

Guidance

G1459

Guidance relating to women going through the menopause

Applies to all of TfL

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1 Purpose

The purpose of this Guidance is to outline Transport for London's (TfL) approach towards supporting employees who are going through the menopause, and their line managers.

2 Scope

This Guidance applies to all TfL employees, and should be read together with policies and guidelines which apply to relevant areas of the organisation.

3 Guidance

3.1 Introduction

TfL is committed to and promotes the principle of equal opportunities for all employees, contractors, casual workers and agency workers. TfL aims to treat employees fairly, equally and with dignity and ensure that no unlawful discrimination occurs on the grounds of age, disability, nationality, ethnic or national origin, gender, marital status, race, religious belief, sexual orientation or gender reassignment.

3.2 Background information

The Office of National Statistics state that the proportion of women between 50 and 64 who are in work is at its highest level ever (63.2 per cent). Thus many women go through the menopause while working full-time or part-time. Menopausal symptoms such as hot flushes, fatigue, irregular periods, mood swings and poor memory can often affect an employee's self-confidence and their ability to work as productively as they would like.

Some women may experience menopause much earlier in life, through illness, the result of a hysterectomy or through spontaneous (natural) early menopause.

In a public environment women sometimes feel exposed by their inability to conceal the often unpredictable, unpleasant and highly visible physical symptoms of the menopause. Hot flushes and sweats, for example, are not only an obvious sign of the menopause, but can make women feel acutely self-conscious, particularly when working with younger staff members, male colleagues, customers or clients. Alongside the physical symptoms, women can be affected by forgetfulness, poor concentration, mood swings and tiredness, which can undermine their confidence, authority and ability to function effectively in the workplace.

There is also the possibility of being misunderstood by younger colleagues and male co-workers. Women may be reluctant to discuss symptoms or to seek support, especially in male-dominated workplaces, which means that the menopause remains hidden and they can feel isolated with no one to talk to.

3.3 Advice for managers and employees

This guidance has been developed to help employees and managers to work together to manage the effects the menopausal condition may have. It also enables managers to apply a flexible yet fair and consistent approach when supporting their