



# Maternity

Management Services



ICAS WELLBEING

# Maternity Management Services

## Did you know?

- The cost of losing a competent, skilled employee is always high and pregnancy is recognised as a time when a woman may re-evaluate her options. Employee turnover costs (recruitment / selection / cover / administration and induction) are estimated at £8,200 per employee, rising to £12,000 for more senior managers.
- Uncertainty over whether or when a woman returns to work and issues relating to cover (e.g. workload increase for other staff, training new staff and planning cover) are perceived to be the hardest issues when dealing with pregnancy in the workplace.
- Women still find it difficult to combine work and family life. Women face substantial penalties, in terms of pay and progression, for taking time out of the labour market or reducing working hours. Skills are being under-utilised and this represents lost productivity for the UK economy.

(Sources: CIPD, EOC, Women & Work Commission)

## Why Maternity Management Services?

Changes in legislation introducing longer maternity leave, paternity leave, parental leave and flexible working have been

contributing to a much greater awareness of the needs of parents in the workplace. There is a real debate underway about effective work-life balance and what organisations can do to support this.

Pregnancy, maternity leave and return to work can be real turning points for women in their working lives. These women in their 20s, 30s and 40s have significant valuable work experience which is not easy to replace. Research demonstrates that the treatment women receive during pregnancy affects their likelihood of return to work, potentially leading to the loss of a skilled, competent and valuable employee, if unsupported.

To aid retention and boost loyalty, many organisations are now recognising that they need a more consistent and integrated approach to maternity.

They are looking to meet the organisation's needs regarding how to plan the maternity period effectively and to support the individual woman, whilst taking into account the needs of managers and colleagues.

Typical challenges include:

### Negotiating part-time or other forms of flexible working

Women may be concerned about the reaction of their manager and colleagues and whether they are jeopardising future career prospects. Managers may be thinking about the practicalities of managing workload, impact on others, and potential future requests for flexible working.

### Communication during maternity leave

What's appropriate? What are the best ways of keeping in touch? How do I deal with it when I'm up to my eyes in nappies?

### Return to work

Perhaps feeling less confident than previously, managing the balance, supporting a woman going through this transition.

These issues can be effectively addressed with a clear and consistent approach to maternity in the organisation.





## Maternity Coaching – The Maternity Project

Women benefit from a structured coaching programme, with a mix of face-to-face and telephone coaching during the three phases: pre-maternity leave, during maternity leave and on return to work. All our coaches are highly skilled and experienced in coaching, as well as being professional working mothers.

Our core model and visual maps draw on research that identifies key issues for women during pregnancy and following the birth of a child. Coaching recognises the deep change which women go through during this period and is highly individualised yet consistent, focusing on the needs of the woman, addressing workplace issues and the impact of motherhood. Sessions are supported by a toolkit of focused activities and exercises to meet individual needs.

Issues that may be addressed during coaching include:

- Managing the transition at work: planning and awareness of the views of others.
- Coping with change.
- Assertive communication and helping others know what we need.
- Weighing up childcare options – with referral to an AXA ICAS Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) for personalised support where EAP services are in place.
- Managing the practicalities such as sleep and feeding: how to regain a sense of control.
- Mapping support networks at home and work.
- Prioritising family goals (including work with the partner/father).
- Managing the help and advice of relatives.
- Managing our own reactions (to have more influence) whether at home or work.
- Defining family values and vision.

We also provide training for internal coaches and mentors on using the Maternity Project model.

## Training

We offer three types of workshops: for managers, for pregnant women / women returning to work and taster sessions for a wider group of parents, suitable for lunchtime seminars.

## The Manager's Guide to Successful Maternity – Policy and Practice

The aim of these short sessions is to help managers understand the necessary legal backdrop, manage the maternity period and return to work successfully and help them foster a good experience of support from the organisation for women.

## Workshops During Pregnancy

### Having it all: How do you combine working and motherhood?

During this workshop, women have the chance to explore their personal and cultural expectations around pregnancy and returning to work as a mother. It is a unique opportunity to focus on their work and personal aspirations, whilst learning practical, constructive tools to manage the changes ahead. A supportive atmosphere is created to build an internal network based on mutual experience and trust.

## Workshops on Return to Work

### Managing the Balance – Returning to work after a new baby

Topics include self-image as a mother and working person, managing the transition from home back to work, values as a parent and creating a work-life balance. The aim is to encourage an honest, supportive, good-humoured and productive atmosphere in which to share tools and ideas to help with juggling new responsibilities.





