



**Greenhead College
Corporation**

Menopause at Work Policy

September 2023

1. Introduction

Greenhead College is committed to providing an inclusive and supportive working environment for our staff affected by the menopause. The menopause transition happens to most women at some point in their lives. It is not always an easy transition and there can be an adverse impact on working lives. The menopause can also impact trans and non-binary people who may not identify as female.

With the right support, the experience of people transitioning through menopause can be improved which, in turn, will improve their experience at work.

Menopause should not be taboo or "hidden". Greenhead College wants everyone to understand what menopause is, and to be able to talk about it openly, without embarrassment. This is a societal issue, not just a women's issue. We believe everyone should be better informed about this significant life transition.

Any health information provided by people transitioning through menopause will be processed in accordance with the College's Data Protection Policy. It is recognised that this data is sensitive and it will be handled in a confidential manner.

2. Purpose and aims

This Policy applies to all employees, workers and agency workers of Greenhead College.

This Policy sets out the guidelines for people transitioning through menopause and their managers on providing the right support to manage menopause at work.

The Policy is not contractual and does not form part of the National Joint Council terms and conditions of employment set out in the:

- Teaching Staff in Sixth Form Colleges Conditions of Service Handbook (Red Book)
- Support Staff in Sixth Form Colleges Conditions of Service Handbook (Lilac Book)

The aims of this Policy are to:

- 2.1. Foster an environment in which people can openly and comfortably instigate conversations, or engage in discussions about menopause.
- 2.2. Ensure everyone understands what menopause is, can confidently have constructive conversations, and is clear on the College's Policy and practices.
- 2.3. Educate and inform managers about the potential signs and impact of menopause, and how they can support people transitioning through menopause at work.
- 2.4. Ensure that people transitioning through menopause and experiencing noticeable changes feel confident to discuss it, and ask for support and reasonable adjustments so they can continue to be successful in their career.

2.5. Signal Greenhead College's serious commitment to supporting people transitioning through menopause in a way that is flexible and responsive to their individual needs.

2.6. Direct people transitioning through menopause to relevant advice and assistance.

3. Scope

This Policy should be read in conjunction with SFCA's Employers' Guide to the Menopause, which provides detailed guidance on a range of issues related to the menopause, including the stages of the menopause, common signs associated with menopause, the roles of various staff, and sources of support.

People transitioning through menopause should refer any questions they may have about the day-to-day application of this Policy to a member of the Human Resources Team.

4. Definitions

4.1. **Menopause** is defined as a biological stage in a woman's life that occurs when she stops menstruating. Officially, it is defined as having occurred when a woman has not had a period for 12 consecutive months. Menopause is often used as a transitional reference covering the lead up to this one-day event. Most of those who experience menopause will do so between the ages of 45 and 55. The average age for menopause is 51, however, it can be earlier or later than this due to surgery, illness or other reasons. For women who are in surgical menopause, menopause is not a gradual event as oestrogen withdrawal is instant.

4.2. **Perimenopause** is the time leading up to menopause when people may experience changes, such as irregular periods or other aspects affecting them physically, psychologically or cognitively. This can be years before menopause.

4.3. **Postmenopause** is the time after menopause has occurred.

5. Signs of menopause

5.1. It is important to note that not every person will notice changes during their menopause transition or even need help or support. According to the British Menopause Society, around 80% will notice changes impacting their psychological, physical and cognitive health, with 25% experiencing changes that severely impair daily life.

5.2. Menopause affects everyone in different ways and changes evolve over time. Common aspects affecting those at work include hot flushes, poor concentration, headaches, panic attacks, heavy/light periods, joint pains, anxiety and depression and loss of confidence but there are many more – some that won't be obvious or visible, such as poor sleep – that feel disruptive or distressing. For more details, please see www.nhs.uk/conditions/menopause/symptoms

6. Roles and responsibilities

6.1. Employees, workers and agency workers are responsible for:

- 6.1.1. Taking a personal responsibility to look after their health.
- 6.1.2. Being open and honest in conversations. Greenhead College aims to offer as many opportunities as possible for people transitioning through menopause to discuss any issues, including with line managers, the HR Department and Senior Leadership Team.
- 6.1.3. Contributing to a respectful and productive working environment.
- 6.1.4. Being willing to help and support their colleagues.
- 6.1.5. Understanding and supporting any necessary adjustments their colleagues are receiving as a result of their menopausal symptoms, if their colleague is willing to share this information.
- 6.1.6. Helping to raise awareness and managing unconscious bias.

