

Menopause, Work and Workplace Adjustments

We are all in it together

- Debbie James: Specialist Nurse Practitioner in Occupational Health
- Amy Gouldstone: People Wellbeing Lead

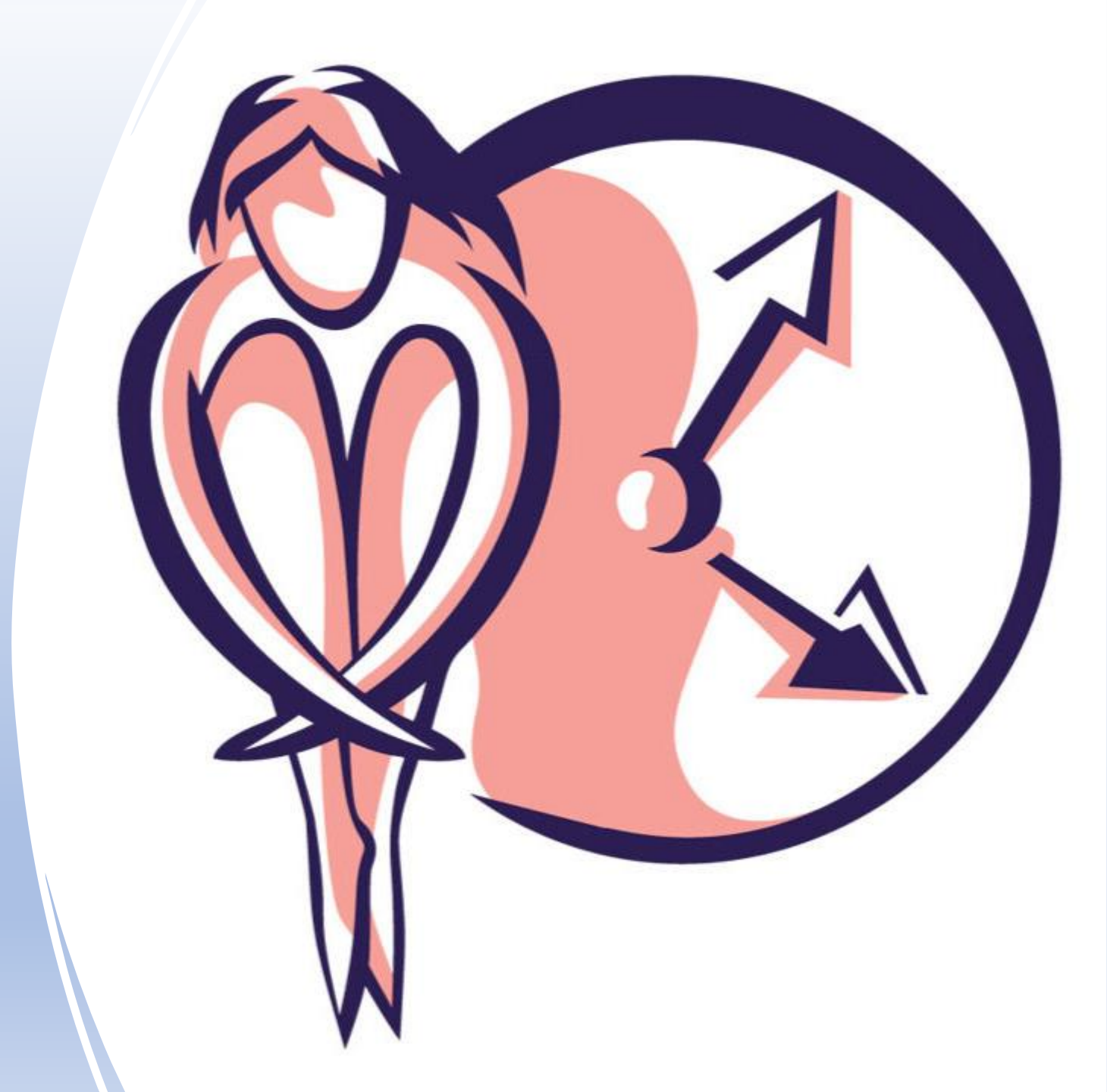
sfh-tr.wellbeing@nhs.net

sfh-tr.occupational.health@nhs.net



Aims & Objectives

- Equality Act
- Where does Occupational Health fit in the organisation?
- Symptoms
- Impact at work
- Workplace adjustments
- Recording Menopause related absence
- Support in your organisation



Is the Menopause a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010?

