

Written evidence submitted by Vodafone [MEW0004]

Vodafone's global employee commitment on menopause

- Earlier this year we announced a new global employee commitment on menopause. We estimate that around 15% of our 100,000 global employees will be experiencing the menopause at the moment.
- To ensure that all Vodafone employees feel comfortable seeking support, Vodafone's global commitment will introduce support and assistance as well as training and awareness.
- This will involve rolling out a training and awareness programme to all employees globally, including a toolkit focused on raising understanding of the menopause and providing guidance on how to support employees, colleagues and family members.
- This year we ran an internal employee global webinar on Hormonal Health and Life stages and have a global internal employee community - 'Cycles of Life' – a forum where employees experiencing hormone related conditions such as the menopause can share experiences and feel supported.
- This is in addition to existing policies enabling employees to take leave for sickness and medical treatment, opt for flexible working and access support and care through Vodafone's Employee Assistance programme.
- The commitment forms part of our broader strategy of supporting all employees through every life stage to create a culture of inclusion, further details of which can be found below.

Research

Vodafone also recently published [independent research](#) conducted by Opinium. Based on a survey of 5,012 people in five countries who had experienced menopause while at work, Opinium found that:

- Nearly two-thirds of women (62%) who experienced menopause symptoms said that this impacted them at work, rising to four in five (79%) for 18-44 year olds.
- A third (33%) of those who had symptoms said they hid this at work, and 50% felt there is stigma around talking about the menopause.
- 43% of women in the UK who experienced menopause symptoms said they have felt too embarrassed to ask for support in the workplace, rising to 63% of women aged 18-44 in the UK.
- Two-thirds (64%) of women in the UK agree there should be more workplace support for women going through menopause.

Vodafone's global programmes to increase diversity and inclusion

- Vodafone's goal for women to hold 40% of management and leadership roles by 2030 is already reflected at Board level, demonstrating Vodafone's commitment towards this ambition. Globally, women currently hold over 31% of Vodafone's management and leadership roles.
- To meet our ambition to be recognised as the world's best employer for women by 2025, Vodafone has developed and introduced a series of pioneering global programmes. These include progressive flexible working policies; maternity and parental leave that supports families to share caring responsibilities in the home; ReConnect to attract talented individuals back to the workplace; and a Domestic Violence and Abuse policy.
- Vodafone launched the ReConnect programme in 2017 to attract talented individuals who have left the workplace for several years – often to raise a family – who want to return to work but are struggling to make the professional connections needed or refresh the skills required.
- In 2019, Vodafone supported families with a new global parental leave policy offering 16 weeks fully paid leave to all employees, giving every parent the opportunity to have more time with children new to their family. Vodafone's parental leave will be available to all non-birthing parents – regardless of their gender, sexual orientation or length of service.
- In 2019, Vodafone launched its global domestic Violence and Abuse policy, setting out a comprehensive range of workplace support, security and other measures for employees at risk

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of, experiencing, and recovering from, domestic violence and abuse. Vodafone also made publicly available a toolkit on domestic violence and abuse at work, enabling line managers and colleagues to recognise, respond and support affected employees.

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