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**Menopause Policy**

**Policy Statement**

Dainty Little Hands Ltd. recognises that the menopause is an equality and occupational health and safety issue and that there may need to be appropriate flexibility, support, and adjustments during the time of change before, during and after the menopause. Dainty Little Hands Ltd. will treat all individuals with dignity and respect during this time, ensuring the workplace does not aggravate symptoms. Dainty Little Hands Ltd. is committed to ensuring that we all feel confident in discussing menopausal symptoms openly, without embarrassment, and are able to request support and adjustments in order to continue to work safely.

**Purpose**

Dainty Little Hands Ltd. acknowledges that change before, during and after the menopause can be significant, challenging and can affect levels of confidence and self-esteem. Staff may feel too embarrassed to seek help and to share the difficulties they are experiencing. Dainty Little Hands Ltd. aim to reduce the stigma and embarrassment through sharing concerns, allowing joint solutions to be found. The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 requires businesses to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of staff. In addition, in line with the Equality Act 2010, Dainty Little Hands Ltd. have a duty not to discriminate and staff should be treated with respect in terms of their age and gender. Any detrimental treatment of staff related to the menopause could represent direct or indirect sex discrimination and conditions which are linked to the menopause require reasonable adjustments. The aim of this policy is to encourage staff to talk more openly about the menopause, and to encourage Managers and Staff to work together to seek solutions to challenges and difficulties that be experienced or faced. Dainty Little Hands Ltd. also aim to ensure that conditions in the workplace do not aggravate menopausal symptoms, and that appropriate adjustments and support are easily accessible. Dainty Little Hands Ltd. aim to achieve a fair and consistent approach, whilst also recognising that each individual experience of the menopause and perimenopause is unique to that individual. Dainty Little Hands Ltd. intend to reduce sickness absence due to menopausal symptoms and retain valued staff, assisting them to maintain good levels of health and wellbeing, confidence, and self-esteem.

**Roles and Responsibilities**

The Support Managers and Managing Director are responsible for ensuring this policy is applied fairly and consistently across Dainty Little Hands Ltd. . Support Managers and the Managing Director must ensure they respond sensitively, supportively, and professionally to staff experiencing challenges relating to the menopause. Support Managers and the Managing Director should listen and respond sympathetically, be aware of the potential impact the menopause can have and provide a safe place for staff to speak openly and honestly. Employees are responsible for looking after their health and being open and honest, contributing to a respectful and healthy working environment, and be willing to help and support colleagues.

**Stages and Supportive Measures**

There are various stages to the menopause, as follows:

• Perimenopause (the period of hormonal change leading up to the menopause, which can last up to 5 years, and can include a variety of symptoms)

• Menopause (this usually occurs between the ages of 45-55, although around 1% do experience the menopause before the age of 40)

• Medical/surgical menopause. It is possible that ovaries can be damaged by treatments such as chemotherapy, radiotherapy or surgery which can mean that the menopause can be experienced at any age, and for some the loss of fertility can be extremely hard to bear. In such circumstances, Employees will be offered confidential counselling and emotional support via the Employee Assistance Programme through BrightHR, signposting to external services, and/or support via the Occupational Health Department.

• Those undergoing treatment for conditions such as endometriosis and infertility may experience menopausal symptoms whilst receiving treatment The menopause can result in temporary psychological issues, including but not limited to, depression, anxiety, panic attacks, mood swings, irritability, issues with their memory and loss of confidence.

Supportive measures may include leaving doors and windows open (where feasible and safe), provision of fans, fitting blinds to windows, cover arrangements to enable access to toilet facilities and cold water, and the potential for flexible working arrangements. Risk assessments will be individual and specific to the person and their circumstances. Where actions and adjustments are agreed, the Support Managers should make a note of them (via an individual risk assessment) and the Support Managers and employee should jointly monitor the achievement of actions and adjustments and their impact on the issues initially highlighted. Where adjustments do not have the desired impact, and symptoms remain the same or worsen over time, the Managing Director and employee may agree to an occupational health referral. The Occupational Health Department can assess, provide advice and guidance, and signpost to other appropriate sources of help and advice.

**Supportive Organisations**

There are several specialist organisations who can offer support to individuals before, during and after the menopause, including the following:

• The Employee Assistance Programme (accessed through BrightHR) is able to provide specialist and confidential advice and counselling 24/7.

• NHS Guidance on Menopause provides comprehensive advice on symptoms and treatment options available: [www.nhs.uk/conditions/menopause](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/menopause)

• Menopause Exchange Helpline can be contacted on 020 8420 7245 and their newsletters provide information and advice: [www.menopause-exchange.co.uk](http://www.menopause-exchange.co.uk)

• Education Support Partnership Helpline provides support 24/7 at 08000 562561 or via text on 07909341229. Useful resources can be accessed at: <https://www.educationsupport.org.uk/blogs/teaching-and-menopause>

• British Menopause Society provides a wealth of information and guides on the menopause and all aspects of post reproductive health: thebms.org.uk. This is primarily aimed at health care professionals and the Women’s Health Concern is the patient arm of the British Menopause Society providing factsheets, articles, FAQs and further reading links: [www.womens-health-concern.org](http://www.womens-health-concern.org)

• Daisy Network is a charitable organisation providing support and guidance for all experiencing premature menopause: [www.daisynetwork.org.uk](http://www.daisynetwork.org.uk)

• Menopause Matters provides easily accessible information about the menopause, including treatments available and what steps to take: [www.menopausematters.co.uk](http://www.menopausematters.co.uk)

• Menopause Café is a discussion group to gather to eat cake, drink tea and discuss the menopause in a friendly and easily accessible way: [www.menopausecafe.net](http://www.menopausecafe.net)

• Henpicked is an online community providing ‘lunch and learn’ videos with industry wide experts: [www.henpicked.net](http://www.henpicked.net)

• Simply Hormones provides blogs and articles about the menopause and the opportunity to sign up to receive a free menopause survival kit, newsletters and updates: [www.simplyhormones.com](http://www.simplyhormones.com)

• Simply Hormones – Menopause: A Guide for Men provides information and helpful hints to help men understand more about the menopause: [www.simplyhormones.com/men-andthe-menopause](http://www.simplyhormones.com/men-andthe-menopause)

**Monitoring Compliance and Effectiveness of this Policy**

The Support Managers and the Managing Director will monitor the effectiveness and compliance of this policy and procedure.

**Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually by Support Managers and Managing Director.

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| Signed: | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_Jayne Dainty\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| Date 01/08/2024  Review Date 01/08/2025 |  |
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