- **Disability-** a person is considered to have a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on their ability to do normal daily activities;
- **Gender-** Must not treat woman's menopause symptoms less seriously than a male worker's health condition
- **Gender Identity-** you must not be discriminated against because you are transsexual, when your gender identity is different from the sex assigned to you when you were born.
- **Employers have a legal obligation to:**
 - Make reasonable adjustments
 - Not discriminate against the worker
 - Ensure that any factors in the workplace do not worsen someone's menopausal symptoms

Where does Occupational Health fit into the organisation ?

Supporting the Menopause journey?

- **A large amount of our life is spent at work. Occupational Health provides an independent service which helps make sure that your health is not adversely affected by the work you do.**
- **Our focus is the Health of the Workforce and within that remit we have a responsibility to advise Managers on the rehabilitation and redeployment of staff.**

Supporting employee and manager - Occupational health professionals are uniquely competent in providing both health services for employees and professional support to management.

You don't have to have a referral with Occupational Health to discuss reasonable adjustments

In some instances, employees may be reluctant to have discussions about their experience of the menopause with their manager.

Referrals to Occupational Health

There are 2 ways you can access Occupational Health :

Management referral:

- A **Management referral** is completed by an employees line manager. Once a **Management referral** is received an appointment will be made with a OH Nurse practitioner. During the appointment the MR process will be explained and the employee will discuss their health symptoms e.g. **Menopause** in a **confidential environment**.
- Employees are reassured that discussions about their health, including the **menopause**, will always remain confidential (Information will only be shared if the employee consent to this).
- A **management referral** often creates an environment whereby an employee feels comfortable disclosing health symptoms.
- Employees may be referred for one health condition and a link is identified to possible **Menopause symptoms** . This can then open a conversation about **Menopause** providing an opportunity to signpost to what support is available.

Self-Referral:

- A **self-referral** is when an employee makes direct contact with Occupational Health and requests an appointment with a OH Nurse to discuss a Health condition or symptoms.
- Some women may be reluctant to have discussions about their experience of the **menopause** with their manager therefore a **Self-referral** can often open up a confidential dialogue between employee and OH Professional
- It is important to say '**No Report**' is sent back to management following a **Self-referral** appointment.
- If during the appointment it becomes apparent that an employee would benefit from **Workplace adjustments** we would encourage the employee to request a **Wellbeing Conversation** with their manager.

Scope of the issue

- 76.5% of the NHS workforce (over 1 million) are women
- Women between the ages of 45 and 54 make up **1 in 5** of the entire NHS workforce, over 260,000 women
- The most-reported difficulties menopausal people report at work include:
 - Poor concentration
 - Tiredness
 - poor memory
 - feeling low and/or depressed
 - lowered confidence.

Workplace factors that may be difficult to deal with include:

- jobs that have long shifts or work through a 24-hour shift rota
- difficult to take regular toilet breaks
- wearing of a uniform or working in areas that may make it uncomfortable if there are problems regulating temperature control
- lack of flexible working
- working too many consecutive days in a row
- a demanding workload
- having a fast-paced role that requires concentration
- early start times after a difficult night's sleep

Hot flushes

Potential impact at work:

_Less tolerant of temperatures in the workplace.

Work clothes / uniform may become uncomfortable.

PPE may be uncomfortable if worn for long periods.



Potential Adjustments:

- Ensure easy access to drinking water.
- Ensure easy access to washroom/changing facilities.
- Access to shower facilities, if required.
- Suggest layering of clothes so items can be removed in the event of a 'Flush'
- Allow for more frequent breaks to manage symptoms, change clothes, etc.
- Avoid close fitting or non-breathable clothing e.g. scrubs.
- Allow flexibility with uniforms (e.g. no tights required).
- Consider providing additional uniforms.
- Look at ways of cooling the work environment (e.g. fan, moving to a desk near a window that opens).
- Limit the time spent wearing PPE.

Sleep difficulties, insomnia and fatigue

Potential impact at work:

Tiredness, Concentration issues, Irritability

Potential Adjustment:

- Agile working options
- Adjusted working hours
- Flexible working approach
- Extra time for tasks to assist with concentration
- Fixed shift pattern so that there is predictability
- Work the same hours over more days or the same days with less hours.



