

**Create a work environment** that is supportive of employees experiencing the menopause or perimenopause and ensure that work does not exacerbate employees' menopause-related symptoms. Encourage open conversations about menopause between all workers, not just managers and menopausal women.

**Under the Equality Act 2010**, workers are protected from discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the basis of protected characteristics including disability, age and sex. If menopause symptoms have a long term and substantial impact on a woman's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities, these symptoms could be considered a disability.

**Understand the impact** that menopausal symptoms can have on employees at work. There are too many common symptoms to list here but menopausal symptoms can have a significant impact on an employee's attendance and performance at work.

**Employers need to understand the employment law implications.** Be aware of the risks of discrimination and unfair dismissal claims when managing an employee experiencing the menopause. Employees should not suffer less favourable treatment because of their menopause.

**Be empathetic, treat employees fairly and be aware of harassment and victimisation in the workplace.** We've all heard jokes about hot flushes but an employee experiencing the menopause may be able to establish that they have been harassed on the basis of sex, age or disability if colleagues joke about their menopausal symptoms.

**Know your health and safety.** All employers have an obligation to make workplaces suitable for the individuals who work in them and to help employees to manage their menopause in the workplace. Employers should undertake suitable and sufficient assessment of risks and take action to prevent exposure to risks.

**Decide whether to introduce** a standalone menopause policy or to incorporate the menopause into existing policies such as your absence policy. This approach will depend on the culture or size of your business and depend on where you want the information on menopause to be held.

**One-size-does-not-fit-all!** There are a number of practical steps that an employer can take and guidance for from the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) has emphasised the need for reasonable adjustments where a worker's symptoms amount to a disability.

If you're unsure about how to implement any of these strategies or need HR advice and support reach out to [natalie@hr2goconsultancy.co.uk](mailto:natalie@hr2goconsultancy.co.uk) 07779 508972 01279 771098