

Starting menopause support groups

Menopause is a significant life stage that can present various physical and emotional challenges for individuals. Establishing peer support groups for menopause within the workplace can provide a valuable platform for sharing experiences, seeking advice, and offering mutual support. This guide offers HR leaders step-by-step instructions for starting and maintaining effective menopause support groups.



Assess the need for menopause support groups

Conduct surveys

- Distribute anonymous surveys to gauge interest and identify specific needs related to menopause support.
- Include questions about menopause symptoms, support needs, and any existing gaps in workplace support.

Hold focus groups

- Organize focus groups to discuss the potential benefits and concerns related to menopause support groups.
- Gather insights from employees experiencing menopause to ensure the group's relevance and inclusivity.



Define the purpose and goals

Clarify objectives

- Determine the primary purpose of the menopause support groups (e.g., sharing experiences, offering emotional support, providing practical advice).
- Set clear, achievable goals for the groups, and share with group members

Identify target audience

- Define who the groups are for (e.g., employees experiencing menopause, those supporting someone through menopause).
- Ensure inclusivity by considering diverse needs and interests.

Recruit group facilitators

Select facilitators

- Choose facilitators who are respected, approachable, and trained in group dynamics.
- Consider employees with personal experience or those trained in counseling or support roles.

Provide training

- Offer training programs for facilitators on effective communication, conflict resolution, and group management.
- Ensure facilitators understand menopause, its symptoms, and the impact it can have on work life.

Establish group guidelines

Develop group rules

- Create a set of guidelines to ensure respectful and confidential discussions.
- Include rules on confidentiality, mutual respect, and equal participation.

Set meeting structure

- Define the frequency, duration, and format of meetings (e.g., in-person, virtual, hybrid).
- Determine the optimal group size for effective participation and support - usually no more than 20 people per meeting is ideal.

Promote the support groups

Raise awareness

- Use internal communication channels (emails, intranet, bulletin boards) to announce the formation of menopause support groups.
- Highlight the benefits and objectives of the groups to encourage participation.

Encourage participation

- Invite employees to join voluntarily without pressure.
- Ensure that participation is seen as a positive and supportive opportunity.

Provide resources and support

Allocate resources

- Provide necessary resources such as meeting spaces, virtual meeting tools, and refreshments.
- Offer access to relevant materials and tools that can aid discussions and activities, like those found in Maven's Family Benefits Resource Hub.

Ensure accessibility

- Make meetings accessible to all employees, considering different time zones, locations, and schedules.
- Provide accommodations for employees with disabilities, if relevant.

Monitor and evaluate

Gather feedback

- Regularly solicit feedback from group members and facilitators to understand what is working and what can be improved.
- Use anonymous surveys and feedback forms to ensure honest input.

Evaluate effectiveness

- Assess the impact of the support groups on employee well-being, engagement, and overall workplace culture.
- Track participation rates and any changes in employee satisfaction or productivity.

Adjust and improve

Refine guidelines

- Based on feedback, adjust group guidelines, meeting structures, and objectives as needed.
- Ensure that the groups remain relevant and beneficial to participants.

Expand or diversify

- Consider expanding the program to include additional groups or topics based on employee interest and need, like partners of those experiencing menopause.
- Promote diversity by ensuring that groups cater to various demographics and job levels.