Mental health symptoms

Potential impact at work:

Performance may be affected

Potential Adjustment:

- Contact your Employee Assistance Programme for advice and support
- Time to attend appointments if fall within work time
- Undertake mindfulness activities such as breathing exercises or going for a walk
- Identify a 'buddy' for the individual to talk to (this could be within or outside of their team)
- Microbreaks of 5 to 10 minutes in a quiet setting



Poor concentration / loss of confidence

Potential impact at work:

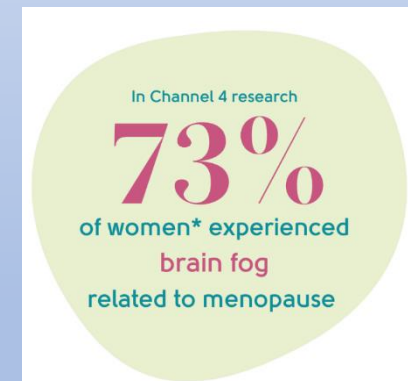
Performance may be affected.

Difficulty making decisions and focusing.

Work-related stress.

Potential Adjustment:

- Consider if concentration is better or worse at particular times of the day and adjust working pattern / work tasks accordingly.
- Use technology where this is helpful, for example for reminders or note taking
- Review task allocation and workload.
- Have regular one-to-one meetings so that any issues can be discussed.
- Where possible, arrange a quiet place to work and reduce interruptions.
- If work-related stress is perceived, stress risk assessment to identify the perceived sources of stress and what can be done to remove/reduce



Irregular and/or heavy periods

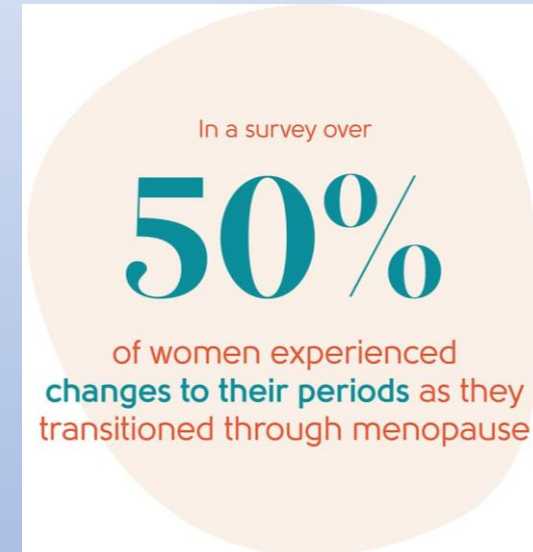
Potential impact at work:

Need to access toilet facilities on a frequent basis.

Certain tasks may be unfeasible (e.g. assisting with hydrotherapy)

Potential Adjustment:

- Ensure easy access to toilet.
- Allow for more frequent breaks to go to toilet.
- Access to shower facilities, if required.
- Temporary adjustment to duties, if required.
- More uniforms may be needed



Urinary Problems

Potential impact at work:

Need to access toilet facilities more frequently.

May need to drink more fluids.

Potential Adjustment:

- Ensure easy access to drinking water.
- Ensure easy access to toilet facilities.
- Allow for more frequent breaks to go to toilet.



Headaches

Potential impact at work:

Loss of concentration / performance may be affected.

Potential Adjustment:

- Ensure easy access to drinking water.
- Where possible, arrange a quiet place to work and reduce interruptions.



Joint stiffness, aches and pains

Potential impact at work:

Static postures/moving & handling may be more uncomfortable.

Potential Adjustment:

- For desk based employees, undertake a workstation risk assessment
- Allow for more frequent breaks so that the employee can change position and stretch
- Review manual handling risk assessments for moving and handling requirements
- Self referral physiotherapy services are widely available through GP practices – time to attend appointments if in work time



Keep track of your symptoms:

A symptom tracker or checklist can help you understand what is going on and can help your employer or GP understand how to support you

In a survey ca.

40%

of women experienced
joint aches
related to menopause

Reasonable Adjustments Form

Healthier Communities,
Outstanding Care



Sherwood Forest Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Reasonable Adjustment Agreement

This form is to be completed by the employee and line manager at a meeting to discuss the employee's disability or long term condition and then placed on the employee's personal file.

1. Personal Details

Name:	
Job Title & Department:	
Date of agreement:	
Line Manager:	

2. Details about my disability / long term condition

What is the pattern of your disability or long term condition? Is it stable, relapsing/remitting, recurrent etc?	
Are you on medication or treatment that gives you side effects? If so what side effects do you get?	
What impact does your disability or long term condition have on you physically, emotionally and behaviourally?	
How does your disability or long term condition affect you at work?	
Are there any early signs that your disability or long term condition is deteriorating? If so, what are the signs?	
What current strategies are in place in the workplace to support you? E.g. longer breaks	
Do you have regular health related appointments that you will need to attend? If so, what is the frequency of these?	

