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HR STRATEGY NEWS SPOTLIGHT

## Why employers should rely on evidence-based data for menopause policies

By ALESSANDRA PACELLI MONDAY, JULY 14, 2025

**With workplace menopause support gaining greater focus through the Employment Rights Bill and a rise in tribunal cases referencing menopause, employers are being advised to verify the data they rely on when developing menopause-friendly policies.**

The Open University has published a new independent report, offering what it calls the “most comprehensive evidence review of menopause in the workplace to date”. The report was commissioned by Deborah Garlick, founder of Henpicked: Menopause in the Workplace, which provides menopause training and accreditation to employers.

“The last 10 years have seen huge change when it comes to menopause in the workplace,” Garlick said. “A decade ago, you’d struggle to find a menopause policy anywhere; today, there is far more awareness, but also far more noise.”



“We see a lot of statistics and headlines published, but not all ‘facts’ are created equal. It’s crucial to understand which ones hold water.”

## The risks of inaccurate data in workplace policies

The report warns against the risks of using flawed data to shape workplace policies, as widely quoted figures have been shown to be inaccurate or misleading.

Garlick cited a survey from a well-known menopause doctor which claimed that over 90 percent of women said menopause had a serious impact on their work performance.

“The sample wasn’t representative and the messaging implied menopausal women are less productive, making women feel ‘less than’ which is neither true nor acceptable,” she said.

She also pointed out that the frequently cited statistic claiming 900,000 women had left work due to menopause symptoms has been discredited, yet still appears in some reports. Instead, Garlick recommended using robust data such as that from the Fawcett Society’s 2022 report, which found that one in 10 people who worked during menopause had left a job due to their symptoms, and 14 percent reduced their working hours.

Professor Jo Brewis from The Open University, lead researcher on the review, said, “It’s important that people don’t settle for surface-level data: training, education and action must be rooted in fact-checked, robust data.”

## Moving beyond surface-level initiatives

Professor Brewis explained that the review included more than 230 sources, covering academic research, grey literature, lived experience and international studies. “Our unique position gave us access to paywalled academic material not available to most. We reviewed it thoroughly and excluded weak or misleading studies,” she said.

Key findings in the report include the most common symptoms that affect workplace performance, how certain working environments can worsen symptoms, and which interventions deliver lasting impact.

It also highlights the risks of remaining silent about menopause in the workplace, showing how inaction can harm both wellbeing and productivity. The report calls for employers to avoid focusing solely on awareness campaigns and instead develop meaningful, evidence-based strategies.

Garlick added, “Using an evidence-based approach to training is vital to creating inclusive, sustainable change, enabling employers to demonstrate the impact that defines a truly menopause friendly workplace.”

