

MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY			
MEETING OF THE:	AUTHORITY		
DATE:	20 OCTOBER 2015	REPORT NO:	CFO/085/15
PRESENTING OFFICER	PHIL GARRIGAN		
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	PHIL GARRIGAN	REPORT AUTHOR:	AMANDA CROSS
OFFICERS CONSULTED:	NICK MERNOCK DIRECTOR OF PEOPLE AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT. MIKE PILKINGTON, TIME AND RESOURCES MANAGER, PAUL BLANCHARD FLETT, OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH MANAGER.		
TITLE OF REPORT:	IVF SERVICE INSTRUCTION		

APPENDICES:	APPENDIX A: IVF SERVICE INSTRUCTION
	APPENDIX B: EIA IVF

Purpose of Report

1. To request that the Authority approve the proposed in-vitro fertilisation (IVF) Service instruction.

Recommendation

2. Approve the attached Service Instruction with regard to IVF.

Introduction and Background

3. It is recognised that IVF is a delicate and sensitive subject and Managers will be expected to treat the matter with the appropriate level of confidentiality required to ensure that the employee receives the best possible support.
4. IVF can take a number of different forms and each individual will react to the treatment in a different way. Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority (MFRA) will work with the individual in a supportive and sympathetic manner looking at each case to provide a flexible approach to meet that person's needs.
5. Thousands of IVF babies have been born since the first in 1978. In 2009, nearly two per cent of all the babies born in the UK were conceived as a result of IVF treatment.
6. The Authority has had and currently has a number of employees who are accessing IVF in order to improve their chances of conceiving. IVF is a very technical and sensitive process. IVF requires invasive treatment and as such an agreed amount of time off to enable this will provide some support to those employees.

7. The Authority has been dealing sensitively with this issue on an informal basis. Officers have developed Service Instruction in order to formalise this process.

Equality and Diversity Implications

8. The attached Equality Impact Assessment outlines the Equality & Diversity implications for IVF. By introducing this process the Authority will be supporting the mental, emotional and physical well-being of its employees.

Staff Implications

9. Three employees are currently undertaking IVF treatment with similar numbers of employees undertaking treatment over the last 2 years. The process outlines what support an employee can have in relation to support with hospital visits and leave around the time the eggs are implanted.
10. IVF is a very private and sensitive subject and this will provide a framework for Managers to offer help and support to their employees. Where this has been used informally it has enabled a structured and supportive conversation and a planning of leave arrangements in advance.

Legal Implications

11. Women are protected from any less favourable treatment under the sex discrimination provisions of the Equality Act. Women will be considered to be undertaking IVF treatment from the point that the eggs are removed until the treatment concludes.

Financial Implications & Value for Money

12. In the majority, if not all, cases it is expected that any agreed time off can be managed and therefore avoid any requirement to cover any absences of employment through additional staff resourcing. In the cases to date the agreed time off has been planned and has not resulted in the employees resorting to sick leave.

Risk Management, Health & Safety, and Environmental Implications

13. Once an employee is pregnant they will be covered by the risk assessment for pregnant employees.

Contribution to Our Mission: *Safer Stronger Communities – Safe Effective Firefighters*

14. For some people an inability to have children and/or the psychological effects of unsuccessful IVF treatment can lead to depression. A National Infertility Awareness Campaign advised that 94% of couples who are unable to conceive have suffered depression and feelings of isolation. By providing a supportive

environment for our employees we will be actively working to reduce depression/mental ill health.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

IVF In-vitro Fertilisation