
**Me and my
menoPAUSE**



Introductory Information

Conceived and developed in collaboration by:



fox & cat®



**The Menopause
Charity**

Introduction

There are 33 million¹ women living in the UK and almost all will go through the menopause at some point in their life.

The menopause is a natural stage of life when people who have a menstrual cycle stop having periods and can no longer get pregnant naturally. However, some people may experience a surgically-induced menopause because they have had their ovaries removed. People who experience the menopause can include trans people and people with variations of sex development (VSD)².

The age at which people start the menopause can vary greatly and each individual will have their own unique experience. While some people transition through the menopause smoothly, others will experience symptoms and endure the negative impact these have on their lives both at home and at work.

Often the menopause can have a significant impact on people's physical and mental health. They will likely need to make adjustments to their life both within and outside of work to allow for the changes to their body, mood and ability. The mental health impact of going through the menopause isn't just caused by hormone change, it's equally around the anxiety and stress caused by worrying about the impact on their ability to work, of stigma and of embarrassment.³

Therefore, it is important too that businesses understand the menopause so they can effectively support all members of their team who might need to talk about the menopause with colleagues. This will include: team leaders and line managers; those going through the menopause; and all employees who might want to know more about this phase of life.

How can businesses benefit from including the menopause in their employee wellbeing strategies?⁴

- Retaining more experienced staff
- Reducing staff absence by addressing and avoiding illness
- Avoiding employee grievances by ensuring all colleagues are looked after properly
- Sending a clear message to potential employees that they belong to an organisation that cares about its employees' wellbeing and holds their best interests at heart
- Creating an inclusive culture. The empathy this engenders will promote a sense of understanding and unity, helping to showcase your business as a desirable place to work

Did you know?^{5, 6}

- Women over the age of 50 are the fastest growing group in the UK workforce
- As the average age of the menopause is 51, symptoms can often occur at the peak of a woman's career
- Currently around 10% of women aged 45-55 have left their jobs due to the menopause
- The perimenopause can affect women outside of these age groups. It can bring issues such as extreme bleeding and pain that can also severely impact women in this stage of their life

Me and my menoPAUSE

Me and my menoPAUSE has been co-created by the Healthcare Communications Association and fox&cat to help guide important conversations around the menopause. It is intended to support all employers and employees, whether they work in agency, in-house teams or as freelancer/contractors. It has been created with insight from our panel of experts.



In healthcare communications, 60-70% of the workforce are women and so the menopause has the potential to affect a larger percentage of the workforce compared to other sectors. This resource comes at a time where there is no legal protection for employees and hopes to help bring best practice to our industry around this important matter.

- Mike Dixon,
CEO of the HCA




Due to its mental health impact, perhaps unsurprisingly the menopause was one of the main triggers for stress and pressure that attendees of our mental well-being programme, *Under the tree*, mentioned in their evaluation.


It is my hope that this campaign helps employers and their teams to have meaningful conversations that lead to reduced feelings of avoidable pressure and stress for all involved.


- Paul Hutchings,
founder of fox&cat



Me and my menoPAUSE includes individual guides for:

 **Team leaders and line managers.**
We recommend you send this guide to all members of your team with people leadership responsibilities.

 **Employees going through the menopause.**
We recommend you share this guide with those who contact you or a member of your leadership team because they would like to start a conversation about the menopause.

 **All employees.**
We recommend you send this information sheet to your whole team and encourage each individual to educate themselves about the menopause so that they can understand how it may affect members of their team.

These guides are also being made available directly to anyone working in healthcare communications via the HCA website, therefore you may be approached by others within your organisation about this campaign. In case this happens, we recommend you read the full campaign pack so you are aware of what it covers.



Resources

Below we have highlighted a range of key resources available to businesses to enable best practice around the menopause. Also check with HR teams whether your organisation has existing policies and support programmes in place such as Employee Assistance Programmes (EAPs). These can often provide support in mental and physical health queries for employees. Early Intervention and/or Occupational Health services may also be useful for employees and organisations where reasonable adjustments may be required.



<p><u>Menopause and the workplace</u></p>	<p>Government information including recommendations aimed at bringing about comprehensive change and support for those experiencing the menopause in key areas of Government policy, employer practice, and wider societal and financial change.</p>
<p><u>Supporting staff through the menopause</u></p>	<p>Resources from the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) that cover how employers can support staff through every stage of the menopause, including: training managers, carrying out health and safety checks, developing a menopause policy, managing sickness and performance, appointing menopause and wellbeing champions.</p>
<p><u>Menopause in the workplace</u></p>	<p>Resources from Women's Health Concern covering how the menopause can impact work, what it means for line managers and organisations, and available support.</p>
<p><u>Professional menopause guidance</u></p>	<p>Full resources and guidance on how to provide effective support for employees experiencing the menopause. Covers all aspects of the menopause at work, and includes useful downloadable resources.</p>
<p><u>Menopause Friendly Accreditation</u></p>	<p>A service that can accredit your business / policy as "menopause friendly".</p>

Contributors

Me and my menoPAUSE has been co-created by the Healthcare Communications Association and fox&cat to help guide important conversations around the menopause.

Fox&cat has invested in this initiative as a part of its ongoing commitment to lessen the impact of pressure and stress that affects 7/10 people working in the communications industry.

It draws on the expert advice from:

Jenny Haskey, The Menopause Charity
Antonia Katsambis, Independent HR Practitioner
Diane Wass, Managing Director, JPA Health
Lucy Heaton, Menopause Coach

The HCA is the leading professional association uniting and championing all those in healthcare communications. It is a not-for-profit organisation with membership comprising in-house teams, agencies, third sector and individuals working in national and global healthcare communications across diverse business sectors.

Find out more here: www.the-hca.org



Fox&cat is a multi-award-winning integrated healthcare communications agency which creates inspirational campaigns and programmes that deliver meaningful impact; offering excellent value to clients due to its lean, post-covid operating model. Its social purpose mission focuses on helping everyone working in comms to deliver and thrive under pressure, resulting in the industry's first free to all educational campaign, *Under the tree*.

Find out more here: www.foxandcat.online



The Menopause Charity exists to educate everybody so that perimenopause and menopause are properly understood. The Menopause Charity provides trusted information in a way that everyone understands and works to ensure everyone has equal access to appropriate advice, support and treatment. It believes that by replacing the stigma and social taboo with trusted knowledge, women can thrive through the menopause.

Find out more here: www.themenopausecharity.org



1 The Menopause Charity. www.themenopausecharity.org [Accessed October 2023]

2 ACAS. Menopause at work. www.acas.org.uk/menopause-at-work [Accessed October 2023]

3 NHS Inform. Healthy Living, Women's Health. www.nhsinform.scot [Accessed October 2023]

4 British Safety Counsel. www.britsafe.org/publications/safety-management-magazine/safety-management-magazine/2023/why-it-s-important-to-be-a-menopause-friendly-employer/#:~:text=Business%20benefits%20of%20being%20menopause%20friendly&text=It%20sends%20a%20clear%20message,their%20best%20interests%20at%20heart [Accessed October 2023]

5 Fawcett Society. Menopause and the workplace. 2022. www.fawcettsociety.org.uk [Accessed October 2023]

6 Careers Smart. Which jobs do men and women do? Occupational breakdown by gender. <https://careersmart.org.uk/occupations/equality/which-jobs-do-men-and-women-do-occupational-breakdown-gender> [Accessed October 2023]