Miscarriage: ‘The loss of a pregnancy during the first 23 weeks’ [1]

Over 500 everyday in the UK alone [2]

Early  
< 14 weeks

Late  
14 < 24 weeks  
(24 weeks stillbirth) [1; 2]

1 in 4

pregnancies result in miscarriage [1; 2]

Despite prevalence, impact & severity, miscarriage often minimised & ignored by society [4; 5; 6]

Stigma & taboo

leaks into realm of work [7; 8]


References


The limited extant research reveals organisations commonly ignore miscarriage & so women seldom receive adequate support, can face discrimination & some consider leaving [7; 8; 9].

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)

Fear of discrimination prevents disclosure (e.g., being overlooked for permanency & promotion)

Unrealistic workloads/expectations upon returning-to-work

Pro-natal cultures traumatic for affected employees (from baby showers at work to more flexibility permitted for parents)

Conclusion:

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 perinatal cultures through training.

5. Provide accessible information on pregnancy loss.

6. Set up/encourage support groups.

Supportive managers often:

✓ Facilitated flexible/work-from-home options
✓ Supported paid leave
✓ Respected confidentiality
✓ Been through miscarriage themselves

Gaps:

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

If organisations do not acknowledge pregnancy loss:

− Increased Mental health illness
− Decreased Staff turnover
− Increased Absenteeism
− Decreased Presenteeism

Eye of the storm:

• Thought I’d be written off now they knew I was trying to get pregnant.


“Why we need to talk about losing a baby”

Some times

− You’re making people in the office feel very uncomfortable: I built a virtual performance at work

− She took my place. I thought that should have been me. It’s not me. I thought I’d be written off now they knew I was trying to get pregnant.

− “I thought I’d be written off now they knew I was trying to get pregnant.”

− I built a virtual performance at work

− “The loss of a pregnancy during the first 23 weeks” [1]

− The limited extant research reveals organisations commonly ignore miscarriage & so women seldom receive adequate support, can face discrimination & some consider leaving [7; 8; 9].

− “You’re making people in the office feel very uncomfortable”: Experiences of miscarriage in the pro-natal workplace. In K. Schnitzler, S. Murphy & K. Jones (Eds.), Supervisors: Dr Sam

− You’re making people in the office feel very uncomfortable”: Experiences of miscarriage in the pro-natal workplace. In K. Schnitzler, S. Murphy & K. Jones (Eds.), Supervisors: Dr Sam

− You’re making people in the office feel very uncomfortable”: Experiences of miscarriage in the pro-natal workplace. In K. Schnitzler, S. Murphy & K. Jones (Eds.), Supervisors: Dr Sam

− You’re making people in the office feel very uncomfortable”: Experiences of miscarriage in the pro-natal workplace. In K. Schnitzler, S. Murphy & K. Jones (Eds.), Supervisors: Dr Sam

− You’re making people in the office feel very uncomfortable”: Experiences of miscarriage in the pro-natal workplace. In K. Schnitzler, S. Murphy & K. Jones (Eds.), Supervisors: Dr Sam

− You’re making people in the office feel very uncomfortable”: Experiences of miscarriage in the pro-natal workplace. In K. Schnitzler, S. Murphy & K. Jones (Eds.), Supervisors: Dr Sam