

Lloyds Banking Group - Menopause Case Study

Context

Lloyds Banking Group (LBG) is a UK-based financial services organisation. We employ around 65,000 people and we are passionate about inspiring colleagues to be their best. Our purpose, strategy and culture combine to ensure we grow sustainably, play our role in society, and create an even better place to work.

From speaking directly to our people and by completing external research and benchmarking exercises in early/mid 2021, we knew that we can do more to support our people when it came to the topic of menopause. We realised quickly that menopausal women are one of our fastest growing demographics and approximately 1/3 of our workforce could be undergoing their menopause transition right now.

Through our menopause proposition, we wanted to:

- “Break the taboo” around menopause and ensure our people felt comfortable discussing menopause as a topic and how their experiences may be impacting them
- Provide education and training to our people (both colleague and managers, senior and non-senior, male, female and other) to allow them to engage in meaningful conversation and support the “normalisation” of the topic
- Provide avenues for our people to access support as and when they need it, be it: accessing relevant information; knowing who to talk to; and/or gaining access to formalised support (be it medical or other).

We are very confident that we’ve been able to influence real meaningful change for our people in the space of menopause, and we believe we are able to demonstrate enough evidence that we are worthy of the menopause-friendly accreditation. However, we are still aware that we are at the start of our journey and it will not stop here. Menopause remains one of the key elements of our Health and Wellbeing strategy and we aim to continue the good work.

When did our journey formally kick off?

Our menopause proposition was designed by what colleagues told us were their biggest priorities. We hosted a series of listening sessions in mid-2021 where we spoke with c210 of our people. Additionally we had anecdotal feedback via our women’s network, Breakthrough and an informal menopause group that was being run by colleagues.

Their views helped us to focus upon 3 main things:

- Introduce some formalised medical support
- Increase awareness and education for all
- Commit to relationships with Subject Matter Experts to ensure our proposition was as well-rounded as possible.

Our working group was born in Q2 2021, bringing together a group of fiercely brave influencers from our Wellbeing, Reward, Culture and Talent, Legal, Inclusion & Diversity and Policy teams. Our (then) Chief Culture & Talent Officer sponsored our activity and was

influential in supporting us to gain executive buy-in to this topic; we presented our proposed proposition to our most senior people committee in July 2021. We reached agreement, and acknowledgment, of why menopause was/is such an important topic to place continued focus on. This was a key turning point that enabled us to power up menopause as a wellbeing topic.

By speaking to our people and completing thorough external research and benchmarking activities, we knew that we were progressing a proposition that was both aligning to the needs and wants of our people, and taking inspiration from the best practice of others.

What results have we seen?

It is difficult to summarise and quantify the cultural changes we've been able to influence through our hard work over the last year or so. The level of initial and ongoing engagement in our menopause proposition continues to stand as one of the most highly regarded wellbeing propositions to date by our people. It has completely proven to us why this topic is so important to our people, and how it came along at the right time.

We hosted a series of colleague listening sessions in 2021 and almost exactly a year on in 2022. These "one year on" listening sessions aimed to determine the type of change people have experienced when it came to menopause. We are delighted to say that our people highlighted remarkable differences in the culture around menopause and how comfortable they are discussing it at work. There has been noticeable difference in the view towards understanding and awareness across our organisation, but we now know we need to more in this space.

From the viewpoint of our working group, as we continue to plan for our World Menopause Day 2022 activity there has been a remarkable difference of take up to support and get involved across the organisation. It's obvious to us how well-received the proposition has been and all of the ongoing activities afterwards, and how highly people regard the proposition as an important ongoing topic.

We see some of our highlights being the creation of our Menopause Promise, our wellbeing Menopause Hub, our Bupa medical menopause support and our internal private Support Community. Each of these have been influential in providing informal/formal support, providing information and awareness, providing structured policy support, allowing people to network and generally changing the culture of menopause across our organisation.

What has our proposition looked like?

Our engagement proposition launched on 18th October 2021, however we began speaking about our campaign to colleagues as far back as early September. For such a large amount of colleagues across our multiple divisions, pre-engagement ensured success and awareness once the proposition and campaign formally launched. We spoke to key influential committee/forums across the organisations, involving our culture leads, our inclusion and diversity leads, our divisional wellbeing reps and disability leads, our HR and internal communication divisional partners and more.

Our organisation-wide campaign had both internal and external facing elements, was supported and endorsed by some of our most senior individuals/leaders and has continued to grow and develop as time continued. We are happy to state that the launch of our menopause proposition and corresponding engagement campaign persists as being our most well received wellbeing campaign to date by our organisation.

We overtook our organisation's Group Interchange Page with an eye-catching article, showcasing all of the new support. Our launch article provided details of our proposition and all of the newly-provided information and support, information and where to go for further support and general important facts and figures. Our "tag line" for our engagement campaign focussed on supporting our people to become "menopause aware and informed". This has ran throughout our entire campaign and illustrates our expectations that our people will not only become aware of what menopause is and how it can impact, but informed on how to support themselves and those around them.

This article was further bolstered by the standing up of multiple senior leaders (male and female) across the organisation sharing their stories/reflections why menopause is so important to focus on. We also created some externally facing material involving LinkedIn posts and Instagram posts. But, the campaign didn't end there. We pledged to continue the conversation in January 2022 with the official launch of the available medical menopause support, available through our Private Medical Benefit provider Bupa, as well as our manager awareness e-learning course.

