

PREPARED FOR

Manas – Center for Mental Wellness & Counselling

# Maternal Mental Health – An Employer's Guide

Supporting Employees Through Pregnancy, Maternity, and Return to Work

Presented by Dr. Priya Dubey Sharma

Manas – Center for Mental Wellness & Counselling

UDYAM-MP-10-0120839



मनस् – Center for Mental Wellness & Counselling

## Programme Overview

This programme addresses the critical need for workplaces to understand and support the mental well-being of mothers. We aim to equip employers with the knowledge and tools to foster a nurturing environment, recognizing that approximately 1 in 5 mothers face mental health challenges during and after pregnancy, often without adequate workplace support.

## Learning Objectives

- ✓ Understand the common mental health challenges faced by mothers during pregnancy and postpartum, and recognize why early support is crucial for both the employee and the organization.
- ✓ Identify practical strategies to psychologically support employees throughout their pregnancy journey, ensuring a sense of security and care.
- ✓ Develop effective approaches to manage maternity leave transitions and alleviate the anxieties associated with returning to work, promoting a smooth reintegration.
- ✓ Explore the impact of breastfeeding, sleep deprivation, and associated stress on workplace performance, and learn how to foster understanding and flexibility.
- ✓ Learn how to design and implement a comprehensive maternal mental health policy that aligns with Indian workplace norms and promotes employee well-being.
- ✓ Gain insights into leveraging existing Indian workplace structures like creche facilities and dedicated pumping rooms to enhance support for new mothers.

### WHO SHOULD ATTEND

This programme is designed for HR professionals, people managers, and senior leadership who are committed to creating a supportive and inclusive work environment for all employees, especially mothers.

## Programme Content

### 1. The Mental Health Landscape of Pregnancy and New Motherhood

Pregnancy and the postpartum period can present significant emotional and psychological shifts for mothers. Understanding common experiences such as increased stress, mood fluctuations, and the potential for more challenging mental health states is the first step towards providing effective support. These experiences can impact an employee's focus, engagement, and overall well-being, making workplace awareness and empathy vital. This session will explore these realities, highlighting why proactive support is beneficial for the employee and the organization.

 **Activity: Group discussion: Sharing common workplace observations related to new mothers.**

### 2. Psychological Support During Pregnancy

Supporting an employee during pregnancy involves more than just logistical accommodations; it requires genuine psychological care. This section will focus on creating a safe space where employees feel valued and understood, reducing anxiety about job security and performance expectations. We will discuss how managers can offer reassurance, flexible work arrangements where possible, and foster open communication, thereby enhancing loyalty and productivity during this sensitive phase. Understanding the nuances of Indian maternity leave culture is key here.

 **Activity: Role-playing: Practicing supportive conversations with a pregnant employee.**

### 3. Navigating Maternity Leave and Return to Work

The transition into and out of maternity leave can be a significant source of anxiety for new mothers. This session will explore strategies to make these transitions smoother, addressing concerns about career progression and reintegration into the team. We will discuss the importance of clear communication regarding leave policies and expectations for return, helping to mitigate feelings of being disconnected or overwhelmed. Exploring how to leverage creche facilities and family support structures can ease this transition.

 **Activity: Brainstorming: Developing a checklist for smooth maternity leave transitions.**

#### 4. Breastfeeding, Sleep Deprivation, and Workplace Performance

The realities of breastfeeding and severe sleep deprivation post-childbirth can significantly affect an employee's energy levels and cognitive function, impacting workplace performance. This section will discuss how employers can create a supportive environment by providing dedicated, hygienic pumping rooms and understanding the need for flexibility. Recognizing and accommodating these challenges fosters a more compassionate workplace, leading to improved morale and sustained performance from returning mothers.

 **Activity: Case study analysis: Addressing performance concerns related to new mothers' well-being.**

#### 5. Building a Maternal Mental Health Policy Framework

A well-defined maternal mental health policy demonstrates a commitment to employee well-being and can significantly reduce the incidence of mental health challenges. This session will guide participants through the essential components of such a policy, including clear communication channels, access to resources, and non-discriminatory practices. We will emphasize integrating this policy with existing HR frameworks to ensure comprehensive support for all employees during their maternal journey.

 **Activity: Group activity: Drafting key policy statements for maternal mental health support.**

#### 6. Leveraging Indian Workplace Structures for Support

India's evolving workplace landscape offers opportunities to enhance support for mothers. This section will delve into effectively utilizing existing provisions like maternity leave policies, exploring the potential benefits and implementation of creche facilities, and ensuring the availability and accessibility of dedicated pumping rooms. Understanding and promoting the role of family support structures within the broader context of work-life balance will be central to fostering a truly supportive environment.

 **Activity: Discussion: Sharing best practices for utilizing existing support structures in Indian workplaces.**



## Action Plan

Concrete steps for implementation.

Action	Owner	Timeline	Notes
Conduct an initial assessment of current maternal support provisions.	HR/Manager	Week 1	Review existing policies on maternity leave, flexible work, and any existing wellness programs.
Organize foundational training for HR and managers on maternal mental health.	HR	Month 1	Focus on awareness, empathy, and basic support strategies.
Formulate a draft Maternal Mental Health Policy.	Manager	Week 2	Incorporate insights from the programme and employee feedback.
Communicate the new policy and available resources to all employees.	HR	Month 1	Ensure clear understanding of benefits, support systems, and reporting mechanisms.
Evaluate and enhance infrastructure for breastfeeding mothers (pumping rooms).	HR/Manager	Month 2	Ensure facilities are hygienic, private, and easily accessible.
Integrate maternal mental health support into the company's overall wellness strategy.	Leadership	Quarter 1	Allocate budget and resources for ongoing support and awareness initiatives.

## About Manas



### Dr. Priya Dubey Sharma

Founder & Consulting Psychologist | Applied, Organizational & Behavioural Psychologist | PhD | 18+ Years

Dr. Priya Dubey Sharma brings 18+ years of applied psychology to corporate wellness. She has worked with SBI, educational institutions, and corporate teams across India. Her evidence-based approach combines CBT, mindfulness, and culturally contextualised psychology for measurable outcomes. She is the creator of the Performance FOMO Index™ and the High-Functioning Distress Framework™.

### Manas – Center for Mental Wellness & Counselling

A MSME-registered organisation dedicated to evidence-based mental wellness.

UDYAM-MP-10-0120839

Ready to Partner With Us?



Website

[manas365.com](https://manas365.com)



Corporate Enquiries

[manu@manas365.com](mailto:manu@manas365.com)



WhatsApp

[+91 99818 13224](https://wa.me/919981813224)



Book a Meeting

[manas365.com/book-session](https://manas365.com/book-session)

**Disclaimer:** This document has been prepared by Dr. Priya Dubey Sharma — Founder & Consulting Psychologist (Applied, Organizational & Behavioural Psychologist, PhD, 18+ years), Manas – Center for Mental Wellness & Counselling (UDYAM-MP-10-0120839). Content is for programme overview and educational purposes only. Nothing herein constitutes legal advice regarding POSH Act compliance — organisations should consult qualified legal counsel for specific legal guidance. For clinical or psychological support, please reach out to the Manas Team for personalised guidance, or consult a qualified Psychiatrist or licensed mental health professional. © 2026 Manas – Center for Mental Wellness & Counselling. All rights reserved. Confidential — prepared specifically for the named organisation. For queries: [manu@manas365.com](mailto:manu@manas365.com) | +91 99818 13224