

Workplace Ambassador



You are not alone

Fertility
in the
Workplace

Workplace
Ambassador



WHY CHOOSE FITW?



Support the national charity

Fertility Network UK provides free and impartial support, advice, information and understanding for anyone affected by fertility issues.

We are the nation's leading patient-focused fertility charity and are here on a practical and emotional level, whatever your experience of fertility issues, to offer support services, information and access to a community of people affected by fertility problems.

NO OTHER FERTILITY ORGANISATION OFFERS THE RANGE OF SERVICES AND SUPPORT THAT WE PROVIDE

Learn from Lived Experience

All of our Fertility in the Workplace team have had their own personal fertility journey and their own workplace experiences. We are here to help to provide the much needed support to others with shared experiences and to share from our own knowledge, learnings and experiences as a team and as individuals.



ABOUT THE ROLE



Workplace Ambassadors provide a key role in inspiring change in the workplace and offering direct support to colleagues within their own organisation.

The role involves the following:

- **Be a point of contact for 1:1 support to colleagues and managers**
- **Encourage the organisation to review/implement workplace policy around fertility treatments and associated reproductive health issues**
- **Update the organisation on news and events relating to fertility in the workplace**
- **Encourage open conversations about fertility issues and the impact on all areas of life**
- **Provide signposting to relevant professional organisations**
- **Encourage organisations to sign up to Fertility in the Workplace support packages**
- **Encourage organisations to sign up to the parliamentary Fertility Workplace Pledge**

Providing support to staff

At Fertility Network UK we have shown repeatedly that most people experiencing fertility problems are reluctant to speak to their employer, because they fear it may have a detrimental effect on their career. We know it is not uncommon for staff to end up reducing their hours or quitting their job if they are unable to balance work and fertility issues.

We look to our Workplace Ambassadors to be willing to be the person in their organisation who can provide a listening ear and guidance to those who are undergoing fertility treatment, and those who want to support colleagues who are. By becoming a recognised Ambassador, proudly displaying your badge on your email signature, you make colleagues aware that if they don't feel comfortable speaking to their team or line managers, they can speak to you, in confidence, and you will:

- Offer an understanding ear.
- Provide information on what the organisation is currently able to offer in terms of workplace support
- Signpost to additional support services.

We recognise that for many, particularly those who have their own lived experience of fertility issues, this role could result in some difficult conversations at times. We therefore offer free listening and counselling skills training, to increase personal confidence in how to manage these conversations. **You are not expected to be a counsellor** and, should you feel that counselling would be a beneficial option, we would expect you to signpost to other professional services (ideally through your own organisation if this support is provided, or we will provide links to appropriate services). This free training simply helps to develop the skills needed to be an effective and empathic listener.

You will also receive 1:1 support from our experienced team, to ensure you can talk things through if needed and access the correct support and signposting.

Fertility Policy Review

While maternity is a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010, under current legislation, until a woman who is trying to start a family is actually pregnant, she is not entitled to the same protections. While most who are trying to conceive naturally will be protected from unlawful discrimination at the point at which their bosses are informed of the pregnancy, many who are undergoing fertility treatments need to make bosses aware much earlier in the process of conception and are not currently awarded the same anti-discrimination rights. A recent survey by Fertility Network UK and Fertifa found that only 25% of organisations currently have a Fertility Policy in place.

Research shows that those undergoing fertility treatments find they are treated unfairly in terms of being allowed time off to attend medical appointments or are concerned that they will be overlooked for career opportunities due to the assumption that fertility treatments will end in a pregnancy and subsequent maternity leave. This is often not the case and people can undergo fertility treatments for many years, suffering financial, mental and physical pressures as a result, finding themselves overlooked in the workplace for promotion and opportunities, only to face a life of childlessness, not by choice, and all the grief and repercussions that come with that.

As a Workplace Ambassador we would look to you to identify what policies are currently in place at your organisation and ensure that a fertility policy exists and is fully understood by line managers and staff, so that it can be fairly implemented. Where a policy is not in place, or does not seem to be sufficient, we would encourage conversations to take place with HR teams on what changes can be made to better support staff.

[Fertility in the Workplace Support Packages](#) offer organisations free policy guidance and we would encourage all organisations to find out more.

STARTING THE CONVERSATION



Mailing List

Our Fertility in the Workplace team produces a monthly newsletter which contains information on legislative change, free wellbeing courses, webinars, news and information to people in the workplace. We would ask all Ambassadors to sign up to this newsletter and share with relevant staff and HR departments, to ensure that the conversation remains a priority in the organisation.

Resources

We will provide access and signposting to all Fertility Network UK support groups and events, to encourage people to connect with others who have shared experiences. Organisations who sign up to our packages will also receive access to posters and factsheets to encourage open conversations within the workplace, helping to remove the taboo from this topic.



Affected by fertility issues?

Fertility Network UK, the national charity, offers **free** advice, support, information and understanding to anyone affected by fertility issues.

Find out how your workplace can support you

**Recognise
Implement
Support
Educate**



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At Fertility Network UK we have frequently demonstrated that most people experiencing fertility problems are reluctant to speak to their employer, because they fear it may have a detrimental effect on their career. We know it is not uncommon for staff to end up reducing their hours or quitting their job if they are unable to balance work and fertility issues. This can be a challenge for employers both operationally and financially, and why a growing number of firms now have a fertility policy in place outlining the help available – they appreciate a supportive workplace is good for business as well as for employees.

Our support packages aim to empower employers and line managers to develop and share knowledge of the impact of fertility struggles, an understanding of employee rights and policies and appropriate and sensitive support for employees.

All our support packages provide the following
for one year:

Policy Guidance
Online Learning
Resources
Employer Recognition
Employee Support

*Additional benefits are available with higher levels of support packages. To find out more, [download our brochure](#) or [contact us](#) directly and one of our team will be in touch to discuss your needs.

Join us in our campaign for **Workplace Fertility Fairness**.

Fertility Network UK is currently working as part of the Workplace Fertility Campaign Group, to raise awareness of much-needed change in employment legislation.

The Fertility Workplace Pledge (established by Nickie Aiken, MP) and Workplace Fertility Campaign Group, seeks to support anti-discrimination in the workplace, to protect the rights of those undergoing fertility treatment.

By becoming a Workplace Ambassador, you can help with this.

The Fertility Workplace Pledge, consists of four steps for employers to sign up to:

1. **Accessible information:** Having an accessible workplace fertility policy to create an open culture free from stigma; to make sure employees feel comfortable in the workplace; and to prevent the best talent from leaving.
2. **Awareness in the workplace:** Establishing the role of Fertility Ambassador to open conversations internally and make people aware of available support.
3. **Staff training:** Making sure line managers understand the realities of treatment for employees including the physical, mental, and financial impact – and how they can support someone going through it.
4. **Flexible working:** Giving the right for employees to request flexible working, including reasonable working adjustments, so they can attend appointments.

By implementing a Fertility Workplace Ambassador, your organisation would already be meeting 2 of the 4 steps and FiTW can help with the rest!

CAN YOU RISE TO THE CHALLENGE?



How to sign up...

All you need to do to sign up for this programme is speak to your line manager/HR department about it. Tell them why you want to do it, show them this information and ask them to confirm they are happy for you to enrol. There is no cost involved and the benefit to the organisation is that it demonstrates they are seeking to actively support the wellbeing of their workforce. A great message to send to both existing and potential staff.

Send us confirmation of this agreement and we will set you up with all you need to take on this incredibly worthwhile role in your workplace.



If your organisation would like to know more, please don't hesitate to put them in touch with us and we will be happy to book in a call.

CONTACT US

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