"You’re making people in the office feel very uncomfortable": Experiences of miscarriage in the pro-natal workplace

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Version: Poster
### Research Questions

1. How does the physical & psychological experience of miscarriage impact upon women’s working lives, & careers?  
2. What are women’s experiences of workplace behaviours following early miscarriage?  
3. What are the barriers for women returning-to-work following early miscarriage?  

### Preliminary findings

- **Inconsistent practice due to lack of formal policy**  
- **Discriminatory practice, incl. formal warnings for taking sick leave**  
- **Inappropriate leave (e.g., sick, compassionate & annual leave when miscarriage is protected by pregnancy-related sickness)**  
- **Unrealistic workloads/expectations upon returning-to-work**  
- **Fear of discrimination prevents disclosure (e.g., being overlooked for permanency & promotion)**  
- **Managers unequipped to support affected employees due to lack of formal training**

### Conclusions: What do workplaces need to do?

1. **Train HR & managers, equipping them with the knowledge & confidence to support affected employees.**
2. **Implement a pregnancy loss policy outlining entitlements to pay & leave support.**
3. **Inform employees about their rights to protected paid leave.**
4. **Tackle pro-natal cultures through training.**
5. **Provide accessible information on pregnancy loss.**
6. **Set up/encourage support groups.**

### Gaps:

- Future research should collate experiences from managers & HR professionals to investigate the barriers they face when supporting affected employees.  
- Experiences from affected partners are also needed.

### References:


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**Over 500 everyday in the UK alone**

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**Early**

- **< 14 weeks**
- **14 - 24 weeks**

**Late**

- **< 14 weeks**
- **14 - 24 weeks**

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**1 in 4** babies

- **pregnancies result in miscarriage**
- **often minimised & ignored by society**

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**Depression**

- **Anxiety**

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**PTSD**

- **Disenfranchised grief (unacknowledged)**

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**Micorsad: ‘The loss of a pregnancy during the first 23 weeks’**

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