

Tuesday, 18 October 2022

Scotland's Colleges Launch National Menopause Policy

Colleges have launched a national menopause policy in a bid to improve the support offered to colleagues in Scotland.

The policy, which has been adopted by all 26 colleges in Scotland, was drafted by the National Joint Negotiating Committee which includes representatives from colleges, trade unions and College Employers Scotland.

As part of the rollout each college has agreed to ensure dignity and respect for all and to provide appropriate support for women experiencing menopause. Managers will familiarise themselves with the new policy and be open to having sensitive and confidential discussions about support plans and reasonable adjustments, along with a risk assessment for specific employees.

The policy is being announced today to mark World Menopause Day, which takes place every year on 18 October to raise awareness, break the stigma and highlight the support options available for improving health and wellbeing.

Katrina Daly of College Employers Scotland said: "All of us recognise that much more needs to be done to assist members of staff during what can be an incredibly difficult and challenging time. Going through the menopause is a totally different experience for every woman but the level of dignity and support offered should be consistently high.

"This new national policy for colleges is a huge step forward to providing a structured approach into how we raise awareness of the challenges women may face.

"By doing this we aim to create an environment in every college where women feel comfortable enough discuss the issues around their symptoms and confident that every effort will be made to support them."

EIS-FELA National Officer Stuart Brown said: "The agreement of this policy is a welcome step forward in building a culture of openness, understanding and support around the menopause. It should also serve to help college employers to further develop positive, progressive and just approaches to matters related to women's health in the workplace."

Grace Hepburn, Women's Officer of the UNISON Scotland Further Education Branch and a department administrator at Forth Valley College, produced the first draft of the policy. She added: "I'm extremely happy that colleges across Scotland are implementing this policy. We worked hard to ensure it reflects the individual needs of everyone who is impacted by menopause.

"Only by raising awareness of the challenges menopause brings – physical, mental and emotional - can we put in place the support structures people need.

"Feedback from staff members has shown us that many previously felt unsupported through an incredibly difficult period in their lives.

"By ensuring every college is now focused on supporting those who need it most, we can create a more protective and caring working environment which is absolutely what our staff deserve."

ENDS

Note to Editors:

The National Menopause Policy can be found at
<https://njncscotlandcolleges.ac.uk/communications/njnc-communications.html>

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