



**Workforce**

# **Menopause and Menstrual Health Policy**

# Aim

This policy outlines a commitment to creating a supportive and understanding workplace for everyone affected by menstrual health and menopause. It also sets out the support you can expect to support your health and wellbeing at work.

It aims to:

- Support employees and minimise the impact that menstrual health and menopause symptoms can have at work.
- Create an open culture where you feel confident asking for help and getting the adjustments you need.
- Increase awareness through education, inclusive discussions, and compassionate leadership.

# Scope

This policy applies to all employees. It also applies to bank, secondees, agency, sessional workers, volunteers, contractors, and those on placement, such as trainees, students, or individuals undertaking work experience.

In this policy, 'employee' includes all these groups unless stated otherwise.

This policy complies with current legislation and meets the aims of the [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) of the [Equality Act 2010](#).

# Definitions

**Menstrual cycle** is the monthly process in which an egg develops, and the lining of the womb is prepared for a possible pregnancy.

**Menstrual health** is a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being, not merely the absence of disease or infirmity, in relation to the menstrual cycle.

A **period** is part of the menstrual cycle when women, girls, and people who menstruate, bleed from their vagina.

**Period products** absorb or collect the blood that is released during a period.

**Menopause transition** has 3 stages:

- **Perimenopause** is the time from the start of the menopausal symptoms until after the employee has experienced their last period.
- **Menopause** is defined as the last menstrual period. Menopause is reached when there has not been a period for 12 consecutive months.
- **Postmenopause** is when the employee has not experienced a period for over a year, but some women do continue to experience symptoms of menopause for many years.

## Roles and responsibilities

There is a range of standard expectations which underpin all policies. [Read more about standard roles and responsibilities](#). In addition, the following specific responsibilities apply to this policy.

### Employer

The employer is responsible for creating a positive and supportive culture for those experiencing menstrual health and menopause symptoms.

### Manager

The manager should:

- Be supportive—Support employees who choose to share their experiences with menstrual health conditions, menstrual health issues, or menopause symptoms.
- Access information—Increase their own knowledge and awareness of menstrual health and menopause related symptoms.
- Make adjustments—Consider any workplace adjustments that could help an individual.
- Review support regularly—Menstrual health and menopause symptoms can change over time.
- Signpost to sources of help—Make employees aware of the support available within NHS Scotland, including occupational health.
- Follow the Attendance Policy—Support employees who are absent from work due to menstrual health-related symptoms, a menstrual

health condition, or menopause. [Find out more about the Attendance Policy.](#)

- Adopt a person-centred approach—If employees are experiencing challenges in their role due to menstrual health or menopause, consider supportive conversations and adjustments outlined in the [Capability Policy.](#)

## Employee

The employee should:

- Take care of their own health and wellbeing.
- Speak to their manager at the earliest opportunity if menopause or menstrual health-related symptoms are having an impact on them at work.
- Think about what might help. Consider any support or adjustments that could make work more comfortable.
- Maintain an ongoing dialogue with their manager to review any agreed workplace adjustments.

## Procedure

Effective support for employees with menopausal and menstrual health symptoms helps everyone by:

- improving morale
- retaining skills and talent
- addressing inequalities
- reducing sickness absence

## Supportive conversation

When an employee notifies their manager that symptoms are affecting them at work, they should have a supportive conversation as soon as possible.

Symptoms associated with menopause and menstrual health are often considered a private and personal issue. It may make it difficult for employees to talk openly about how these symptoms are affecting them at work.

- Who to talk to—If the employee doesn't feel comfortable speaking to their direct manager, they can approach another manager or a trade union representative. That person should liaise with the direct manager and HR to facilitate any reasonable adjustments or support.
- What to expect—The conversation is a confidential and safe space for the employee to discuss their concerns. The aim is to agree on any adjustments or support that would be helpful. The direct manager will take a note of what was agreed and provide a copy to the employee. This should provide details on any agreed adjustments and when they will be reviewed.

## Workplace support and adjustments

Many practical adjustments can support you at work. These will be different for everyone, and not all are possible in every workplace. More detail can be found in the following supporting documents:

- [Menopause and Menstrual Health Policy: guide for managers](#)
- [Menopause and Menstrual Health Policy: guide for employees](#)

## Absence recording

If an employee is absent from work due to menopause or menstrual health issues, their absence will be recorded in accordance with the [Attendance Policy](#).

## Resolution of disagreements

If a disagreement arises, employees have the right to raise the issue under the [Grievance Policy](#). It may be appropriate for either party to seek advice on resolving the matter from HR colleagues or a trade union representative. They should seek early resolution wherever possible.

## Related policies

The following policies are related to the Menopause and Menstrual Health Policy:

- [Attendance Policy](#)
- [Capability Policy](#)
- [Flexible Work Location Policy](#)

- [Flexible Work Pattern Policy](#)
- [NHS Scotland National Uniform Policy \[PDF\]](#)