

# Menopause in the workplace

Menopausal symptoms may have a negative impact on work and the ability to work, leading some women to exit employment or to reduce their working hours, which can have short- and long-term effects on income and security. EMAS therefore published global recommendations about menopause in the workplace, which are summarized below.

## Recommendations for employers and organizations

Employers and organizations should:

- make health and wellbeing during the menopause a priority and ensure that staff are retained
- have a zero-tolerance policy on the bullying, harassment, victimization or belittling of women with menopause symptoms
- undertake an assessment of how work patterns may impact symptoms
- allow flexible working
- ensure menopause is included in training for all staff
- develop an employment framework that recognizes the potential impact of the menopause
- include explicit coverage of menopause in sickness and attendance management policies and ensure women can access workplace healthcare provision.

Women living with and beyond cancer experiencing menopausal symptoms should be encouraged to seek specialist advice.

## Recommendations for managers and supervisors

Managers and supervisors should:

- create an open, inclusive and supportive culture regarding the menopause
- ensure that human resource functions work with occupational health professionals
- allow flexibility in dress codes and allow for uniforms to use thermally comfortable fabrics
- review control over workplace temperature and ventilation and provide access to cold drinking water
- ensure access to clean and private changing and washing facilities and toilets
- allow breaks to manage symptoms such as severe hot flushes.

Women with a premature menopause should be encouraged to seek specialist services.

## Recommendations for healthcare and allied healthcare professionals

Healthcare and allied healthcare professionals (HCPs) should:

- recognize that menopausal symptoms can adversely affect working life
- provide evidence-based advice using national and international guidelines.

Occupational health professionals should:

- provide advice on how to manage menopause and work, and encourage women to consult their usual health provider if necessary.

There is a diversity of experience of menopause in the workplace, shaped by not only by menopausal symptoms but also the workplace environment.

## Recommendations for women

Women should:

- talk to their line managers or supervisors if they experience menopause-related problems that impact on their ability to work
- seek help and advice from employee support or advocacy bodies and occupational health services, if necessary
- be aware of state-wide or national legislation and regulation that protects menopausal women at work
- consult their usual healthcare provider, if necessary
- access evidence-based guidelines for information on menopause care
- be involved in developing health and wellbeing policies in their workplace
- take part in induction, training and development programs that include coverage of menopause
- be involved in formal and informal support groups for women with menopausal symptoms.

## Further information

**Global consensus recommendations on menopause in the workplace: A European Menopause and Andropause Society (EMAS) position statement** <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.maturitas.2021.06.006>