

HR Checklist

Guidance on how to support employees who are, or will become carers

Did you know that 1 in 7 employees provide care to a friend or loved one in some form?* Whilst some employees cope well with their caring responsibilities, others feel the strain – impacting their performance at work, their social life and overall health. Our checklist can help your company mitigate the impact on its bottom line and support carers in your workforce.

Aware of carers

- Create an employee wellbeing survey**
A dedicated survey or question in your existing employee survey will help you identify the number of carers in your workforce and their current situation.
- Review and amend performance targets and objectives**
Appraise objectives regularly so they work around your employees needs and try to be flexible with absence reporting. Double check that personal development is inclusive for carers, so they don't miss out on opportunities.
- Offer training or carer webinars to line managers**
Ensure line managers have the confidence to have sensitive conversations with employees and empower them to tailor their working arrangements to suit their individual caring needs wherever possible.
- Include carers in your bereavement policy**
Be mindful of who employees are caring for and broaden your policy where possible. Consider paid or unpaid leave, timeliness to action an approach and sensitivity around team communications.

Support for carers

- Signpost to local charities or support groups**
Information on carer networks, local authorities and charities should be easily accessible and appropriate. Use a mixture of sources that are local, generic and condition specific.
- Holistic wellbeing and benefit provisions**
An EAP is a good start, but your employees need a mixture of emotional, practical and financial support in-the-moment and on a more regular basis. Review your benefits package against relevancy and specialism to support carers with such matters.
- Offer flexible working, reduced hours or paid leave**
Understand that caring responsibilities may be unexpected or irregular, so a willingness to tailor your policies around each carer's needs will help them to manage stress and focus on the job in hand.
- Allow personal calls or rest time**
Be mindful and accommodating of carers responsibilities where possible. Encourage them to block out time in their diary or set 'do not disturb' on Skype or Teams to create transparency, demonstrate flexibility and to develop rapport.

Designed to help HR teams and line managers to:

- Support carers' health and wellbeing remotely
- Boost productivity and reinforce your company values
- Create an inclusive and engaging culture
- Reduce the pressure on your line managers

Engage with carers

- Promote carer awareness days and include as part of your wellness calendar**
Your senior team should champion carers' needs and create an environment for carers to access and request support.
- Start a fortnightly newsletter, internal social media account or quarterly CEO update**
Regularly promote carer support and policies using a multi-channelled approach (don't forget to include those on furlough or other leave).
- Arrange a buddy system, carer forum or lunch and learn event**
Utilise expertise from charities and resources from your benefits provider to engage employees and equip line managers with supporting carers in their team.