

## Menopause Policy

Policy Code:	HR17
Policy Start Date:	March 2025
Policy Review Date:	March 2028

Please read this policy in conjunction with the policies listed below:

- HR6 Data Protection
- HR8A Equal Opportunities and Diversity
- HR18 Staff Sickness Absence
- HR25 Flexible Working
- HR34 Emotional Health, Wellbeing Policy for Staff

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## **1 Policy Statement**

- 1.1 The Priory Federation of Academies Trust (the Trust) is committed to creating a supportive and understanding environment for all members of staff experiencing the menopause. Recognising menopause as a significant life transition, The Trust aims to provide appropriate support and foster an inclusive workplace where all staff feel valued and respected.
- 1.2 This policy will be applied to all members of staff, as well as any volunteers working within the Trust. It acknowledges that menopause can affect everyone differently and aims to cater to individual needs.
- 1.3 This policy does not form part of any member of staff's contract of employment and it may be amended at any time.
- 1.4 References to the Trust or Academy within this policy specifically include all primary, secondary and special academies within the Trust, as well as the Early Years setting at the Priory Witham Academy, Priory Apprenticeships and Lincolnshire ITT.
- 1.5 The Trust is committed to supporting all staff, and will ensure that the requirements set out in the Health and Safety Act 1974 and the Equality Act 2010 are adhered to.

## **2 Roles, Responsibilities and Implementation**

- 2.1 The Pay, Performance and HR Committee has overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy and for ensuring compliance with the relevant statutory framework. This committee delegates day-to-day responsibility for the policy and ensuring its maintenance and review to the Director of Wellbeing.
- 2.2 Leaders and managers have a specific responsibility to ensure the fair application of this policy and all employees are responsible for supporting colleagues to ensure its success.

## **3 Aims**

- 3.1 To create an environment where staff members feel confident to discuss their menopausal symptoms and request support and adjustments at work, ensuring that the Trust retains valuable staff in the work place.
- 3.2 To ensure that, where possible, workplace conditions do not exacerbate menopausal symptoms and that appropriate adjustments are provided, recognising that the menopause is an individual experience.

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- 3.3 To help ensure that Trust staff have low-levels of absence due to menopausal symptoms.
- 3.4 To provide a supportive environment to ensure that staff experiencing menopausal symptoms receive the support and understanding they need to continue to be successful in their roles.
- 3.5 To increase awareness and understanding of menopause amongst all staff, promoting a culture of empathy and respect.

#### **4 Definition**

- 4.1 Menopause is the end of a biological woman's menstrual cycles and fertility. It usually occurs in-between 45 and 55 years of age (the average in the UK is 51). Menopause can happen naturally with age or due to surgery, medical treatment, or illness. It affects anyone who has periods.
- 4.2 Perimenopause is when a woman has the symptoms of menopause but their periods have not yet stopped. Perimenopause ends and a woman reaches menopause when she has not had a period for 12 months.
- 4.3 Menopause and perimenopause can cause symptoms such as:
- anxiety and panic attacks;
  - mood swings;
  - brain fog;
  - memory loss;
  - reduced concentration/focus;
  - headaches/migraines;
  - dry eyes;
  - recurrent urinary tract infections;
  - joint stiffness, aches and pains;
  - hot flushes;
  - night sweats and difficulty sleeping;
  - fatigue;
  - irregular and/or heavy periods.

These symptoms can start years before a woman's periods stop, and carry on afterwards (post-menopause).

The list of symptoms above is not exhaustive, but reflect some of the more common symptoms of perimenopause/menopause.

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## **5 Support for individuals**

- 5.1 The Trust recognises that the menopause is a very personal experience and different adjustments and levels of support may be needed for each individual.
- 5.2 The Trust expects all staff to familiarise themselves with this policy, and to be supportive of colleagues who may be affected by perimenopause/the menopause in the workplace.
- 5.3 The Trust encourages any individual who may be perimenopausal, or menopausal, to:
- take personal responsibility for looking after their own health and wellbeing, and seek the advice of health professionals, as necessary; and
  - speak openly with their Line Manager and/or HR (Human Resources) about their needs and any reasonable adjustments that may help them manage their symptoms.
- 5.4 In the first instance, staff should seek support from their Line Manager and/or HR. The HR Team may seek further medical guidance as and when necessary, to ensure full support is provided, along with signposting to any available external support. Conversations surrounding support, medical requirements, and related matters will be treated with the utmost confidentiality and respect.
- 5.5 Reasonable adjustments may include:
- flexible working hours or patterns;
  - temperature control in the workplace;
  - access to private rest areas;
  - provision of fans or other cooling devices;
  - a referral to Occupational Health; and/or
  - adjustments to dress code requirements.
- 5.6 The Trust also offers the following services, which may support an individual:
- Mental Health First Aiders, who can listen and signpost mental health support;
  - Wellbeing Champions in every setting, who can be approached for help and guidance; and
  - the wellbeing pages on the Trust's website.
- 5.7 If appropriate, the Trust will provide staff with access to counselling and/or professional supervision.

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- 5.8 Staff, Line Managers and/or HR will ensure that any agreed adjustments, or risk assessments (where required), are adhered to and reviewed regularly.
- 5.9 External support is available through:
- Menopause Matters: Menopause Matters, menopausal symptoms, remedies, advice
  - Daisy Network: Charity for Women with POI | The Daisy Network
  - Menopause Café: Gather to eat cake, drink and discuss menopause
  - Women's Health Concern: Women's Health Concern | Confidential Advice, Reassurance and Education

## **6 Support for Line Managers and colleagues**

- 6.1 To ensure that any individual experiencing perimenopause or menopause feels supported, the Trust will provide a training offer for staff, to help increase awareness and understanding of menopause and how to support individuals in the workplace.
- 6.2 Should Line Managers feel that they need guidance in how to best support a colleague, they can speak to the HR Team, who are able to provide advice and guidance.

## **7 Policy Change**

- 7.1 This policy may only be amended or withdrawn by the Priory Federation of Academies Trust.



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## **The Priory Federation of Academies Trust Menopause Policy**

This Policy has been approved by the Pay, Performance and HR Committee:

Signed..... Name..... Date:

Trustee

Signed..... Name..... Date:

Chief Executive Officer

Signed..... Name..... Date:

Designated Member of Staff

Please note that a signed copy of this agreement is available via Human Resources.