



**Derbyshire
Police and Crime
Commissioner**

Protecting Communities,
Fighting Crime

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FOI 22/2023

I write in connection with your request for information processed under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and received in the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Derbyshire on 03/10/2023 when you asked the following question(s):

Can you please provide any information, policies or procedures in relation to women, to include staff and the menopause.

I can confirm that the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Derbyshire does hold the information you have requested.

The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Derbyshire uses the same guidance Derbyshire Constabulary have provided you with. Please find the document named 'Menopause Guidance' attached.

If you are not satisfied with our response to your request, under Section 17 of the FOIA you are entitled to ask for an internal review of our decision. Any internal review needs to be submitted within two months of the date of receipt of this response and state why you are unhappy with the response. You can submit an internal review in the following ways:

- * emailing the OPCC Inbox –
PCCOffice@Derbyshire.PNN.Police.UK or;
- * writing to the OPCC at –
The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Derbyshire
Butterley Hall
Ripley
Derbyshire
DE5 3RS

By phone – 0300 122 6000 (as a reasonable adjustment under the Equality Act 2010).

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of the internal review under Section 50 of the FOIA you can apply directly to the Information Commissioner (ICO) for a decision. Generally, the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the internal review procedure provided by the OPCC. You can contact the ICO in the following ways:

- * online at the ICO –
<https://ico.org.uk/global/contact-us/> or;
- * writing to the ICO at –
Information Commissioner's Office

Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Marie Romano'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name 'Marie' written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name 'Romano'.

Marie Romano
Interim Strategic Lead for Governance and Compliance
On behalf of the Police and Crime Commissioner



Menopause guidance for women and line managers

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This guidance is aimed at women going through the menopause, and to assist managers supporting individuals in the workplace.

What's on this page

- [Why does this matter to the police service?](#)
- [Guidance for women experiencing menopause transition](#)
- [Guidance for employees and line managers](#)

The menopause is a natural and inevitable stage of every woman's life, however, it is an experience that can vary significantly for individual women.

Why does this matter to the police service?

The symptoms outlined may pose a series of difficulties for individual women in the workplace. Loss of sleep, for example, can reduce ability to concentrate and stay focused. Heavy periods or hot flushes are physically distressing and can be embarrassing in front of colleagues and managers. Irritability and mood swings could mean that a woman's relationships with others at work are affected by uncharacteristic behaviour. As well as impacting on their performance at work, certain symptoms might mean women are absent from work more frequently. Very severe symptoms may mean women are unable to work at all.

Not all symptoms are directly related to the hormone changes within menopause transition, some are a consequence of their occurrence. For example, hot flushes and night sweats are sometimes said to cause insomnia, and this in itself is identified as leading to irritability, fatigue and poorer cognitive function.

The symptoms of menopause transition can have an impact on quality of working life and performance at work. However, much of the following can be enhanced through supportive interventions and line management:

- Efficiency and the avoidance of higher sickness absence.
- Engagement with work.
- Job satisfaction.
- Commitment to the organisation.
- The desire to remain at work.

The evidence suggests that failure to manage transition symptoms might have an impact on:

- Time management.
- Emotional resilience.
- Ability to complete tasks effectively.
- Physical resilience.

Considering the above in terms of policing roles and potential deployment, there is a clear need to ensure that individuals going through the menopause are managed sensitively and effectively. By being aware of the impact of the menopause transition on the well-being of women at this stage within their working lives, the police service, line managers and women themselves can be better prepared to lessen the impact and provide supportive solutions to ensure that individuals are able to work as effectively as possible at this stage in their lives.

Guidance for women experiencing menopause transition

The causes of the menopause

The menopause is a natural transition in an individual's life; it occurs when the ovaries stop producing eggs. The ovaries also make the hormone oestrogen and the onset of the menopause results in a drop in the level of this hormone. This change disrupts the cycle of periods and causes the symptoms associated with the menopause.

In most instances the menopause occurs gradually. For a few years before the menopause, periods may become irregular. This stage is called the perimenopause and individual women may experience significant variance in the duration of this process. The menopause is considered to have occurred once a woman has not had a period for at least a year.

When menopause can occur

For most women, the menopause occurs between the ages of 45 and 55, though some women will experience the menopause earlier in life.

When the menopause happens before the age of 40, it's considered to be premature (early) menopause. While an early menopause can happen naturally, it can also happen following a hysterectomy where one or both ovaries are removed. Early menopause may also be a result of illness.

Symptoms

There is a wide range of symptoms characteristic of menopause transition. These can broadly be divided into physical and psychological symptoms.

Physical symptoms may include irregular and/or heavy periods, hot flushes and night sweats, sleep disturbances, headaches, urinary issues, vaginal dryness/itchiness, dry eyes and weight gain.

Psychological symptoms may include depression and anxiety, irritability and mood swings, loss of confidence and difficulty in concentrating or memory problems.

Due to the variance in symptoms and severity for individual women it is not practical to provide an exhaustive list. Rather, it is desirable to look to take a more holistic approach to the condition and management interventions.

It is important that women do not assume that their symptoms are related to menopause transition and are advised to go to their GP in the first instance to ensure other health issues that are not related to the menopause are identified in their early stages.