6.2. Line Managers, Senior Leaders and HR

Primarily, line managers need to ensure that they have regular dialogue with their team members and know them sufficiently well to identify when there may be difficulties or a need to offer support.

All line managers, Senior Leaders and HR should, where appropriate and practicable:

- 6.2.1. Familiarise themselves with this Menopause at Work Policy and SFCA's Employers' Guide to the Menopause.
- 6.2.2. Be ready and willing to have open discussions about menopause, appreciating the personal nature of the conversation, and treating the discussion sensitively and professionally. Any health information provided should be handled confidentially and in accordance with Greenhead College's Data Protection Policies.
- 6.2.3. Be prepared to initiate dialogue where potential difficulties or a need for support are noticed.
- 6.2.4. Use SFCA's Employers' Guide to the Menopause. Review it during conversations you have with any individual about menopause and together with Human Resources, if applicable, agree how best they can be supported, and any temporary reasonable adjustments required.
- 6.2.5. Consider how Greenhead College's approach to flexible working might assist people transitioning through menopause in managing their working day to provide flexibility where it is necessary and appropriate.
- 6.2.6. Record any adjustments agreed, and actions to be implemented.
- 6.2.7. Have ongoing dialogue and review dates as appropriate.

- 6.2.8. Ensure that all agreed adjustments are monitored and adhered to.
- 6.2.9. Within any confidentiality constraints, try to ensure other colleagues respond empathetically and appropriately.
- 6.2.10. Where adjustments are unsuccessful, or if symptoms are proving more problematic, the individual, their line manager and HR may:
 - 6.2.10.1. Discuss a referral to Occupational Health via the HR Department for appropriate expert advice;
 - 6.2.10.2. Review expert advice, and implement any recommendations, where reasonably practical;
 - 6.2.10.3. Update the action plan, and continue to review.

7. Support

- 7.1. Further guidance and information on menopause can be found in SFCA's Employers' Guide to the Menopause, which is available on SharePoint.
- 7.2. The HR Department are available to provide additional support on any aspect of this Policy.
- 7.3. Physical adjustments that may be helpful could include temperature control, provision of electric fans or access to rest facilities. Depending on individual and College needs, adjustments such as flexible working, more frequent rest breaks or changes to work allocation may be considered. These are examples only and not an exhaustive list.
- 7.4. Greenhead College may refer people transitioning through menopause to their GP or Occupational Health to gain a better understanding of any adjustments or other support that may help to alleviate the symptoms affecting the work of people transitioning through menopause.
- 7.5. An employee may also self-refer to Kirklees Employee Healthcare for support from a specialist Menopause Practitioner.

8. Risk assessments

Greenhead College is committed to ensuring the health and safety of its employees and will consider any aspects of the working environment that may worsen menopausal symptoms. This may include identifying and addressing specific risks to the health and wellbeing of people transitioning through menopause.

9. Monitoring and review

- 9.1. Greenhead College reserves the right to vary the terms, conditions and procedure set

out in this Policy at any time.

9.2. This Policy will be kept under review and will be monitored by Director of Human Resources at regular intervals to ensure its fairness and effectiveness.

This policy and procedure should be read in conjunction with the following:

- SFCAs Menopause Guide for Employers
- Flexible Working Policy
- Absence Policy
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Framework
- Health and Wellbeing Policy

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“This policy has been impact assessed to ensure it complies with all aspects of Equality and Diversity. Members are reassured that this policy is compliant with current equality legislation”.