

AGE UK EXETER

Controlled Document

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Review Schedule: Every three years

Next review due: April 2026

Owner (Responsibility) CEO

Amendments to: Governance Officer

Revision History: See end of document

Document location: www.ageuk.org.uk/exeter/about-us/policiesandguidelines

Document Description

This policy outlines Age UK Exeter's approach to supporting employees through the menopause or perimenopause.

Implementation and Quality Assurance

Implementation is immediate and this policy shall stay in force until any alterations are formally agreed.

The policy will be reviewed every three years by the Board of Trustees, sooner if legislation, best practice, or other circumstances indicate this is necessary.

All aspects of this policy shall be open to review at any time. If you have any comments or suggestions on the content of this policy, please contact the CEO on info@ageukexeter.org.uk or at Age UK Exeter, The Sycamores, Mount Pleasant Road, Exeter, EX4 7AE, 01392 202092.

Menopause Policy

1. Introduction

Menopause at work is covered by specific pieces of legislation that protect employees. Under the Equality Act 2010, menopause is largely covered under the protected characteristics of age, sex and disability discrimination. The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 provides for safe working conditions which extends to the work environment when experiencing menopausal or perimenopausal symptoms. The Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (Acas) has also produced new codes of practice around flexible working.

Age UK Exeter is committed to fostering an inclusive and supportive working environment for all our staff. We recognise that many members of staff will experience menopause and that for some menopause will have an adverse impact on their working lives.

The purpose of this policy is to raise awareness of the menopause and the impact of menopause in the workplace, and to encourage open conversations between managers and staff. We are committed to supporting staff who are affected by menopause and to signpost to relevant advice and support agencies as appropriate.

This policy covers all employees and volunteers. This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment, and we may amend it at any time.

2. Definition

All women will experience menopause at some point during their life. Menopause can also impact trans and non-binary people who may not identify as female. Most of those who experience menopause will do so between the ages of 45 and 55. However, some start experiencing symptoms much earlier. Often, symptoms last between four to eight years, but they can continue for longer. Symptoms can include, but are not limited to, sleeplessness, hot flushes, memory loss or poor concentration, headaches, muscle and joint pains, depression, and anxiety. The majority of those going through menopause will experience some symptoms, although everyone is different, and symptoms can fluctuate.

Menopause is preceded by the perimenopause, during which the body prepares itself for menopause. The perimenopause can also last several years and can involve similar symptoms to the menopause itself. For the purpose of this policy, any reference to menopause includes the perimenopause.

3. Procedures and Principles

We are committed to ensuring the health and safety of all our staff and will consider any aspects of the working environment that may worsen menopausal symptoms. This may include identifying and addressing specific risks to the health and well-being of those experiencing menopause.

Anyone affected by menopause should feel confident to talk to their line manager about their symptoms and the support they may need to reduce the difficulties menopause can cause them at work. Line managers should be ready to have open conversations with staff about menopause during their regular one-ones and be confident to signpost to appropriate support and put action plans in place. Such conversations should be treated sensitively, and any information provided should be handled confidentially in accordance with our Confidentiality Policy.

While many who experience menopause will be able to carry on their working lives as normal, we recognise that others may benefit from adjustments to their working conditions to mitigate the impact of menopause symptoms on their work. If an employee or volunteer believes that they would benefit from adjustments or other support, they should speak to their line manager in the first instance during a one-one session.

Physical adjustments could include temperature control, provisions of electric fans or the provision of a quiet space. Depending on individual and business needs, adjustments such as flexible working, more frequent rest breaks or changes to work allocation may also be considered. These are examples only and not an exhaustive list.

We may need to seek medical advice from the employee's GP to better understand any adjustments and other support that may help alleviate symptoms. Any request for a medical report or examination will be dealt with as set out in our Sickness Policy and with the employee's consent.

Revision History

Revision date	Summary of Changes	Other Comments
11 January 2023	New policy with help and collaboration from Age UK Lincolnshire	