The GP is the most obvious source of advice and support for women experiencing menopausal symptoms. A GP will be able to offer the relevant tests, give advice and treatments tailored to individual needs which may include:

- Hormone replacement therapy (HRT) – tablets, skin patches, gels and implants that relieve menopausal symptoms by replacing oestrogen.
- Vaginal oestrogen creams, lubricants or moisturisers for vaginal dryness.
- Cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) – guided self-help in a group or individual environment.
- Eating a healthy, balanced diet and exercising regularly – maintaining a healthy weight and staying fit and strong can improve some menopausal symptoms.
- Medical treatment, not traditionally associated with the menopause, may on occasion be prescribed.

A GP can also make a referral to a menopause specialist if an individual's symptoms don't improve after trying treatment.

See the [NHS menopause conditions page](#) for further information.

Police officers and staff have a responsibility to tell their force about medical conditions or the side effects of medication, which impact on their ability to safely perform their role. It is recognised that raising menopausal transition with line managers will be difficult for many women. However, declaring this enables forces to ensure that support provisions are made available, and that they can meet their duty of care to their staff.

If symptoms are a cause of anxiety or impacting on your work and/or professional relationships, there are benefits in approaching your force occupational health

department. This will help to ensure that appropriate support (including, where relevant, reasonable adjustments) can be considered, and assist you in deciding whether to raise this issue with your line manager.

If you require any advice or support, in the first instance speak to your line manager, or if you require further advice [contact the HR Policy and Wellbeing team](#). Further guidance may be of use in our [Right to request flexible working policy](#) and [Implementing reasonable adjustments in the workplace](#) pages.

Useful resources

[NICE guidance on menopause diagnosis and management](#)

[British Menopause Society](#) (provides ‘education, information and guidance to healthcare professionals specialising in all aspects of post reproductive health’)

[Women’s Health Concern](#) (the patient arm of the British Menopause Society)

[Faculty of Occupational Medicine](#) (provides guidance on the menopause at work)

[Henpicked: Menopause in the Workplace](#) (‘making it easy for you to introduce the right menopause awareness, training, policies and practices’)

[Menopause Café](#) (‘gather to eat cake, drink tea and discuss menopause’)

[Talking Menopause](#) (provides ‘seminars, coaching and individually tailored programmes helping organisations transform their culture and create menopause-friendly workplaces’)

[The Menopause Exchange](#) (provides ‘independent advice about the menopause, midlife and post-menopausal health’)

[Menopause Matters](#) (‘an independent website providing up-to-date, accurate information about the menopause, menopausal symptoms and treatment options’)

[Menopause Support](#) (provides personal and business support)

[Meg’s Menopause](#) (‘an open source of information and advice dedicated to empowering women through an honest and frank discussion of all things menopause’)

Guidance for employees and line managers

One of the key requirements of a line manager is to create an environment which is supportive and responsive to different needs and, where relevant, ensure reasonable adjustments made to support individuals. This is not just a moral and ethical responsibility but also a legal one since line managers have a duty of care in relation to the health, safety and wellbeing of their staff.

All managers are advised to familiarise themselves with the [HSE Guidance](#), regardless of whether they have become aware that a member of staff is going through menopause transition.

Managers should encourage the development of shared organisational values, beliefs and norms within which menopause transition, like pregnancy, is acknowledged as a natural process and that women are able to seek support including [Implementing reasonable adjustments in the workplace](#).

It is important to develop tailored interventions for individuals taking into consideration all the different and often unique working environments.

The following aspects are particularly challenging, for example:

- Inadequate ventilation, high temperatures, humidity and dryness have a negative impact on the experience of hot flushes.
- Stress related to workload, deadlines, responsibility, formal meetings – especially meetings involving senior colleagues – increased stress in having to learn something new and/or give presentations is linked to frequency of menopausal symptoms.
- Lack of access to appropriate toilet facilities, showers, cold drinking water or quiet rest areas and not being able to take regular breaks can make coping with heavy or irregular periods, hot flushes and transition-related fatigue difficult.
- Confined work spaces or crowding can make the experience of hot flushes worse.
- Working with team members, uncomprehending clients and younger colleagues can cause women concern that those people will not understand their situation or that their symptoms will affect the way they are perceived or treated.
- Unsuitable uniforms, ties, suit jackets or other heavy, uncomfortable or cumbersome work-wear can exacerbate the experience of menopausal symptoms.
- The physical demands of a job can make heavy periods harder to manage.

It is vital that employers are aware of the health impacts menopausal transition can have on female workers.

Managers should liaise with the [HR Policy and Wellbeing team](#) to help manage and risk-assess the woman's needs.

Line managers should also consider:

- Accommodating flexible working requests that will help women manage their health issues.
- Whether reasonable adjustments are necessary to support women who are experiencing the menopause transition.

Alongside the clear responsibilities line managers have under health and safety legislation, line managers should also be aware that a failure to adequately support women experiencing the menopause or implement reasonable adjustments risks creating liability for sex and/or disability discrimination under the Equality Act 2010.

For further information, please see the 'Managing Menopause in the Workplace' document attached to this page as well as the links to the NPCC and CIPD resource documents.