We are currently in the midst of planning our second large-scale campaign for World Menopause Day 2022, focusing on a "#oneyearon" messaging piece and detailing how menopause remains high on our agenda. This will again have coverage on our Group Interchange, having internal and external facing messaging and will provide colleagues the chance to interact once again. We will be joining the "Menopause: Continuing The Conversation" programme in readiness for October 2022, in partnership with ITN and the British Menopause Society, to provide a platform to share real experiences of our people and bring our proposition to life. We're keen to take our menopause proposition to future talent outside of the organisation, as well as keep talking and supporting our existing people. We are also delighted to have sponsored the Menopause Friendly Employers Awards in September 2022 also.

What about policies?

By creating our unique Menopause Promise, we wanted to be able to demonstrate to our people that we are serious about creating a menopause aware and informed workplace.

We spoke to other organisations, some already menopause-friendly accredited, and realised that not all had a menopause policy. However, we employee over 65,000 people of whom c.23,000 identify as female and 40+, meaning 1/3 of the population could be experiencing their menopause transition. The scale, therefore, of how many people this would touch, before considering, colleagues who have female partners, confirmed that a policy and the evolution of the Promise was important. Together, the working group identified, through benchmarking the experience of others and through learnings from experts, what should be included.

While we have a supportive Health, Wellbeing and Attendance approach, focused on wellbeing, the Promise is a standalone Policy. The Promise commits to raising awareness and provide ongoing communication and training to develop an informed workplace. We want all colleagues to be comfortable to be able to ask for support and for our managers to have the knowledge to be able to have relevant and empathetic conversations. Colleagues can speak to someone else, if for example, they don't want to speak to a male manager, recognising "silent sufferers" need to find solutions in a way that works for them.

We include advice on changes and adjustments to how someone works and explain why those changes might be helpful. These short-term recommended changes to working patterns introduce realistic examples of how a colleague, or a manager, might recommend tangible ways to support a colleague undergoing menopause and needing that extra level of support.

We chose the language we use very carefully, reflecting references such as "informed" - being more than just "aware" and avoiding language such as reasonable adjustments, that could be misconstrued as disability related. We are clear that this is for everyone including our trans and non-binary colleagues.

What about facilities?

A large part of our initial and ongoing discussions as a working group have involved how we can support our people in ways that work for them. We have provided items for people to order, free of charge, we introduced our medical menopause support available through Bupa, as well as recommended working alterations to support people in our Promise and we're having ongoing conversations about our colleague uniforms "Careerwear" team to introduce menopause-friendly uniforms.

January 2022 saw the launch of our menopause primary care benefit, available to all of our colleagues who are a member of Bupa's Private Medical Benefit Scheme (in which nearly all colleagues are). Bupa have a relatively new public facing pause support plan, where for the price of £250 an individual can gain access to a year's worth of guaranteed support from a menopause specialist GP/nurse, have access to private prescriptions for necessary support, have support accessing things like blood tests etc and general ongoing support. We are one of the first organisations to have made this Menopause Plan available as part of our Private Medical Benefit. We are happy to say that as we are one of the first to introduce this scheme in a corporate environment, we were also able to positively influence Bupa into creating the now publicly available Bupa Menopause HelpLine, a free-to-call service, 24/7, 365 days a year, whereby the caller will be connected to a Bupa specialist menopause nurse.

In readiness for our campaign launch, we introduced 3 menopause-specific items for colleagues to order: a cooling mist spray, a cooling seat pad and a USB desk fan. All available free of charge, delivered to a chosen branch, head office or home location.

As mentioned in a previous section, we deliberately wanted our Promise to provide tips on realistic short-term working arrangement changes to support somebody with their menopause symptoms. Not only do these detail information around the items mentioned above, but temporary working pattern changes to fit the colleague, including: having more flexibility of where to work, providing more chances for colleagues to move around

and work in quieter/cooler spaces of an office/other, allowing someone to alter their working hours, travelling at different times to avoid rush hours, and more. We promote a culture of encouraging colleagues and their managers to decide an alteration to works that works for both parties, in order to ensure our people are best supported.

Last but not least...our uniforms! We were inspired by HSBC being able to introduce menopause-friendly career wear option for their colleagues, and based on colleague feedback, we wanted to do the same. We have already started to put in the steps to influence the next clothing iteration to be menopause friendly: supported by our Careerwear team, women will be invited to attend some face-to-face workshops at the most appropriate time to test different styles, fabrics and sizes of clothing to decide which types of materials etc are most supportive of their menopause symptoms. This will feed directly into what will be available in 2025.

What's next for LBG?

We want to continue progressing our menopause proposition as we know we're only so far along in our journey. It's important for us to keep speaking to our people and other organisations to understand what more can we do, and how can we get there.

A big focus for us going forward will revolve around how we'll continue to expand our proposition and start to take it externally, to support reaching out those such as our possible future talent.

As explore above, we want to do even more to expand the knowledge of our people and want to continue working with SMEs and cultivating content to support the growth of understanding and awareness. Good awareness turns into well-informed action!