

LGBT+
in facilities management

BEST PRACTICE GUIDANCE

Inclusive Support for menopause and hormone change

INTRODUCTION

We hope this guide will help people and organisations across the Facilities Management sector to support LGBT+ and other colleagues who are going through menopause or other hormone change.

The guide is based on the collective experience and research of our committee members; individuals representing a variety of organisations with personal and professional experience of menopause and hormone change.

It is not designed to be a 'one size fits all' guide; is not exhaustive or representative of the experience all people's experience of menopause or hormone change and of course we are not medical or legal professionals. The needs of every person, every organisation and every workplace are different and this advice needs to be placed into that context. It is intended then that this guide will continue to evolve to reflect our ever-changing society and world of work, and we very much value your contributions and suggestions to help that journey - please email any comments to lgbtinfm@gmail.com

We hope you will find this guide useful in developing more inclusive cultures that support people experiencing hormone change in the workplace.





GLOSSARY

- AFAB:** Assigned female at birth
- Andropause:** is a condition that is associated with the decrease in the male hormone testosterone. It is unlike menopause in that the decrease in testosterone and the development of symptoms is more gradual than what occurs in women.
- AMAB:** Assigned male at birth
- Cis:** Cisgender is a term used to describe a person whose gender identity corresponds to their sex assigned at birth. E.g. a Cis-gender woman is someone who was assigned female at birth and still identifies as female. A Cis-gender man is someone who was assigned male at birth and still identifies as male.
- Non-binary:** people may identify as an intermediate or separate third gender, identify with more than one gender, no gender, or have a fluctuating gender identity
- Pre-menopause:** before menopause.
- Peri-menopause:** usually mid to late 40's & typically 2-10 years before periods stop
- Menopause:** reached when no periods are experienced for one year.
- Post-menopause:** is the time after menopause, a period has not been experienced for over a year. Menopausal symptoms may continue to be experienced after periods have stopped.

A BIT ABOUT HORMONES

Hormones are chemical messengers that affect and manage almost every part of the body.

Over 50 hormones have been identified in the human body. Early on in life, they're essential to growth as well as bone and brain development. They affect reproduction and sexual health, the nervous system, metabolism, mood and sleep.

Hormone change is a normal part of aging and people of all genders are impacted by hormones throughout life.

For some people, hormone change goes hand in hand with symptoms which can be isolating and distressing. Raising awareness of menopause and other hormone changes and related symptoms will enable organisations support their people to remain happy and productive.



FACTS & FIGURES

- Approximately 15% of the workforce experience hormone-related symptoms
- 9 out of 10 people say menopausal symptoms negatively impact their work
- People of colour enter the menopause up to 2 years earlier
- After the age of 40, Testosterone declines at 1% a year in people assigned male at birth
- Trans-men and non-binary people can experience menopause
- 1 in 3 say they are not comfortable talking to their manager about menopause
- 4 out of 10 people do not seek medical advice even though their menopause symptoms are worse than expected.
- 47% have taken a day off work and not told their employer the reason was related to the menopause.
- 25% of menopausal people have considered leaving their employer due to negative experiences
- 80% of menopausal people are active in the workplace
- There are more than 52 recognised menopause symptoms - the average person experiences nine

WHO IS IMPACTED BY HORMONE CHANGE?

People of all genders can be impacted by hormone change:

- Conditions such as hypothyroidism, diabetes and graves disease can impact people of all genders and ages.
- Cis-women will experience menopause.
- Trans men and non-binary people who were assigned female at birth (AFAB) who do not undertake hormone treatment to change their gender may experience menopause.
- Trans men and non-binary people AFAB may experience early menopause symptoms if they undertake hormone treatment to change their gender profile.
- Medical conditions or medical treatments such as malaria, hysterectomy or cancer treatment can cause menopause for people AFAB
- People assigned male at birth (AMAB) may experience Andropause - a decline in testosterone
- People AMAB undergoing prostate cancer treatment may experience symptoms due to androgen hormone blockers



A large, open folding fan is positioned on the left side of the image. The fan's surface is a vibrant purple, while its ribs and the inner section are a bright yellow. The fan is set against a light purple background. The right side of the image features a vertical gradient from orange at the top to teal at the bottom.

TYPICAL HORMONE IMBALANCE SYMPTOMS

There are more than 30 recognised symptoms of menopause, including:

- Sleeping problems
- Hot flushes
- Anxiety
- Low mood
- Night sweats
- Weight gain
- Joint aches
- Stress
- Low energy
- Low libido
- Brain fog
- Headaches
- Urinary changes
- Skin and hair changes

These symptoms may also be experienced due to other hormone conditions such as: under/over active thyroid, testosterone decline, androgen decline.

Some people may experienced many symptoms, others none at all.

