**Guide and Tips for managers’ to have a menopause discussions with a staff member**

Not everyone will experience menopause in the same way and therefore as a manager it is important to manage each individual situation in accordance to your staff member’s particular circumstance.

If an employee wishes to speak about their symptoms, or just to talk about how they are feeling (they may not recognise themselves that they are experiencing menopause symptoms), you should ensure that you:

* Allow adequate time to have the conversation;
* Find an appropriate confidentiality space to hold the meeting;
* Encourage them to speak openly and honestly;
* Either at the meeting or following the meeting suggest ways in which your they can be supported;
* Agree actions, and how to implement any support;
* Agree if other members of the team should be informed or not, and if so by whom;
* Ensure that designated time is allowed for follow up meetings. Regular routine one-to-one management catch ups with your staff member is an ideal time to enquire into your staff member’s well-being.

**Management Guidance on how you can support your staff member’s menopause symptoms**

Symptoms can manifest both physically and emotionally, including, but not exhaustively or exclusively; support for employees should be considered as detailed below:

**Hot Flushes**

* Request temperature control for their work area, such as a fan on their desk or moving near a window, or away from a heat source;
* Easy access to drinking water;
* Have access to a rest room for breaks if their work involves long periods of standing or sitting, or a quiet area if they need to manage a severe hot flush.
* If they are required to wear a uniform for their work, ensuring that the uniform fabric does not make exacerbate the symptoms of hot flushes.

**Heavy/light Periods**

* Have permanent access to washroom facilities;
* Ensure storage space is available for a change of clothing.

**Headaches**

* Have ease of access to fresh drinking water;
* You may want to consider Flexible working or Hybrid Working for a period of time.
* Have time out to take medication if needed.

**Difficulty Sleeping**

* You may want to consider Flexible Working or Hybrid Working particularly is a staff member is suffering from a lack of sleep.

**Low Mood**

* Enable time out without needing to ask for permission;
* Identify a ‘buddy’ for the colleague to talk to – outside of the work area;
* Identify a ‘time out space’ to be able to go to ‘clear their head’;
* Contact Employee Assistance (<http://hr.qmul.ac.uk/wellbeing/mental-wellbeing/employee-assistance-programme/>) on 0800 243 458, by emailing assistance@workplaceoptions.com or online www.workplaceoptions.co.uk - (username: queenmary and password: employee).

**Loss of Confidence**

* Ensure there are regular Personal Development Discussions;
* Have regular one-to-one meetings with your staff member;
* Enable agreed protected time to catch up with work.

**Poor Concentration**

* Discuss if there are times of the day when concentration is better or worse, and adjust working pattern/practice accordingly;
* Review task allocation and workload;
* Provide books for lists, action boards, or other memory-assisting equipment;
* Reduce interruptions;
* Have agreements in place in an open office that an individual is having ‘protected time’, so that they are not disturbed;
* Have agreed protected time to catch up with work.

**Anxiety**

* Promote counselling services provided by the Employee Assistance Programme for staff struggling with mental health issues;
* Identify a ‘buddy’ for the colleague to talk to – outside of work their area;
* Be able to have time away from their work to undertake relaxation techniques;
* Enable the staff member to be able to undertake mindfulness activities such as breathing exercises, or going for a walk.

**Panic Attacks**

* Agree time out from others, when required, without needing to ask for permission;
* Identify a ‘buddy’ outside of work area;
* Be able to have time away from their work to undertake relaxation techniques;
* Enable the staff member to be able to undertake mindfulness activities such as breathing exercises, or going for a walk.
* Discuss whether the member of staff has visited their GP. Depending on the discussion, this may be the next step suggested, particularly if the areas of difficulty are sleeping, panic attacks or anxiety.
* If they have visited their GP, and are being supported by them, it may be helpful at this point to make an Occupational Health referral to give specific advice regarding the workplace