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WOMEN IN SECURITY

Magazine

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DEPARTMENT OF REGIONAL NSW DEPLOYS PARENTAL LEAVE SUPPORT PLATFORM

by **Stuart Corner**

Being pregnant and in paid employment is never going to be easy, but with the wrong workplace culture, it can be nigh on impossible.

That was the experience of recruitment consultant Rebecca Grainger who migrated to Australia from the UK in 2010 and took on a role with a boutique consultancy.

In 2014 she resigned after a miscarriage. "My focus was looking after my health and stress levels. Sadly, it became evident I didn't have the support of management, so I felt the only option was to move on," she recalls.

She began career coaching and discovered the scale of the challenge working women face when pregnant or trying to return to work after parental leave.

"The people who came to me were all women, either on maternity leave, or had returned to work post-parental leave. In all scenarios, they were

professional and ambitious women who were feeling disengaged and disconnected from their employer," she says.

A TOOL TO INCREASE EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

Those experiences led Grainger to found [triiyo](#), described as a "human-centred connectivity tool that increases employee engagement and retention during workplace transitions. ... [a] simple, automated tool [that] guides managers through every step associated with complex workplace transitions [removing] the guesswork, ensuring each employee has a consistently positive experience."

triiyo has just received a significant boost: the Department of Regional NSW has chosen it as the basis of a customised, online platform to support its employees on parental leave.

The department says the goal is to give employees an all-in-one tool “where they can access information, communicate with their colleagues, get paired with a buddy on their team, and stay on track in their career – all at their own pace.”

Donna Mcleod, Director Workforce Capability and Talent at the Department of Regional NSW, says the aim was to ensure open communication between managers and their employees at every stage of parental leave: becoming pregnant, putting together a communications plan while on leave, career planning for their return to work.

SUPPORTING THE PARENTAL JOURNEY

“We really want to make sure our teams have support and that they’ve got a means of staying connected at a cadence that suits them” she explains. “Being able to access information on the triiyo platform, regardless of gender, will help all parents on their journey.

“In the early days, it’s about creating a safe space for employees and managers to have an open conversation. Because in the early stages there are a number of scans, blood works and doctor’s appointments that need to happen, and a number of women feel unwell through the first trimester. So, it’s about talking to employees and asking, ‘How can we support you? What can we put in place?’ and being really adaptive.”

triiyo says its platform offers a safe and confidential place for employees to access the information they need to prepare themselves for the first conversation about pregnancy and navigate the other stages of their parental leave journey with their manager when they are ready.

“Companies can upload their policies and procedures and create community channels where employees can connect with colleagues also on leave to share experiences and seek advice.

“Employees also have access to a resource hub curated by experts to support them in all aspects



of pregnancy and parenting: from miscarriage and infertility to balancing work with parenthood.”

Grainger says triiyo had been designed to be outside company HR systems, “so employees can access a safe and confidential space that ensures people get support early on in what many employees fear are career-limiting life phases.”

A CUSTOMISABLE PLATFORM

McLeod says the department chose triiyo after evaluating several similar platforms. “It had to be customisable, and it had to have a journey. ... It needed to support people from the time they find out they are going to be parents, and have a keeping in touch mechanism that could be driven by the employee. ... The level of customisation you can have within triiyo, the level of information it contains and the number of partnerships: we felt it was exactly what we wanted for our people.

“Also professionally, we want them to feel they’ve got colleagues and friends they can check in with [to make sure] everything’s okay. It gives our employees access to drive how they want that communication to be. And it gives them a peer network with other parents and carers for when they come back to work.”