BrisDoc Patient care by people who care

NHS

Menopause and Menstrual Health Guidance

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Purpose and Scope

This guidance supports BrisDoc's inclusive culture and commitment to wellbeing by addressing the impact of menopause and menstrual health at work. It ensures alignment with BrisDoc's **Sickness Management and Wellbeing Support Policy**, **Flexible Working Policy** and **Reasonable Adjustments Guidance**, and relevant legal frameworks including the **Equality Act 2010**.

Creating a Menopause and Menstruation-Friendly Organisation

BrisDoc is proud to be a menopause and menstruation-friendly organisation, committed to breaking the stigma and creating a workplace where colleagues feel supported, informed, and empowered at every stage of life. We actively promote awareness, provide tailored support, and foster open conversations to ensure that menopause and menstruation are understood and normalised across our teams.

We recognise that experiences of menopause and menstrual health are highly individual and are committed to fostering a culture where colleagues feel able to seek support without stigma or judgement.

Perimenopause and menopause in the workplace

Perimenopause is the transitional period before menopause, characterised by fluctuating hormone levels and menstrual cycle changes, while menopause is defined as the absence of menstruation for 12 consecutive months. However, for some individuals, menopause may occur following surgery, medical treatment or illness, meaning menstruation may cease without this 12-month transition period.

Perimenopause can last for several years, with symptoms including

- irregular periods
- hot flashes
- mood changes

whereas menopause marks the end of reproductive fertility and menstrual cycles for affected individuals.

Menopause symptoms can significantly impact individuals experiencing menopause* at work. Common symptoms include

- hot flushes
- night sweats
- sleep disturbances
- mood changes (anxiety, depression, irritability)
- fatigue
- cognitive issues like brain fog and difficulty concentrating

These symptoms can lead to reduced productivity, increased stress, and challenges in maintaining effective communication and teamwork.

Research and workplace guidance from organisations including NICE, ACAS and CIPD recognise that menopause symptoms can affect attendance, confidence and performance at work, and that supportive conversations and appropriate workplace adjustments can have a positive impact on employee wellbeing and retention.

It also impacts not only women but also their partners, families, and workplaces. Understanding the physical and emotional changes associated with menopause is crucial for providing effective support. Every colleague can play a vital role by educating themselves about the process, offering practical help, and being patient and understanding.

*Gender Diversity
While commonly associated with cisgender women, menopause can also affect transgender men, non-binary individuals, and intersex individuals and others who experience menopause.

Menstrual Health Conditions

BrisDoc recognises a broad range of menstrual health issues that may affect co-owners' wellbeing, attendance, and performance at work. These include but are not limited to:

Common Conditions

- **Endometriosis** – A chronic condition where tissue similar to the womb lining grows outside the uterus, causing severe pain, fatigue, and heavy bleeding.
- **Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS)** – A hormonal disorder that can cause irregular periods, fatigue, and mood changes.
- **Premenstrual Dysphoric Disorder (PMDD)** – A severe form of premenstrual syndrome (PMS) with intense emotional and physical symptoms.
- **Heavy Menstrual Bleeding (Menorrhagia)** – Excessive or prolonged bleeding which can lead to anaemia, fatigue, and difficulty managing daily tasks.

Symptoms of these conditions may overlap with menopausal symptoms and can impact attendance, concentration, and comfort. These may also co-exist with other conditions or intersect with protected characteristics such as disability, gender identity, or age, requiring a tailored and empathetic response.

Legal Context

Employment Rights Bill 2025

The Employment Rights Bill 2025 requires employers to make reasonable adjustments and provide appropriate support for employees experiencing menopause-related symptoms. This includes fostering an inclusive workplace culture, reviewing policies, and ensuring managers are trained to respond sensitively and effectively.

BrisDoc is legally and ethically committed to:

- Making **reasonable adjustments** (as per our **Reasonable Adjustments Guidance**)
- Preventing **discrimination or harassment**

- Providing consistent, **compassionate sickness management**

Disability

Although menopause and menstruation are not protected characteristics in themselves, the symptoms may amount to a disability under the **Equality Act 2010** if they have a substantial and long-term impact on daily life.

Pregnancy and Maternity

Matters related to **pregnancy and maternity** are separately covered under the **Sickness Management and Wellbeing Support Policy** and the **Maternity Policy** available on Radar.

Gender Pay Gap Reporting

Employers required to report gender pay gap data will also need to include action plans on supporting those experiencing menopause.

Reasonable Adjustments

BrisDoc's **Reasonable Adjustments Guidance** outlines how to request, assess, and implement changes that reduce disadvantage at work. This includes:

- Adjusted duties or schedules
- Ergonomic or comfort-enhancing resources and facilities (e.g. access to fans or private rest spaces)
- Temporary changes in work location flexible working
- Uniform adjustments
- Disability considerations if impact an employee's ability to perform daily tasks is significant
- Use of **Attendance Support Plans** or **Wellness Action Plans**

All conversations about adjustments should be recorded using 'badges' on RotaMaster and supported by the People Team. See the Reasonable Adjustments Guidance for more information.

Learning and Awareness

To promote understanding and reduce stigma, BrisDoc offers **Menopause Awareness eLearning**, available via the Development Hub. This module is recommended for all co-owners (and especially managers) and is designed to build confidence in discussing menopause-related issues and providing appropriate support.

Further learning on equity, diversity, and wellbeing is available through the internal **Learning & OD programme**.

Support for Co-Owners

Co-owners experiencing menopausal or menstrual health symptoms can:

- Notify their manager if they require support or adjustments
- Submit a **Wellbeing Request for Support** form on the Wellbeing Hub
- Access our 24/7 **Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)** via Radar
- Request a referral to **Occupational Health**
- Co-develop a **Wellness Action Plan** with their manager – you can find this by searching on Radar
- Talk to a Wellbeing Champion
- Access resources in Radar Wellbeing Hub

Sickness Absence

Hormonal health-related absences are treated **sensitively and fairly** in line with BrisDoc's policies. Where symptoms are classed as a disability, appropriate legal protections and adjustments will be applied.

All co-owners must:

- Record absence appropriately through RotaMaster under category 09 – Menstrual, Genito-Urinary
- Provide certification where required
- Engage in **Wellbeing Check-Ins** and **Supportive Return Conversations**

Pregnancy- and maternity-related absences are excluded from absence thresholds and are covered under our Maternity Policy.

Advice for Managers

- Conduct supportive, private discussions
- Refer complex cases to Occupational Health
- Avoid assumptions about performance or attendance
- Support and arrange Reasonable Adjustments if the team member's symptoms constitute a disability and document all actions
- Engage in open, non-assumptive conversations, and consider how factors like race, disability, age, and caring responsibilities may shape an individual's experience and support needs
- Request advice through EAP

Resources

Internal

- **Wellbeing Hub on Radar** – Forms, guidance, and EAP access
- **EAP (24/7)** – Confidential support for emotional or practical issues
- **People Team** – workforcesupport@brisdoc.org
- **Occupational Health & Counselling**

External

- Henpicked
- Menopause Matters
- Endometriosis UK
- The Daisy Network
- Wellbeing of Women
- Access to Work
- Mind

Version Control

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09/11/2026	V1.1	Millie O'Keeffe & Alison Barrett	Small updates
29/07/2025	V1.0	Millie O'Keeffe & Alison Barrett	New guidance