



THE WOMEN'S HEALTH IN THE WORKPLACE CONFERENCE 2026

The Economic Case for Supporting Women's Health in the Workplace

12 March 2026

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Section 1

Women's health experiences at work

Women's health in the workplace: key statistics

Overview of health experiences and work impact



Overall health experience

67% of women have experienced a period of poor health, with 52% of those needing to take time off work.



Common health conditions

Mental health issues (41%) are most common, particularly in women aged 45-64. Women-specific health issues (39%) are more prevalent in younger women (18-34).



Impact on work absence

The average female worker lost 6.1 days in 2022, more than male counterparts (5.2 days).



Age and sick Days

Women aged 35-64 tend to take more sick days than men, indicating a higher impact of certain health conditions on this demographic.

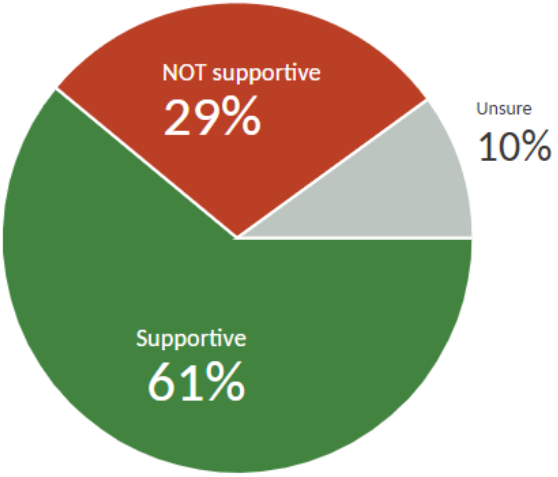
Workplace discussions on women's health



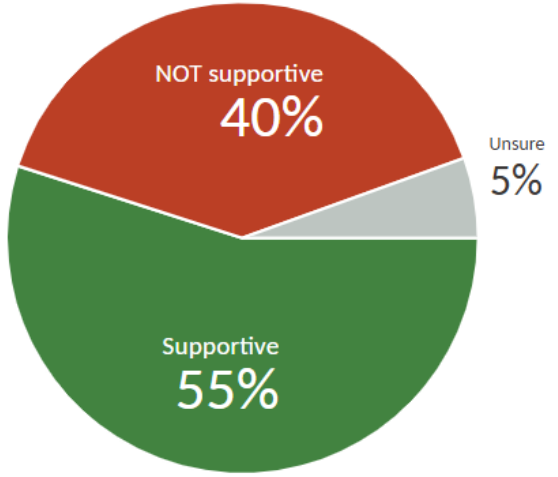
- **General comfort & discussion frequency**
60% of women report feeling comfortable discussing women's health issues at work, with 55% indicating these topics are discussed occasionally or frequently.
- **Company size impact**
Women in micro companies feeling most comfortable and those in medium-sized companies feeling least comfortable.
- **Industry-specific discomfort**
The construction industry shows the highest discomfort among women regarding raising health issues, possibly linked to concerns about lower wages and career advancement.
- **Comfort by relationship**
Women are more at ease discussing these topics with colleagues (66%) compared to their managers (55%).
- **Age-related comfort levels**
Women aged 55-64 are the most comfortable, while those aged 25-34, potentially concerned about career progression, are the least comfortable.

Overall, companies provide better support for general health issues than women-specific health issues

General health issues



Women-specific issues



Source: Research commissioned by AXA Health, conducted by Cebr and Opinium



Section 2

Consequences of inadequate support

Practical and financial impacts of poor health

Women reporting practical/financial impact of poor health

83%

**Primary concern:
career progression**

Career progression was a key concern, especially for young women (29% more than average).

**Major consequence:
leaving workforce**

Women-specific health issues, coupled with a lack of employer support, significantly contributed to women leaving the workforce.

Negative feelings: helplessness



Negative feelings: less motivation





Section 3

Economic impacts

Economic impact of female sick days

Understanding the financial implications for the UK economy

Annual GVA loss

£20.2 billion

for the UK Economy (2021)

Estimated annual sick days

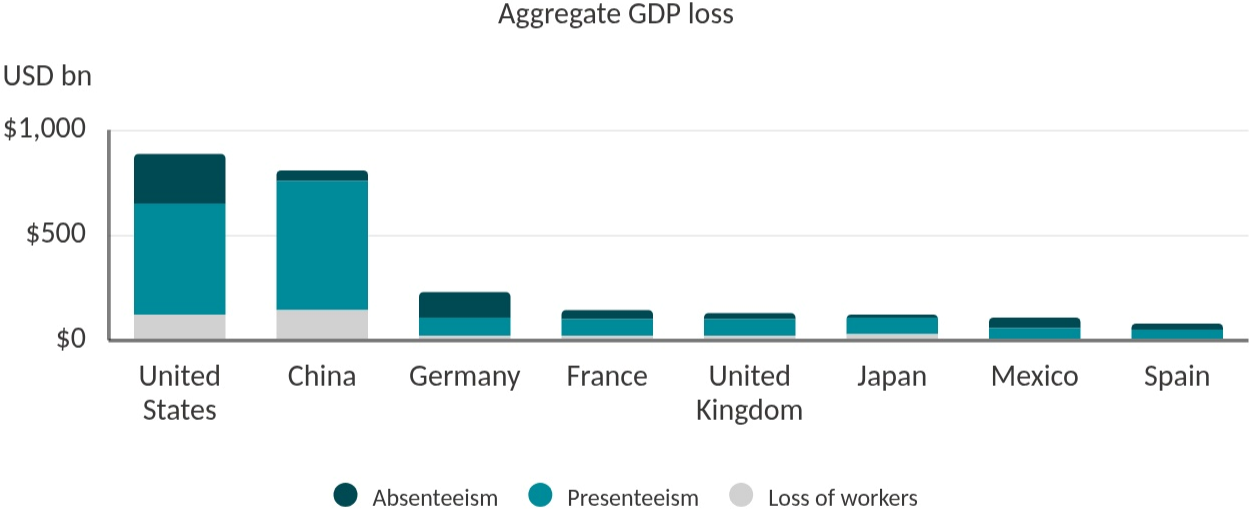
95,122,644

taken by female workers

When companies lose an experienced employee they face:

- Knowledge and expertise loss
- Recruitment costs
- Subsequent training and onboarding costs for their replacement
- Productivity downtime during the transition period

Impact of workers' disengagement on the global economy



Three channels of workers' disengagement:

- **Presenteeism** - quantifying the productivity loss due to less involvement in work
- **Absenteeism** - quantifying the productivity loss due to more sick days
- **Loss of workers** who leave the workforce entirely due to their symptoms

Source: AXA's international mental health survey 2023, Cebr analysis



Section 4

Best-practice examples

Employers and organisations should take steps to support and accommodate women's health needs

Key recommendations for employers

Pillars of support for women's health



Flexible working

Offer flexible hours, remote work, and job-sharing to accommodate individual needs.



Condition support & training

Provide guidance for health conditions (including mental health) and train managers for effective handling.



Comprehensive health insurance

Ensure adequate coverage for preventive care, maternity, family planning, and mental health.



Wellness programs

Implement programs focused on health and well-being, including stigma reduction training.




Let's get to
know each
other better

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