



CARERS POLICY

Aspire Scientific is committed to supporting employees who have caring responsibilities, in order to help them balance their work and caring commitments.

This policy outlines the support available, and advice that may be useful, for employees and line managers.

This policy does not form part of your contract of employment, and we may amend it at any time.

Who does it apply to?

This policy applies to any employee who has caring responsibilities. A carer is someone who provides a substantial amount of unpaid care on a regular basis for another individual. This may include, but is not limited to, someone that relies on you due to physical health, mental health, or disablement, and could be a family member, partner, or friend.

Details of the policy

We recognise that some employees may have caring responsibilities for children or seriously ill or disabled dependant relatives, partners, or close friends, and appreciate the demands this could place on them, sometimes making it difficult to balance work and caring responsibilities.

The Management Team will give sympathetic consideration to requests for support from anyone with caring responsibilities, based on a shared understanding of the situation and its impact. All conversations will be treated in a confidential manner, and we encourage employees to discuss their situation and challenges with their line manager.

Some options that may be considered are:

Time off

If you have caring responsibilities, you may take one week per year off work on an unpaid basis, to assist with your responsibilities. All employees are eligible for this from day one of employment, and the time can be used flexibly during the year.

Please note that other policies may also apply – please see Parental Leave Policy, Dependants Leave Policy, and Compassionate Leave Policy.

Sabbatical

If you need a longer period of time off work to care for someone, you may wish to consider a sabbatical – please see the Sabbatical Policy for details. Whilst usually a sabbatical is only possible after completing 3 years' service, if the request is relating to caring responsibilities, then this may be considered before 3 years of service have been completed.

Flexible working

At Aspire, our employees self-manage their time. However, if you require more flexibility due to caring responsibilities, you should discuss your options with your line manager. Options may include, but are not limited to:

- More breaks during the day.
- Earlier or later start/finish times.
- A request to reduce working hours on a temporary or permanent basis.

Support

Aspire Scientific offer the following support:

- Access to our Employee Assistance Programme via Health Shield, which offers counselling and 24/7 GP appointments (optional benefit offered after completion of probation).
- Access to private medical insurance via Axa, which offers counselling and 24/7 GP appointments (optional benefit offered after completion of probation).
- Access to Aviva Smart Health, which offers 24/7 GP appointments and mental health support.
- Access to our trained Mental Health First Aiders (MHFA: Jo Chapman, James Keane).
- You are also welcome to talk to the HR & Operations Manager, or any member of the Management Team.
- Various resources saved in the Health and Wellbeing Resources Dropbox folder.

We would encourage you to be as open as possible about caring responsibilities, in particular with your line manager to enable discussions about support, and to allow us to regularly review any measures that are put in place. If you feel unable to discuss these issues with your line manager, you may speak to a MHFA, HR & Operations Manager, or a member of the Management Team.

Further information

Carers UK

[UK | Carers UK](#)

Carers Trust

[Homepage - Carers Trust](#)

NHS

[Support and benefits for carers - Social care and support guide - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#)

Independent Age

[Support for carers | Independent Age](#)

Citizens Advice

[Carers: help and support - Citizens Advice](#)

Mind

[Where to find support for carers - Mind](#)

Aspire Scientific HR

July 2024

Document reference: Carers policy v1.0