Recommendations for supportive workplaces

Fertility diagnosis and treatment can have an impact on health, working life, privacy and finances. A supportive workplace can make a real difference by offering clear, respectful and practical ways for employees to get the support and flexibility they need while respecting their right to keep personal matters private.

1. Recognise fertility treatment as a workplace issue

Include fertility diagnosis and treatment in relevant workplace policies and support arrangements. Everyone should be able to access consistent, supportive workplace practices, with clear policies and guidance that make it easier for both managers and employees to navigate fertility-related needs.

2. Protect privacy while providing practical support

Employees should be able to ask for support without having to disclose unnecessary personal or medical details. This should go hand in hand with practical flexibility, such as adjusted hours, remote working, late starts, early finishes or temporary changes to workload.

3. Provide time off for fertility-related care

Provide dedicated or protected time off for fertility-related appointments, procedures, treatment and recovery. Where relevant, this should also include partners who need to attend appointments or provide support.

4. Make support inclusive and accessible

Support should be available to anyone going through fertility diagnosis, treatment or recovery. This includes women and men, partners, LGBTQ+ people, single people, and those using donor conception or other routes to parenthood. Workplaces should also encourage peer networks, support groups and grassroots initiatives that connect people going through similar experiences.

5. Equip managers and HR to respond well

Give managers and HR teams practical guidance on fertility-related conversations, confidentiality, available support and applying policies consistently. Good support should not depend on whether an employee happens to have a particularly understanding manager.

6. Develop clear national guidance

Governments, labour authorities, professional bodies and social partners should develop clear guidance on fertility treatment at work, covering minimum expectations for leave, flexibility, confidentiality and non-discrimination. Patient associations and people with lived experience should be involved in developing this guidance.

Make the invisible manageable. Build fertility-aware workplaces.