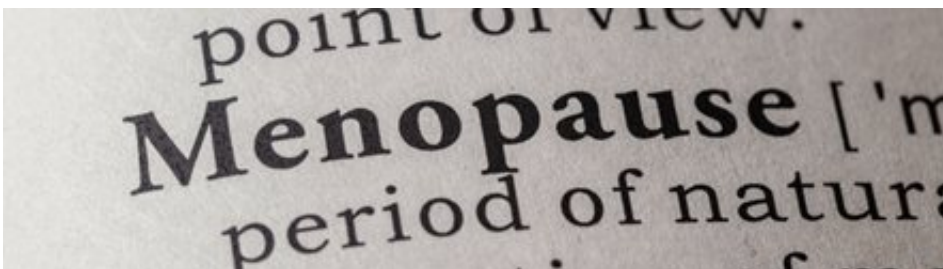


# New guidance on dealing with menopause in the workplace

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Credit: University of Nottingham

Research by a Nottingham academic has helped to shape new guidance on dealing with menopause in the workplace.

Professor Amanda Griffiths, in the University of Nottingham's School of Medicine, has conducted the largest study to date in the UK about the issue and has contributed to the new guidance being launched by the Faculty of Occupational Medicine (FOM).

The guidance is aimed at [women](#) going through [menopause](#) and experiencing the impact it has on their working lives. It also offers employers practical experience on how to improve workplace environments for [menopausal women](#).

Professor Griffiths said: "The Faculty of Occupational Medicine's guidance draws together the latest information we have about how

menopause affects some women at work. It provides straightforward suggestions about what employers and line managers can do to help, as well as tips for women themselves in how to cope.

"It is good to see that menopause is increasingly being widely recognised as a potential problem and is no longer 'taboo'. Serious problems only affect a minority of menopausal women, and even then only temporarily. But for those affected it can be very unpleasant. More awareness and some simple changes, many that women themselves have recommended, could make their working lives during this time much easier."

Dr Richard Heron, FOM President, said: "At the request of the Chief Medical Officer for England, Professor Dame Sally Davies, the Faculty of Occupational Medicine was pleased to lend its support and produce guidelines on menopause in the workplace.

"This is often a hidden health concern of working women, and it is so important that workers of all ages are better informed about how to confidently manage health issues such as this in their workplaces."

The research by Professor Griffiths found that the menopause is still treated as a 'taboo' subject in many workplaces – and that much more needs to be done to support women and help them cope with symptoms such as fatigue, poor concentration, hot flushes and depression.

Many women questioned for the study found they were not prepared for the arrival of the menopause, and nearly half had difficulties coping with symptoms at work. A similar number felt their job performance had been negatively affected, and nearly a fifth thought the menopause made managers and colleagues view them as less competent.

Four overarching issues emerged from the research as areas for possible improvements at work:

- greater awareness of managers about the menopause as a possible occupational health issue for women
- increased flexibility of working hours and working arrangements
- better access to informal and formal sources of support
- improvements in workplace temperature and ventilation

**More information:** The FOM guidance and accompanying infographic is available at [www.fom.ac.uk/menopause](http://www.fom.ac.uk/menopause)

Provided by University of Nottingham

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