Menopause Policy

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A) Purpose and scope

This policy explains how we support employees experiencing the menopause or perimenopause, and how we expect everyone to help make that support work. It applies to all employees, and to colleagues and managers supporting someone going through it.

B) What the menopause is

The menopause is a natural stage of life, usually happening between the ages of 45 and 55, when hormonal changes bring periods to an end. The lead-up, perimenopause, can last for several years. Symptoms differ from person to person and can be physical and psychological, including hot flushes, disturbed sleep, fatigue, headaches, difficulty concentrating, low mood and anxiety. For some people the effects are mild; for others they are significant enough that, over time, they may be treated as a disability under the Equality Act 2010. Related unfair treatment can also amount to sex or age discrimination.

C) Our commitment

We want a workplace where the menopause can be talked about openly and without embarrassment. If it is affecting you at work, we will listen, keep what you tell us confidential, and work with you on practical support.

D) Support and adjustments

Adjustments will always be tailored to you, but might include control over your workspace temperature or a nearby fan, easy access to cold drinking water and to toilet and rest facilities, more frequent breaks, flexibility over hours or working from home, a quieter or cooler place to work, or a review of uniform or dress requirements. If your symptoms lead to time off, we will

handle it sympathetically and in line with our usual sickness procedure rather than treating it as ordinary absence.

E) Raising it

If you would like support, please talk to your line manager, or to another manager or colleague you feel comfortable with. You are in control of how much you share and with whom.

F) Behaviour of others

Everyone is expected to behave with respect and an open mind. Comments, “banter” or harassment about the menopause will not be tolerated and will be dealt with under our disciplinary and anti-harassment procedures.

G) Training and awareness

We give managers guidance on the menopause and on holding supportive and confidential conversations, so that anyone who asks for help is met with understanding.

H) Other support

There are good, free sources of information and community support, including Menopause Matters and the Menopause Café. This policy should also be read alongside our Flexible Working, Equal Opportunities, Health & Safety and Andropause policies.