

SUPPORTING STAFF TO BALANCE WORK WITH A CARING ROLE

The Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform has announced a new partnership with the national charity Family Carers Ireland to provide a suite of practical supports and resources for their staff who balance work with caring responsibilities at home.

Almost two-thirds (62%) of employees at the Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform are balancing work with a family caring role, according to the findings of a recent survey by Family Carers Ireland. This is much greater than the national average of one in nine people (250,000) in the Irish workforce who care for a loved one.

The family caring roles include providing care to children or adults with additional needs, physical or intellectual disabilities, frail older people, those with palliative care needs or those living with chronic illnesses, mental health challenges or addiction. Almost 18% of respondents from the Department claim that they find it difficult to achieve a balance with juggling work, care and other responsibilities.



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Pictured at the launch of the new partnership (l-r): Adam Flanagan, Senior HR Business Partner, Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform; Emma Gibson, Senior HR Business Partner; Joanne Murphy, Executive Officer; David Moloney, Secretary General; Catherine Cox, Head of Communications and Policy with Family Carers Ireland; John Dunne, CEO of Family Carers Ireland; and Amy Burke, Senior HR Business Partner.

Family Carers Ireland, the national charity supporting Ireland's 500,000+ family carers, has recognised this issue and in response it has developed its 'Caring Employers' programme which provides bespoke supports and services shaped to work with the needs of each organisation and their employees.

The Department has collaborated with Family Carers Ireland to develop best practice recommendations for a carer-friendly workplace to ensure that staff, who are also in caring roles at home, are recognised, supported and accommodated in their professional careers.

Minister for Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform, Paschal Donohoe TD, whose department is responsible for driving reform and innovation across the civil and public service, described his partnership with Family Carers Ireland as "a tangible demonstration of our commitment to providing inclusive leadership in building the workplace of the future".

VALUABLE RESOURCE

The Department's Secretary General David Moloney said: "This programme will provide a valuable resource to our colleagues and friends in caring roles.

NATIONAL CHARITY SUPPORTS OVER 500,000 FAMILY CARERS

Family Carers Ireland is the national charity supporting the 500,000+ family carers across the country caring for loved ones such as children or adults with additional needs, physical or intellectual disabilities, frail older people, those with palliative care needs or those living with chronic illnesses, mental health challenges, or addiction. It provides a range of services and supports for family



carers through its Carer Support Centres nationwide and its National Freephone Careline 1800-24-07-24. See www.familycarers.ie for more information.



The initial survey indicates that there is a substantial number of people within the Department who are balancing their roles here with their caring responsibilities and we are committed to supporting them. It is important that we listen to our employees and help provide them with the guidance and assistance they require.”

Micheál Mac Donnchadha, department staff member said: “We are all likely to have responsibilities managing or planning the care for others at some point in our lives. The information provided by Family Carers Ireland so far has been invaluable to me and it’s reassuring to know that I have an employer who will support me.”

Catherine Cox, Head of Communications and Policy with Family Carers Ireland, said: “We want to keep family carers in paid employment, so they avoid isolation and the dangers of falling off a financial cliff which can arise when having to give up work. We estimate that one in five people will be in a caring role by 2030 and from our survey we see that over 80% of respondents in the department felt that it is likely or very likely that they will be in a caring role within the next five years.

“Now is the time to future-proof workforces and not only to acknowledge current caring employees who need support but educate those who anticipate becoming family carers. In these instances, many feel the only option is to leave their jobs.

“The business case

for employers to support family carers centres on the merits of retaining valued employees and avoiding the costs and disruption of recruiting replacements. We are excited to work with Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform and support their caring cohort

over the coming months and years.”

The Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform joins Irish Life, Irish Rail, Bank of Ireland, SETU (Carlow and Waterford) as members of the Caring Employers programme, with more due to come on board in the coming months.

