

Menopause guide and checklist for reps

The menopause is an occupational health issue for women educators, as well as being an equality issue. It is important that schools and colleges are suitable workplaces for menopausal women. The purpose of this guide and checklist for reps is to signpost you to advice, and to support you in improving workplace conditions for menopausal women.

If you have established a dialogue with management, you and your union group will be able to address collective issues when necessary. This will include requesting or reviewing working conditions for menopausal women. The NEU reps guide includes useful tips on engaging with management and representing your union group neu.org.uk/reps

This checklist will assist you in seeking a menopause supportive workplace and in challenging barriers. This is a collective issue and we believe collaboration between workplace reps, health and safety reps, leaders, governors, and a staff support network can go a long way towards creating a supportive environment for women experiencing menopause symptoms at work.

- ✓ **Read our guide for members** – a whole school approach to supporting menopausal women in the workplace will help meet the needs of all staff.
- ✓ **Liaise with NEU reps** – your health & safety rep and equality rep should be able to make valuable contributions to supporting menopausal women at work.
- ✓ **Discuss the menopause with your union group** – how could menopause symptoms impact on members at work?
- ✓ **Encourage members to form a peer support group/network.**
- ✓ **Ask members to consider the NEU model policy.**
- ✓ **Ask your employer to adopt the NEU model policy.**
- ✓ **Read our checklist for leaders** – and give a copy to your head or principal.
- ✓ **Ensure that health and safety risk assessments include menopause issues.**
- ✓ **Encourage members to discuss menopause issues** – and to challenge jointly any barriers faced by menopausal women at work.

Working
**through the
menopause**



- ✓ **Support members if issues arise** – and seek advice if necessary.
- ✓ **Monitor the impact of the NEU model policy** – has it made a difference to your workplace?
- ✓ **Maintain a dialogue with your employer** – discuss the impact of the policy; has the employer taken all the steps in the policy?
- ✓ **Remind your head or principal of the menopause checklist for leaders** – are there any outstanding actions to be taken or remaining barriers?
- ✓ **Talk to your branch** – let them know if your employer adopts the policy and tell them about any successes and any barriers.
- ✓ **Share your policy** – email your policy to equality@neu.org.uk
- ✓ **Contact your organising forum representatives** – you'll find active members in each region and Wales organising for women, disabled members, leadership members and on health and safety. Ask your regional office or NEU Cymru for details.
- ✓ **Display the NEU Working Through the Menopause poster.**

A supportive working culture and environment for menopausal women will benefit all staff. A collective approach is recommended but there will of course be times when a member requires individual support. As a rep, members may approach you with concerns or problems related to the menopause at work. You are not expected to know all the answers or deal with every query yourself.

Women should not be subjected to detrimental treatment on grounds related to the menopause. Menopause is not a distinct protected characteristic itself under the Equality Act 2010 but detrimental or less favourable treatment could amount to discrimination on grounds of sex, age or disability. For example, the impact of menopause symptoms for a worker could meet the definition of a disability if its effects have a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

You'll find a range of guidance on the [NEU website](#). Specific guidance on age, disability and sex discrimination and harassment, health & safety and stress at work might assist with some menopause related enquiries. Your branch/district secretary or regional office in England or NEU Cymru is also at hand to help. As a workplace rep, you can also get advice on representing members and the collective issues you may face in school or college by calling the AdviceLine on **0345 811 8111**.

See the **NEU menopause toolkit** for further advice and information
neu.org.uk/menopause