

Carer-friendly checklist

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There are a number of ways employers in Stockport can support carers in the workforce, some of which are listed below...

Carers' Policy



A specific carers' policy is the best way to make it clear that you're a carer-friendly organisation. Include carers in the process of developing the policy, include a definition of a carer and make sure all new starters are aware of the policy and that it's referred to during inductions.



Flexible working



Flexibility gives many carers the opportunity to stay in work where they otherwise may not be able to continue juggling dual roles. There are many options to consider and flexibility to one person will be very different to another.



Line manager training



Are line managers trained to understand the role of carers and how to discuss caring roles with team members? Contact Signpost Stockport for Carers to arrange training and for access to e-Learning modules.



Staff surveys



Do you know how many carers are in your workforce and the impact additional support will have? The easiest way of finding out is by including a question in staff surveys.

Make sure your question is clear: 'do you have any caring responsibilities for someone who is older, disabled or seriously ill' will be clearer than 'are you a carer?'



Workplace champion



Appoint a workplace champion(s) who knows all about your organisation's policies, carers' legal rights and the support available to them. They don't need to be a carer themselves, but make sure carers are given the opportunity. Managers can also connect with champions to ensure consistency across the organisation.



Carer Passport



Either physical or virtual, carer passports can hold information about the caring role and what support may be needed at work. This can be particularly helpful for carers with multiple managers, or who work in different locations or work shift patterns. It saves the carer explaining over and over again.

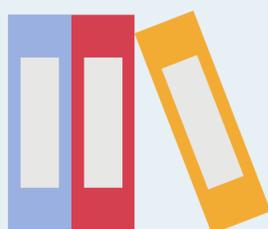
Decide who will 'hold' the passport - it could be line managers, HR or the employee themselves. You could also include other provisions such as medical notes or disability support within one overall 'wellbeing passport'. Find out more at www.carerpassport.uk



Paid or unpaid carer's leave



Carers UK are campaigning for all employees to be given 10 days (unpaid) carers leave as a minimum. A number of organisations already offer carers leave, either paid or unpaid.



This checklist has been produced by Signpost Stockport for Carers as part of its three year employment project, Work With Us.

For more guidance on carer-friendly employment and recruitment visit: www.signpostforcarers.org.uk/work-with-us or email rebecca@signpostforcarers.org.uk

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Staff Carers' Network



In addition to finding out about workplace support, a carers' network is a great way to offer peer support, share tips and experiences and provide emotional support if needed. Many working carers report feeling lonely and this is a great way to help carers feel less alone.



Talk about caring



Encourage line managers to discuss caring during 1-2-1s and appraisals. If you think a colleague is struggling or appears more stressed, could it be because of a caring role at home?

The more caring is talked about, the more comfortable carers will feel. Remember, not everyone will want to talk and that's ok too.



Well-being support



Do you have access to an Employee Assistance Programme? Can your carers access discounted gym membership? Do they have access to counselling? Consider what more can be arranged and make sure it's well promoted.



Bereavement support



Support for employees going through bereavement is always valuable, but it's important to remember that carers will also be experiencing a loss of a role that may have taken over years of their lives.

Many carers speak about a loss of identity and purpose after losing the person they cared for. Extra support at this time will go a long way.



Carer-friendly recruitment



Are carers encouraged to apply for internal promotions? Do your job specs require recent paid experience that may discourage carers from applying? Are you considering flexible work patterns for new roles? Do you have a returners programme? Does your website showcase the support you offer to carers in order to attract applications?



Contingency planning



If you think an employee is likely to be off due to an emergency or breakdown in care arrangements, consider back-up options. It might never happen but the carer may feel more confident if they know their role or specific tasks will be covered if they're away.



Awareness of Signpost's services and support!



Promote your local carers organisation! Encourage employees to contact Signpost for advice, support and opportunities to meet with other carers.

Highlight the services on your intranet and by sharing leaflets and displaying posters.

Connect on LinkedIn for more tips: www.linkedin.com/company/signpost-stockport-for-carers