3. Advice obtained

The following advice has been obtained in relation to my disability or long term condition:

Contact	Most recent date of advice	Recommendations
Occupational Health		
Access to Work		
Health and Safety		
Other : please state		

4. Agreed adjustments

Identified area	Reasonable Adjustment	Timeframe

5. Declaration

This agreement will be reviewed jointly by the employee and line manager on an annual basis, or earlier if there are changes to the employee's condition or they change jobs, to ensure the reasonable adjustments are still addressing the needs of the employee.

An up-to-date copy of this form will be retained on the employee's personal file.

Employee's name (print)

Employee's signature Date

Manager's Name (print)

Manager's Signature..... Date.....

Recording Sickness reason

Create Absence: Enter Absence Details

ESR

Employee Name: [Redacted]
Employee Number: [Redacted]

Select an Absence Type, and enter any other information you want to record for your request. You can choose the Calculate Duration button to see the number of days or hours you are requesting.
* Indicates required field

Absence Type: Sickness
Level 1 Reason: S11 Anxiety/stress/depression/other
Level 2 Reason: S1007 Menopause
Duration: Start Date: 11-May-2021, End Date: 11-May-2021
 If Start Date is required

Days: [Input: 1] **Calculate Duration**
Duration is calculated based on the number of full calendar days between the start and end date of your absence. You may need to update this duration to take account of your work pattern (e.g. to exclude weekends).

Hours Lost: [Input:]
Minutes Lost: [Input:]
Working Days Lost: [Input:]
A/C First Period Hours Override: [Input:]
A/C Last Period Hours Override: [Input:]
Work Related:
Third Party:
Disability Related:
Violence and Aggression Related:
Notifiable Disease:
Return to Work Discussion Date: [Calendar icon]
Occupational Health Referral Date: [Calendar icon]
HR Intervention:
HR Intervention Date: [Calendar icon]
Job Change: [Input:]
Fit Interview Date: [Calendar icon]
Surgery Related:
Related Reason: Menopause
Assessment Date: [Calendar icon]

Health Roster

Group *
Sickness

State *
Approved

Reason *
Genito/Gy - Genitourinary & gynaecological problems

Secondary Sickness Reason
Menopause

Work Related Injury

Return To Work Interview

Refer To Occ Health

Certification
Self Certified

Third Party
-

Return To Work Interview Date
[Calendar icon]

Occ Health Referral Date
[Calendar icon]

Start *
21/06/2024 07:00

End *
21/06/2024 23:59

Duration *
1

Cancel OK

Organisation	Webpage	Contact
Sherwood Forest Hospitals and NHIS Colleagues	SFH Wellbeing and Welfare	Sfh-tr.wellbeing@nhs.net 0330 380 0658
Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust	Menopause for Nottinghamshire Healthcare colleagues	StaffSupportService@nottshc.nhs.uk 0330 380 0658
Nottingham University Hospitals	Managing the Menopause NUH	staffwellbeing@nuh.nhs.uk
Nottingham and Nottinghamshire ICB	ICB Occupational health and Employee Assistance Programme	0800 028 0199
Nottingham CityCare	CityCare Menopause Support	Ncp.menopause@nhs.net
Nottinghamshire County Council		wellbeing@nottsc.gov.uk
Nottingham City Council	Main intranet page: Menopause Intranet page for Nottingham City Council Also Menopause Connect (informal group sessions) and New – Menopause and Perimenopause Well Checks (nottinghamcity.gov.uk) (OH appointments)	ew.admin@nottinghamcity.gov.uk

Resources and information

- NICE (2019) [Menopause: diagnosis and management \[NG23\]](#)
- Henpicked <https://henpicked.net>
- Queer/LGBTQIA+ [Menopause resources for LGBTQIA+ people queermenopause.com](#)
- NHS Employers [Menopause and the workplace](#)
- WHO [Menopause factsheet](#)
- RCN [The menopause and work](#)
- ACAS [Menopause at work](#)
- FOM/RCP [Guidance on menopause and the workplace](#)
- Menopause Matters <https://www.menopausematters.co.uk>

Any Questions?



Sherwood Forest Hospitals

NHS Foundation Trust

#TeamSFH

sfh-tr.wellbeing@nhs.net

sfh-tr.occupational.health@nhs.net