### Lunchtime Seminars

A series of short briefings, ideal for lunchtime meetings and parent networks. Current topics are listed here. Please contact us if you'd like us to tailor-make one for your organisation:

**Life After Birth – for Parents-to-be** Seeing yourself as a parent and creating a vision of how you want the first few months to be.

**Having it All** Strategies for combining work and parenthood.

**Being your own Supernanny** Choosing your own solutions to the common early years sticking points.

**Perfectionist Mother** You've built a successful career but do the same high expectations serve you as a parent?

**What kind of Dad are you?** Making time to think about the choices you make as a parent.

## Consultancy

### MAMA (Maternity Audit and Management Appraisal)

We help you audit and review the effectiveness of your organisation's policies and practices in managing maternity. Our findings help you enhance management awareness, support and competence.

As an on-going partner to the organisation, we help you build solutions to retain and support confident working mothers.

We also develop guidelines for managers to encourage a successful, consistent approach to maternity management across the organisation.



## Pre-maternity Leave Review

We work with pregnant employees and their line managers together to look at how they will manage the transition from maternity leave through return to work, taking into account business needs, flexible working policies and practical considerations.

Review meetings are facilitated and are based on the independent input of both the manager and employee into a questionnaire process. This should take place as soon as possible after the employee has notified her employer of her pregnancy. Alternatively, we can offer training for managers to carry out these planning sessions.

## LifeManagement™ Link

For those organisations with an AXA ICAS Employee Assistance Programme, the LifeManagement™ element of the service can be accessed by women in support of their return to work plans. This service can guide an employee through all the practical issues they may face when managing their work and family commitments and assist them to make a successful and smooth return to the workplace.

Information, practical guidance and support can be provided in the following areas:

- Childcare options - making the decision, locating providers and managing the ongoing relationship.
- Issues affecting working parents, e.g. employment rights relating to time off work for dependants, parental leave, flexible working etc.
- Financial Planning e.g. child trust funds, tax credits/state benefits.
- Parenting support i.e. practical tips on child behaviour issues.



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## What are the benefits?

Investing in Maternity Management Services will help your organisation:

- Retain the unique skills and experience of women in your work place.
- Cut the cost and added work of further recruitment.
- Build your reputation as an employer of choice for women.
- Build loyalty among existing female employees who appreciate your commitment helping mothers return to work.
- Improve consistency and skills in maternity management.
- Benefit from a structured feedback mechanism to help shape future maternity policy.

For the women in your organisation:

- Greater confidence, focus and increased performance when returning to work through creating their own work / life balance strategies in coaching / workshops.
- A unique package of individual support through the integration of coaching, workshops and LifeManagement™ (AXA ICAS customers who have an Employee Assistance programme), which is seen as real added value by women. Not only do women have the benefit of a coaching experience, they also have ongoing access to help with researching childcare options and parenting support.
- Confidential and empowering coaching with an experienced coach who is also a professional working mother. Coaching focuses on easing the transition for the mother and building her resources to enable a good experience of pregnancy, maternity leave and return to work. She will have her own personal coach to ensure continuity and a real understanding between the two parties.

- Coaching and seminars are free to the employee, demonstrating the employer's commitment to retaining women in the workplace.
- Women receive support from a coach who is independent of the organisation but who still appreciates the culture and values of the organisation.
- A structured feedback mechanism exists for the woman to give feedback on issues such as the organisation's maternity policy.

## How we can help

We work with you to create a tailor-made solution to suit the organisation's culture, which could include a rolling annual programme, drawing on:

- Maternity Coaching programme – The Maternity Project.
- Briefings:
  - The Manager's Guide to Successful Maternity.
  - Having it All: How do you combine working and motherhood?
  - Managing the Balance – Returning to work after a new baby.
- Lunchtime seminars.
- Consultancy including MAMA audit and guidelines for managers.
- Training for internal coaches and mentors.
- Pre-maternity leave review.





AXA ICAS in partnership with Managing Maternity Ltd

As Europe's leading EAP provider, AXA ICAS is uniquely placed to help organisations integrate Maternity Management Services in the broader context of managing the risks of stress at work, work-life balance and life management.

AXA ICAS Maternity Management Services are provided in partnership with Managing Maternity Ltd.

Managing Maternity Ltd brings specialist expertise and a team of skilled coaches and trainers who are all professional working mothers, adding a unique perspective and enthusiasm for the subject. All share the passionate belief that it is possible to combine maternity, work and parenthood successfully and that it takes new skills and thinking to do so.



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