

PMW 12

Ymchwiliad i feichiogrwydd, mamolaeth a gwaith yng Nghymru
Inquiry into pregnancy, maternity and work in Wales

Ymateb gan: CIPD

Response from: CIPD



John Griffiths AM
Chair
Equality, Local Government and
Communities Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

22 March 2018

Dear Mr Griffiths

Consultation on pregnancy, maternity and work

I am pleased to attach our response to the above consultation.

On this occasion we do not feel that we are able to address the specific issues as highlighted in the Terms of Reference for this inquiry as we have limited information on how the government objectives in relation to employability programmes and childcare services are being fulfilled. No doubt other stakeholders will be in a far better position to inform Assembly Members.

However, as the professional body for HR and people development, we wish to contribute some insights from a section of our membership.

We hope that this is useful, and would be delighted to share further research and expertise in future relevant discussions.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'L Richards'.

Lesley Richards
Head of CIPD Wales

CIPD Wales Submission to Equality, Local Government and Communities Committee inquiry into pregnancy, maternity and work in Wales

Background

The CIPD is the professional body for HR and people development. The not-for-profit organisation champions better work and working lives and has been setting the benchmark for excellence in people and organisation development for more than 100 years. It has over 145,000 members across the world, provides thought leadership through independent research on the world of work, and offers professional training and accreditation for those working in HR and learning and development.

CIPD Wales represents over 4500 members across Wales, operating the public, private and not-for-profit sectors.

Public policy at the CIPD draws on our extensive research and thought leadership, practical advice and guidance, along with the experience and expertise of our diverse membership, to inform and shape debate, government policy and legislation for the benefit of employees and employers, to improve best practice in the workplace, to promote high standards of work and to represent the interests of our members at the highest level.

Introduction

On this occasion we do not feel that we are able to address the specific issues as highlighted in the Terms of Reference for this inquiry as we have limited information on how the government objectives in relation to employability programmes and childcare services are being fulfilled. However, we wish to share some relevant knowledge.

We obtained information using pulse/convenience survey techniques. These are not randomly distributed and often involve low number of respondents, but we use them to test policy and practice issues with our members. They give an indicative flavour of opinion amongst that section of our membership who responded, who may well be the engaged and interested. We also capture open ended responses from members.

1 It is clear from UK and Welsh Government evidence that women can experience maternity and pregnancy-related discrimination. Based on information you have for your organisation you work with/in, do women suffer maternity or pregnancy-related discrimination and/or unfair treatment? (28 responses)

Over half of our respondents (16n) felt that this is not an issue and in their experience they have not been subjected to – or witnessed – any maternity or pregnancy-related discrimination in their workplace.

A quarter of respondents (7n) indicated that there has been some unfair treatment, with a further 3 saying that it occurs rarely, but only 2 stated that this happens often.

In open-ended responses we heard:

I wouldn't say it's discrimination, but there is a culture that all the burden of new parenthood is on the mother, and there is still the expectation that men will only have 2 weeks' paternity even if they are able to take shared parental leave. Also the expectation is that it is only women who will work part time on their return to work and who want to work flexibly. I hope this will change [...] the number of companies where flexible working is available for all [is] few and far between.

2 Workplace policies can help women in cases of maternity and/or pregnancy-related discrimination. Please indicate from your perspective as an HR/people development professional, your level of support for such policies, as recommended by CIPD's national equalities team (27 responses)

Expectations in terms of what EMPLOYERS should be doing:

	Would support (n)	Would not support (n)	Neutral / don't know (n)
Increased training and awareness for line managers so that individual discrimination behaviour can be tackled	26		1
Ensure that all pregnant women (and those on maternity leave) are aware of employer grievance procedures should they experience issues with line managers or other colleagues)	23		4
Ensure that both maternity and paternity leave policies are communicated and explained in a proactive fashion	27		
Highlight the perception of pregnant women and those on maternity leave in unconscious bias training	18		9
Maintain a voluntary and agreed schedule of "keep in touch" visits to ensure that colleagues on maternity leave are involved and don't feel isolated from the workplace	22	1	4
Ensure that gender pay gap narratives address any issues of pregnancy and/or maternity-related penalties in pay and progression to ensure transparency	21	1	5

Emphasise the role of flexible working to enable participation of all employees including those who are pregnant or on maternity leave	22	1	3
Ensure that learning and development is provided to ensure smooth return to previous jobs which have been changed	26		1
Create a supportive environment for women who wish to pursue specific kinds of maternal care upon their return to work (eg breast-feeding)	24		2

3 Workplace policies can help women in cases of maternity and/or pregnancy-related discrimination. Please indicate from your perspective as an HR/people development professional, your level of support for such policies, as recommended by CIPD's national equalities team (27 responses)

Expectations in terms of what GOVERNMENT should be doing:

	Would support	Would not support	Neutral / don't know
Introduce extended time limits for ET claims where unfair dismissal is claimed to have resulted from pregnancy/maternity-related status under the 2010 Equality Act	10	7	9
Give ET Judges the power to make recommendations to improve workplace practices where such discrimination has been proved	20	1	6
Ensure wide communication through national media of the availability of supported childcare	25	1	

CIPD Wales Viewpoint

Clearly women are disadvantaged compared to men because of pregnancy and maternity aspects of their lifecycle. It is quite clear that we need to tackle outright discrimination in such cases and CIPD supports this. The more insidious issues of how women are integrated into the workplace during and after pregnancy has to be part of a firstly much bigger dialogue around flexibility and family-friendly working. Secondly, it requires flexible and forward looking approaches to work. The way in which the world of work is changing will help that transition and we are convinced that as the labour market implications of Brexit bite, employers at all levels will want to address these issues. CIPD Wales will be delighted to contribute towards those discussions.

We hope the Equality, Local Government and Communities Committee finds this section of CIPD member views and recommendations useful in its forward work. We thank our members for their engagement. CIPD is always happy to share our expertise on skills at national level and also our insight from working across other devolved nations.

End