

MENSTRUATION AND MENOPAUSE POLICY

March 2021

**HARGREAVES
LANSDOWN**

Contents

Introduction.....	3
Who does this policy apply to?	3
Key Terms.....	3
Menopause.....	3
How can we Support?.....	4
Menstruation	5
Responsibilities.....	6
External Resources	6
Policy Review.....	7
Associated Documents.....	7

INTRODUCTION

Hargreaves Lansdown (HL) is committed to providing an inclusive and supportive working environment for all colleagues. We understand that, for a variety of reasons, anyone can be affected by hormonal changes during their lives and that they may require workplace adjustments because of this. However, this policy focusses specifically on menstruation and the menopause in the aim to;

- Foster an environment in which colleagues can openly and comfortably instigate respectful and supportive conversations about the menopause and menstruation;
- Raise wider awareness and understanding among all colleagues;
- Outline support and reasonable adjustments available to colleagues should they need them;
- Make managers aware of their responsibility to understand how the menopause and menstruation can affect people in their team, and how they can support those experiencing symptoms at work.

WHO DOES THIS POLICY APPLY TO?

The principles of this policy extend to everyone who engages with HL, this includes directly employed colleagues, consultants, contractors and agency employees.

KEY TERMS

In this policy, the below key terms are used:

Menopause: a transition typically experienced for several years, whereby a person's oestrogen levels decline, and they stop having periods.

Perimenopause: this is the phase leading up to the menopause when a person's hormone balance starts to change, and when menopausal symptoms may be experienced.

Menstruation: the process a person's body goes through each month, otherwise known as a 'period'.

Premenstrual syndrome (PMS): a range of emotional and physical symptoms usually experienced in the days leading up to and during the first few days of menstruation.

MENOPAUSE

The menopause is a natural transition which usually happens between the ages of 45-55, though some people can experience it earlier than this due to 'premature menopause' which can be induced by surgery, certain treatments or happen naturally. Overall, this period of hormonal change usually lasts from four to eight years, but can last much longer, with symptoms for some continuing for years.

There are a wide range of physical and psychological symptoms that may be experienced during the menopause and the perimenopause, and some people may encounter difficulties at work as a result of their symptoms. Individuals will be affected in different ways, over different periods of time and menopausal symptoms can often indirectly affect partners, families and colleagues.

Symptoms vary greatly, and commonly include (but aren't limited to):

- Hot flushes;
- Heavy and painful periods and clots;
- Changes to mood
- Increased anxiety
- Night sweats, restless leg syndrome and sleep disturbance;
- Low mood, irritability, increased anxiety, panic attacks, poor concentration and memory problems;
- Urinary problems – it is common to have an urgent need to pass urine or a need to pass it more often than normal;
- Irritated skin;
- Joint and muscle aches and stiffness;
- Weight gain;
- Headaches and migraines;
- Menopausal hair loss;
- Osteoporosis;
- The exacerbation of existing impairments/conditions that colleagues may already be struggling to cope with for examples (but not limited to)
 - Individuals on HRT (hormone replacement therapy)
 - Endometriosis
 - Anaemia
 - Post-natal conditions
 - Depression
 - PCOS
 - PMDD
 - Dysphoria

HOW CAN WE SUPPORT?

We understand that this subject is sensitive and very personal, and we recognise that each colleague may require unique support. Colleagues who are struggling with menopausal symptoms which may impact their work are encouraged to let their line manager know, so that the appropriate support can be provided. If you do not feel comfortable discussing issues with your line manager, please contact HR.

Below is a non-exhaustive list of the support we can offer:

- Flexible working;
- Access to changing/showering facilities;
- Thermostat requests;
- Occupational Health;
- Access to the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), Lifeworks;
- Access to HL's Wellbeing resources

MENSTRUATION

As well as the menopause, HL is committed to developing a workplace culture that supports colleagues and encourages them to feel confident to raise issues around menstruation.

Symptoms of PMS and menstruation vary greatly, and commonly include (but aren't limited to):

- Muscle aches;
- Abdominal cramps and lower back pain;
- Fatigue;
- Headaches;
- Acne;
- Diarrhea or constipation;
- Heavy and painful periods
- Mood swings or feelings of irritability.

Managers should be aware of the support we can offer for colleagues should they require, which includes (but is not limited to):

- Free sanitary products in selected HL office toilets;
- Thermostat requests (please speak with Facilities);
- Sit/stand desks;
- Flexible working options;
- Occupational Health;
- Access to the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), Lifeworks;
- Access to HL's Wellbeing resources.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Below are the responsibilities and duties which we expect from colleagues and managers to ensure this policy is followed.

Colleagues:

All HL colleagues should:

- Educate themselves about the menopause, menstruation and the terms of this policy;
- Consider seeking advice and guidance from their manager where needed and speak openly and honestly about experiences so that the appropriate support is offered;
- Understand their responsibility of contributing to a respectful and productive working environment;
- Recognise that some colleagues may require unique workplace adjustments due to their adverse symptoms;
- Be willing to help and support each other.

Managers:

All HL managers should:

- Ensure that colleagues are aware of the support offered in this policy;
- Understand their responsibilities as a manager;
- Be supportive of discussions around the menopause and listen to the needs of each colleague individually;
- Recognise that symptoms may be unique to each individual and diverse and be open and willing to help provide support
- Encourage colleagues to identify the support and adjustments they need;
- Promote an open and understanding attitude to discussions around health issues, ensuring confidentiality where requested;
- Consider all requests for support and adjustments sympathetically whilst ensuring not to discriminate against those who are experiencing adverse symptoms from menstruation or the menopause.

EXTERNAL RESOURCES

The following resources may be useful to colleagues:

- NHS information - [Menopause](#), [Early Menopause](#)
- [NICE guidelines](#) on 'Menopause: diagnosis and treatment'
- [Menopause Matters](#)
- [TOTM - Period Powerful Hub](#)

POLICY REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed annually by HR.

ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

- Flexible Working Policy
- Sickness Absence Policy
- Time off for Medical and Dental Appointments Policy
- Manager Guide to Wellbeing
- HL Wellbeing resources