



3.8 Menopause Policy

Policy Statement

Little Gillies is committed to ensuring the health, safety and Well-being of its employees and ensuring everyone is treated with dignity and respect.

The menopause is a natural process and for many can be positively managed through lifestyle adjustments. However Little Gillies recognises that for some the menopause is not always an easy transition. Some employees may need additional considerations to support and improve their experience at work.

With this in mind Little Gillies is committed to supporting employees who are affected in any way by the menopause and to support and inform managers so that employees reporting issues are treated fairly and given appropriate support.

This Policy is inclusive of all gender identities including trans and non-binary employees. Little Gillies have a duty not to discriminate in terms of age, sex and disability. Detrimental treatment related to the menopause could represent direct or indirect sex discrimination on any or all of these protected characteristics.

The Aim of the Policy

- To support employees to remain at work
- To raise awareness of menopause, the related issues and how this can affect employees
- To break the stigma and taboo surrounding the menopause at work and to promote an environment in which employees feel confident in discussing menopausal issues and ask for support and adjustments, if required
- To provide guidance and direction on how to support employees who raise menopausal issues not only for the individuals experiencing the menopause but also those who may be affected indirectly which may include managers, colleagues, partners and family members
- To inform managers of the potential symptoms of menopause, how this can affect employees and what can be done to support individuals including reasonable adjustments

Procedures

- This Policy applies to all employees of Little Gillies and who work on the board of trustees

- It includes permanent and fixed-term employees, members of staff on bank contracts, those working within the Board on behalf of other agencies, volunteers, and those on work experience or training placements
- Managers Discussions with Employees Regular, informal conversations between manager and employee can enable discussions about issues related to menopause.
- One of the most valuable things a manager can do is listen and respond sympathetically if issues relating to menopause are reported
- These conversations can assist to identify support at work which can make a real difference with how employees cope with menopause

Definitions

- Menopause - The menopause is a natural part of ageing and refers to the time in life when periods stop and the natural reproductive cycle ends. It usually occurs between the ages of 45 and 55 with the average age being
- Premature ovarian insufficiency (premature menopause) menopause before 40 years of age
- Peri-menopause - the time leading up to menopause when menopausal symptoms can be experienced. Symptoms can start a few months or even years before periods stop
- Post-menopause - The time after the last period

Symptoms

The most common symptoms include:

- Hot flushes
- Night sweats
- Sleep disruption
- Fatigue Menopause
- Difficulty concentrating/memory problems/loss of confidence
- Mood disturbances including anxiety and depression
- Headaches
- Irregular periods/heavy bleeding
- Bone and Joint problems

Symptoms on average continue for 2-4 years however some individuals will experience symptoms for longer.

The nature of symptoms will vary from mild to severe. These symptoms can have a significant adverse impact on the quality of both personal and working life.

Roles and Responsibilities

Employees - All employees are responsible for:

- Taking reasonable responsibility and care for their own health and well- being

- Being open to having conversations with managers. If for any reason they feel unable to speak to their manager they can also speak to the chair of trustees
- Upholding a positive working environment treating others with dignity and respect.

Managers- All line managers will:

- Familiarise themselves with the Menopause Policy
- Be willing to have open discussions with employees about changes in their health including issues relating to the Menopause, treat the discussion sensitively and recognise that each individual's experience may differ.
- Ensure on-going communication and agree a plan for review where appropriate.
- Implement agreed adjustments
- Encourage the employee to discuss any relevant health concerns with their GP practice.
- Maintain confidentiality when handling health
- Allow for sufficient time to have the conversation and encourage the employee to be open and honest when discussing any difficulties they may be experiencing.
- Explore with them ways in which they can be supported
- Agree an action plan, record the outcome of the discussion and agree a review timeframe
- Provide details of support and external services available

Suggested Adjustments to Consider

Hot Flushes - Can result in employees feeling uncomfortable and less tolerant of workplace temperatures.

- Review control of workplace temperature and
- Access to drinking water
- Avoid tight fitting uniforms.
- Access to a rest area/room for breaks if work involves prolonged periods of standing or sitting.
- Access to a quiet room/area for a short break to manage a severe hot flush

Night Sweats/Sleep disruption - Can result in increased tiredness and fatigue.

- Consider flexible working hours or temporary shift changes to accommodate difficulties

Difficulty concentrating/Memory problems - Performance may be affected

- Regular supervision/review with manager
- Review task allocation and workload
- Consider flexibility in working pattern or shift pattern.
- Offer quiet place to work)

Low mood/Depression/anxiety/panic attacks/loss of confidence - Can make work tasks more difficult to carry out and performance may be affected.

- Provide opportunity to openly discuss any concerns/difficulties

- Regular supervision/review with manager
- Access to a quiet area for a short break if
- Encourage that they discuss symptoms with their GP practice

Headaches

- Access to drinking water
- Access to quiet space or area for short break and to take medication if required

Irregular/heavy bleeding

- Access to toilet and washroom facilities
- May require more frequent short breaks

Bone and Joint problems - certain moving and handling tasks may be more uncomfortable

- Local risk assessments and moving and handling assessments
- Consider temporary adjustments or modifications to work

All policies and procedures are implemented, reviewed and updated on an annual basis or in line with any changes to local and national guidance/legislation in conjunction with the registered person.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Little gillies

Held on.....

Date to reviewed

Signed on behalf of the provider.....

Name of signatory.....

Role of signatory.....

Reviewed by Sarah Beresford

Date August 2024