the future.

If you are unhappy with the handling of your request, you can ask us to review our response. Requests for reviews should be submitted within 40 days of the date of receipt of our response to your original request – email: infogov@coventry.gov.uk

If you are unhappy with the outcome of our review, you can write to the Information Commissioner, who can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF or email icocasework@ico.org.uk.

Please remember to quote the reference number above in your response.

Yours faithfully

Information Governance

Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing Services

Menopause Talk

Employees Guidance



Coventry City Council

SEQOHS

Safe Effective Quality Occupational Health Service



Faculty of Occupational Medicine



www.coventry.gov.uk/ohsw

At Coventry City Council, creating a place to work where our staff are safe, well and happy is a priority for us. This means supporting our employees to be at their best to be able to do their best while at work.

Our flexible working and inclusion agenda is key in making the Council an open and transparent place to work. The Wellbeing Strategy is part of this, which includes raising awareness of health matters to improve understanding and workplace support.

Despite an aging workforce, an important and often avoided subject is menopause. This can result in those affected being faced with unnecessary difficulty in managing their symptoms along side their work activities. We want menopause to be talked about openly and without embarrassment.

Menopause will be a natural part of every woman's life at some point and it isn't always an easy transition, but 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 in their personal lives.

The changing age of the workforce means that more menopausal women are in work. Research shows that the majority of women are unwilling to discuss menopause-related health problems with their line manager, or ask for the support or any adjustments that they may need. We want to change that.

Menopause isn't just an issue for women, men need to know about it too, so they can support colleagues, friends and family.

This guide is to explain more about menopause to help you understand what support we can offer to our staff and have open conversations about it.

What is menopause?

Menopause is the stage in a woman's life; when she stops menstruating and reaches the end of her natural reproductive life. Usually considered as having occurred when a woman has not had a period for 12 consecutive months (for women reaching menopause

naturally). The average age for a woman to reach menopause is 51 but it can be earlier or later than this, either naturally or due to surgery or illness.

Perimenopause is the time leading up to menopause when a woman may experience changes, e.g. irregular periods or other menopausal symptoms. This can start years before menopause.

Postmenopause is the time after menopause has occurred, starting when a woman has not had a period for 12 consecutive months.

What are the symptoms?

Every woman is different. Not every woman will experience every symptom and some may not notice any at all. However, three out of four will, and one in four could experience severe symptoms.

Symptoms can be both physical and psychological, including hot flushes, night sweats, sleep disturbance, headaches or worsening migraines, poor concentration or memory problems, depression, anxiety, panic attacks and mood changes, weight and skin changes, urinary infections, and joint pain.

Managing symptoms

There are a number of ways to manage any symptoms, from the medical approach to natural remedies, including dietary and lifestyle changes.

For advice on managing their symptoms women are advised to make an appointment with their GP as they will be able to recommend what's right based on the individual's medical history and personal preference.

Talking to your team members

If a member of your team wants to talk about menopause – or to just talk about how they are feeling, as they may not know if they have menopausal symptoms – please make sure you:

- Arrange an appropriate time to meet, allowing enough time for the conversation
- Find a room that will keep your conversation confidential
- Encourage them to speak openly and honestly
- Explore the best ways they can be supported (see reasonable adjustment below)
- Agree on any actions or adjustments and how to implement them
- Arrange a follow-up meeting if needed

Never assume that because a woman is of menopausal age that this will be affecting her at work.

If you feel a member of your team needs support then you can have a conversation about what they're experiencing and how we can help.

If you feel they need further help or support, you may want to refer them to the Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing Service.

If a member of staff does not want to have a conversation about their wellbeing and you remain concerned you may also want to refer them to the Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing Service.

Assessing any reasonable adjustments

Reasonable adjustments will be made on a case-by-case basis. Many will be simple and won't involve any cost, and may vary in the time they are needed for. During your meeting, discuss with your team member what their symptoms are, how they're affecting them at work, what they're doing to manage their symptoms and how we can help.

Try not to make any assumptions in advance, be prepared to listen and open to ideas, with a clear understanding of how this will work for the business as well as for the individual.

Remember that symptoms vary both in their nature and how long they last for.

Hot flushes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temperature control for their work area. This could include offering a desk fan • Permanent access to fresh drinking water • Access to a quiet room for breaks if their work involves long periods of standing or sitting, or a quiet area if they need to manage a severe hot flush
Heavy periods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to washroom facilities • Make sure sanitary protection is available in toilets
Headaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have access to fresh drinking water • Consider if there's a quieter space to work • Have time out to take medication if needed
Difficulty sleeping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider our flexible working policy or informal arrangements to arrive later for work • Consider if working from home is an option
Low mood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct them to the Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing Service for confidential counselling/advice
Loss of confidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular one-to-one discussions • Have protected time to catch up with work
Poor concentration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjust working hours to fit times of the day when concentration is better • Review task allocation and workload • Provide list books, note board or other memory-assisting equipment • Offer quieter space to work • Reduce interruptions if possible • Have protected time to catch up with work
Anxiety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct them to the Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing Service, for confidential counselling/advice
Panic attacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree time out, if required, there are quiet rooms available. Direct them to the Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing Service, for confidential counselling and advice

Review how the adjustments are working and if they're still needed

After the adjustments have been agreed and put into place, it's important to monitor their effectiveness and agree a time for a follow-up meeting to discuss. It may be necessary to change.

Keep notes of all your discussions, including what you've both agreed to do as a result and any necessary follow-ups. Keep these conversations and agreements confidential unless the colleague involved chooses to disclose them to other colleagues. However, relevant staff should understand any necessary adjustments their colleagues are receiving as a result of their menopausal symptoms.

Please talk to, or refer your team member to, the Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing Service if you need any more information or advice.

Below are some useful numbers and links relating to support services and information about menopause.

- National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidelines. These 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
- National Health Services. This provides an overview of menopause
www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Menopause/Pages/Introduction.aspx
- Getting the best from a GP appointment
<https://henpicked.net/how-to-talk-to-your-gp-about-menopause/>
- Menopause information. This provides an overview of menopause.
www.rcog.org.uk/en/patients/menopause/
- Premature Ovarian Insufficiency (POI). POI information and support on early menopause. www.daisynetwork.org.uk
- Information on hysterectomy. This provides an insight into surgically induced menopause as a result of having a hysterectomy
www.hysterectomy-association.org.uk
- Henpicked. This provides information on managing menopause and an insight into women's stories <https://henpicked.net/menopause/>

Further information:

Occupational Health,
Safety & Wellbeing Service
Thomas Yeoman House,
Canal Basin, Coventry CV1 4LY

Tel: 024 7683 3285

website: www.coventry.gov.uk/ohsw

email: ohsw@coventry.gov.uk



**Occupational Health,
Safety and Wellbeing**

Delivering quality services