

Leave for Fertility Treatment Guidance for staff and managers

The College recognises the emotional pressure of undergoing IVF treatment and understands the potential anxiety and distress which individuals may suffer during the process. The College wishes to support members of staff who undertake such treatment themselves or whose partners do so.

It is expected that managers will treat the matter with sensitivity and with the appropriate levels of confidentiality.

Eligibility

For the purposes of leave arrangements, a distinction is drawn between the investigation phase (for example, determining whether there is a disease affecting fertility), and the treatment itself:

Investigation Phase

Absence relating to the investigation of a fertility issue will be regarded as sickness absence. In such circumstances, the member of staff will be subject to the College's normal sickness absence provisions. Female members of staff personally undergoing treatment themselves should note that sickness absence associated with IVF will not be regarded as 'pregnancy-related'.

Fertility Treatment

Members of staff who have completed 12 months' service with the College, may be granted leave for fertility treatment or the support of a partner undergoing the same.

Female staff personally undergoing fertility treatment

Wherever possible, appointments related to fertility treatment should be arranged outside of working hours. Where this is not possible, a member of staff may be **granted up to 5 working days' of paid leave in any 12 month period** for the purpose of receiving and recovering from IVF treatment and to attend appointments specifically associated with the IVF process (i.e. pre-booked interventions for consultant appointments, collection and delivery of eggs, monitoring tests, etc.).

Should the member of staff require time off because of the side effects of the treatment, this will be subject to the College's normal sickness absence provisions. Sickness absence associated with IVF will not be regarded as 'pregnancy-related'.

The paid leave can be taken to suit the member of staff's needs, subject to operational circumstances, e.g. in one block, separate days or half days. The leave entitlement will be pro-rated for part-time members of staff according to their normal weekly working hours.

Members of staff supporting a partner undergoing fertility treatment

If it is an essential requirement within the course of the treatment for the partner to attend a specific appointment, the College will allow eligible employees up to **one day's paid leave in any 12 month period** to support fertility treatment.

Requesting Leave

Eligible staff should request leave from their line manager/supervisor. Managers/supervisors have the discretion to grant this leave, although they may wish to refer a female member of staff who is going to personally undergo fertility treatment for an Occupational Health referral, to assist them with making their decision.

If an employee is not eligible for the leave outlined above, or if they require time off in addition to that above, then alternative leave arrangements should be agreed with their line manager which may, for example, include annual leave or unpaid leave as set out within the [Special Leave procedure](#).