

Better Health at Work Award



# Pregnancy loss and the workplace

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MISCARRIAGE ASSOCIATION

# About us

- Registered UK charity
- Free support and information to **anyone** affected by miscarriage, ectopic or molar pregnancy
- Awareness and education for the public and professionals
- Promoting and guiding good care
- Resources to support employees, employers, HR and line managers



# Understanding pregnancy loss

## Miscarriage

- Estimated 1 in 4 pregnancies ends in loss; 1 in 5 in miscarriage.
- Over 200,000 miscarriages each year in the UK.
- Can be very emotionally and physically distressing.
- Many experience pregnancy loss as a bereavement like any other.
- Usually, a one-off but some experience recurrent miscarriage
- Black and black mixed heritage women disproportionately affected

# Ectopic pregnancy

- Around 1 in 80 pregnancies; cannot survive and often needs medical or surgical management. It can be life threatening.

# Molar pregnancy

- Around 1 in 600 pregnancies are molar (abnormal conception and development); needs specialist follow-up due to risks.

# Embryo transfer loss

# Abortion/termination

# Stillbirth or neonatal death

Surgical

• Maternal

# Physical and practical considerations

- in pain
- managing ongoing bleeding
- struggling to sleep/exhausted
- struggling to concentrate
  
- in need of follow up surgery
- in need of follow up appointments
  
- unable to drive
- unable to stand for long periods
- struggling financially
- having further investigations or fertility treatment

*Many of these issues will affect partners too, directly or indirectly*

# Emotional or mental health considerations

Isolation

Distress

Shock

Grief and loss

Failure

Guilt or blame

Needing to be strong

Seeking reasons

'A blip' or relief

Jealousy

Anger

Powerlessness

Relationship problems

Emptiness

Mental health issues –  
including PTSD, Anxiety

and Depression

(including partners)

# Partners

We suffer in silence.

I feel so helpless.

Family and friends don't understand,  
but we have each other.

We find it difficult to talk  
about - it's affected our  
relationship.



# Pregnancy loss and work

- Disclosing a pregnancy
- Fear of discrimination
- Legalities - pregnancy-related leave
- Paid leave or not?
- Lack of support on return



# Research

- 50% felt they had to return to work too soon - leading to a delayed recovery.
- 40% did not return at usual level - reduced performance quality.
- Unfair disciplinary action.
- 1 in 10 left their roles.
- Almost a quarter (24%) considered leaving their job because of their experience at work.
- One in five (21%) said they didn't receive any support from their employer.
- Only a quarter (24%) of senior decision makers said that their organisation encourages an open and supportive climate to a great extent, where employees can talk about issues like pregnancy loss.

# Being a good employer or manager

How to support staff affected by pregnancy loss

**Create a supportive environment**



**Offer pregnancy-related (paid) leave**



**Ask an employee what they need**



**Support to return to the workplace**



# Being a good colleague

- Learn how to help if someone has a miscarriage at work
- Recognise the impact
- Acknowledge their feelings
- Understand it may take time to return to 'normal'
- Remember there will be ongoing triggers



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**Q&A**