MORE ABOUT MENOPAUSE

Menopause a natural stage of life when someone assigned female at birth (AFAB) experiences:

- Decline in Oestrogen and fluctuation of other hormones levels
- Ovaries no longer produce eggs
- Periods stop

As menopause symptoms are typically experienced over 4-10 years, it is best described as a 'transition' rather than a one-off event.



MORE ABOUT ANDROPAUSE

People assigned male at birth (AMAB) will undergo reproductive hormone changes as they age.

Unlike the more dramatic hormone plunge that occurs in people AFAB during menopause, however, hormone changes in people AMAB occur gradually:

- Testosterone declines on average about 1% a year after age 40
- Despite the decline most older people AMAB will maintain testosterone levels in the normal range and experience no symptoms.
- 10-20% will have low levels which is normally indicated by experience of symptoms.
- Testosterone treatments may be recommended.





WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE WORKPLACE

With four generations in the workplace, approximately 15% of the workforce are experiencing menopausal and hormone change symptoms every day. This includes people of all genders. This number is set to climb as menopausal people are the fastest growing workforce demographic.

Every one of us will be affected by menopause, whether we are supporting a partner, parent, relative, friend or colleague - creating a positive and open environment at work can help prevent the person from:

- losing confidence in their skills and abilities
- feeling like they need to take time off work and hide the reasons for it
- having increased mental health conditions such as stress, anxiety and depression
- leaving their job

Everyone's experience of hormone change is different but by raising awareness and providing support we can reduce stigma, help colleagues manage their symptoms, and achieve their potential at work.

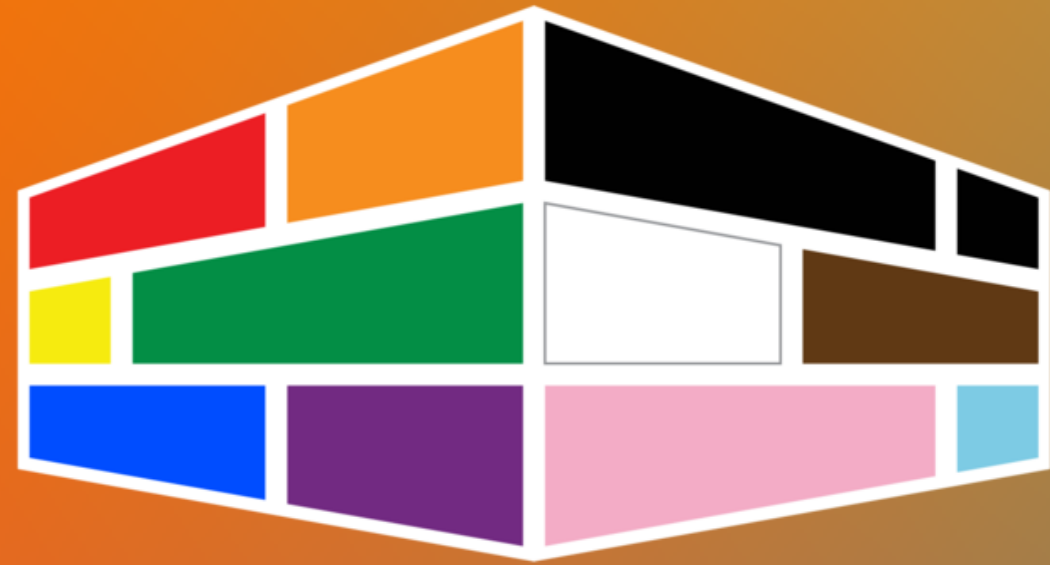
CREATING A CULTURE THAT SUPPORTS ALL COLLEAGUES THROUGH HORMONE CHANGE

- Create a menopause and hormone change policy
- Review other policies, procedures and support related to health, safety and wellbeing - are they inclusive of menopause and hormone change issues?
- Provide information, resources and training to encourage open conversations and to enable managers to support their teams - such as toolbox talks and managers guides to reasonable adjustments that can be made
- Provide a dedicated and confidential channel to seek support outside of line management
- Don't make gender assumptions and ensure all language is inclusive - refer to the [LGBT+ in FM inclusive language guide](#) for more support with this.
- Programme regular events, for example in support of World Menopause Day in October
- Signpost to established and credible sources

WHERE TO GO FOR ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

LGBT+ in FM will support where possible, but here are other organisation that provide information and support:

- [NHS guide to menopause](#)
- [NHS guide to Andropause](#)
- [You and your hormones - society of endocrinology](#)
- [Gender and hormones facts - GenderGP.com](#)
- [Trans & non-binary people and menopause- Menopause in the workplace](#)
- [Transgender Health - Rock my menopause](#)
- [Talking Menopause](#)
- [The Menopause Charity](#)
- [Menopause Support](#)



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