

WeCare: family-friendly working at Amsterdam UMC



Working and caring at Amsterdam UMC

At Amsterdam UMC, many employees combine work with caring for (young) children. This challenging combination often leads to stress, illness, and absence from work.

At the same time, the foundations for health are laid in early life. Parents play a crucial role during this critical period, and finding a good work-life balance is therefore essential – when people feel well, they function better, both at home and in the workplace.

WeCare identified the needs and challenges faced by employees who combine work with caring for infants or young children. These insights are translated into practical tools for family-friendly working. In doing so, we invest in the well-being of our people, the health of their children, and better care for our patients. That's a triple win.

The challenge

Many parents find that balancing work and caring for young children is challenging. Especially in the period just after birth, finding a new balance and manage all responsibilities is hard. During this phase, the rates of absence from work is at its highest.

More than half of parents struggle to balance work and family life. The majority of mothers report negative experiences when returning to work. Working parents experience fatigue, stress, and symptoms of depression. These issues are a major contributing factor to absenteeism among working parents.

"I just couldn't do it anymore. I was planning everything. The whole family was basically revolving around my schedule." Nurse (40)



The solution

This pressure on parents directly impacts the health of their children. Family-friendly working is therefore not a luxury, but a necessity for healthy future generations. In addition, improving employees' work-life balance also brings significant benefits to the organization. Three-quarters of working women report that they would be willing to work more hours if they could better align their work with their personal lives.

In organisations with a good work-life balance, turnover and absenteeism tend to be lower. Furthermore, providing high-quality patient care begins with employees who are healthy and well-balanced themselves.

A Healthy Future for All

WeCare contributes to the Amsterdam UMC strategy 'A Healthy Future for All'. This strategy recognizes that health does not start in hospital, but rather outside of it: in society, in the workplace, and at home. In this context, WeCare focuses on a fundamental prerequisite for sustainable care and health: family-friendly working. This involves showcasing good examples in our organisation, learning what works, and creating practical tools for change. Through WeCare, and together with employees and the organization, we work towards a work culture that provides space for people.

*"Family-friendly working requires effort from all of us. As a frontrunner, we not only demonstrate that it is possible, but also that it is absolutely necessary."
Yolande van der Linden, HR Director*

For healthy employees,
for strong families,
for future generations.

We care.