

## APPENDIX 4

### THE BUSINESS CASE FOR SUPPORTING WORKING CARERS

This document contains a selection of research, information and experiences from other businesses on why it is important to support unpaid carers in the workplace. There are also some examples of what other organisation, both local and global, currently offer their working carers in terms of paid leave and other support.

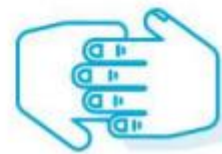
# Carers at work What you need to know



# 6.5m

people in the UK  
are carers

**One in seven people**  
juggle working and  
unpaid caring



Nearly **half a million** people  
have given up  
work over the  
past two years  
as a result of  
caring – that's

# 600

people every day

Source: Centrica Working Carers Guide, courtesy of Carers UK.

## Results for Wales

6% have given up work to care, 3% have reduced working hours. This equates to 149,812 people in Wales who have given up work to provide unpaid care and 74,906 people who have reduced their working hours to part-time because of unpaid caring. 7% said unpaid caring had a negative impact on their work.

16% of people said they were providing unpaid care. This is one in six adults and equates to 399,500 unpaid carers aged 18+ in Wales, compared to around 358,675 carers aged 18+ in the Census 2011.<sup>20</sup> This is a potential rise of nearly 40,825 carers in Wales.

The top three support mechanisms the public in Wales deemed most valuable if they were theoretically providing unpaid care which were considered very and fairly important:

- 84% understanding employer / line manager (62% ranked this as very important)
- 82% flexible working
- 76% a right to paid care leave of between five and ten days

If 15% of all those in employment have unpaid responsibilities across the UK, in Wales this would mean that roughly 223,000 workers were juggling work and care. This is nearly one in seven of all workers in Wales.<sup>21</sup>

Source: "Juggling work and unpaid care: A growing issue", report by Carers UK.

# The business case for a carer-friendly workplace

The societal case for a carer-friendly workplace is obvious – but we believe the business case is equally clear.

A Carers UK study of over 200 British businesses highlighted some of the benefits experienced by employers who supported carers in the workplace:

- 92% saw better staff retention
- 88% experienced lower absence
- 69% observed higher productivity
- 61% witnessed improved recruitment<sup>11</sup>

**On average, Centrica carers take just 3.4 days of matched care leave each year.**

At Centrica, we've had an equally positive experience. We offer paid carers' leave of up to six weeks for our colleagues who care. Despite the substantial paid leave available via this policy, we've found that the average amount of carers' leave taken is just 3.4 matched days per year. Instead of taking intermittent bouts of carers' leave, we've found that our employees prefer to work with their line managers to agree flexible working arrangements that help them balance their longer term work and care commitments – and we've created a culture in which they're able to do this.

To help prove the business case for carer-friendly workplaces, we've recently calculated the financial saving made by supporting our people with a flexible carer policy and peer support:

- Estimated saving of **£1.8 million a year** by avoiding unplanned absences and presenteeism (working while unwell or not fully performing) due to caring responsibilities.<sup>12</sup>
- Further cumulative savings of **£1.3 million** through increased retention by supporting colleagues to stay in work while they care for loved ones.<sup>13</sup>

These figures are significant for us – but imagine if similar flexible working policies were adopted by businesses across the UK.

**£3.1 million**

is the estimated financial saving Centrica has made by avoiding unplanned absences and improving employee retention, by supporting our people with a flexible carer policy and peer support.

Source: Centrica Working Carers Guide, courtesy of Carers UK.

## What makes the biggest difference to carers in the workplace?

New research from Carers UK<sup>10</sup> identifies the support workers would find most useful, imagining they were providing unpaid care:

- 1 A supportive employer and understanding line manager
- 2 Flexible working
- 3 Paid carers' leave of between 5–10 days per year
- 4 Long-term unpaid carers' leave
- 5 Signposting information and advice
- 6 Peer support network

Source: "Juggling work and unpaid care: A growing issue", report by Carers UK.

### **Examples of carer friendly employers**

**Cwm Taf UHB:** Up to 5 days paid carers leave per year, matched with employee annual leave whenever possible. Line managers create an employment support plan with carers to identify what will support them to remain in work and maintain their own wellbeing.

#### **Hertfordshire County Council**

Council employees can take up to five days paid leave to deal with emergencies involving dependants and an extra 20 days unpaid leave each year.

#### **Lancashire Council**

It has a 'Working Carer Policy', through which working carers can access support, advice and information and sign up to the Working Carers database. Workers who have signed up receive regular information, both from within the Council and also national and local carer information. To further recognise their commitment to the valuable contribution that working carers make to the organisation, two half-day carer workshops are organised per year, which can be attended in the working day.

#### **Monmouthshire County Council**

Additional 5 days paid leave for carers based on line manager's discretion. Internal training programme around carer issues for line managers and part of induction training.

#### **Centrica**

Industry: Utilities

Size: Large

For over 15 years, Centrica has introduced a range of carer-friendly policies. Most recently they've updated their policy giving employees up to six weeks of paid carers leave. This includes 10 days (two weeks) paid carers' leave and if additional care leave is required, a further 10 days (two weeks) can be taken when matched with annual leave entitlement. Centrica also offer flexible working, a Carers' employee network, an employee assistance line, and Carers regional representatives to encourage employees to seek any support they might need.

### **Aviva**

Industry: Financial Services & Insurance

Size: Large

Aviva's carers policy enables full-time employees with caring responsibilities to take up to 35 hours of paid leave per year for planned events, such as to attend hospital appointments and up to 35 hours of paid leave for emergencies. The amount of paid leave for part-time employees is pro-rated. Carers can also request up to three months of unpaid leave and adjustments to their working patterns, for example part-time hours. Aviva also doubled bereavement leave entitlement from 35 to 70 hours per year.

### **Intuit**

Industry: Information Technology/Software

Size: Medium

Intuit UK offer all employees with at least one year's service up to four weeks fully paid time off per year to support family members who need additional support. Time can be taken in days or weeks and covers scenarios such as supporting a spouse after an operation or finding long-term nursing care for an elderly parent/in-law.

### **BT**

Created and implemented a BT Carers Passport that can be completed by any BT employee with caring responsibilities that they consider would impact on their ability to work, short or long term. A document which describes their caring responsibilities and caring needs/adjustments as well as actions to take if the carers needs to leave work suddenly or is unable to attend to work. This Passport allows employees to take their requirements from one manager to another as they move around departments.

### **British Gas**

Their Carers Policy includes practical arrangements for carers, flexible working and up to one months' matched leave per year, so if an employee takes five days annual leave for caring responsibilities British Gas will match this with an additional 5 days at no service requirement.