

# News Release

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XX XXX 2019

## NEW DADS AT AVIVA TAKE OVER FIVE MONTHS PARENTAL LEAVE

### Aviva data reveals when barriers are removed, fathers share childcare and work more flexibly

- 23% increase in the number of new dads taking equal parental leave in 2019 vs 2018
- New fathers at Aviva in the UK have taken an average of 22 weeks' paternity leave since its Equal Parental Leave policy was introduced, vs an average of two weeks previously
- 97% of new dads at Aviva in the UK took more than two weeks, compared to the national average of 31% of eligible dads who used two weeks paternity leave in the last year\*
- 32% of Aviva UK new dads work flexibly when they return to work

New figures from Aviva show how equal parental leave can transform parenting patterns in the UK, with new dads now taking on average five months parental leave, on full pay, compared to the national average of two weeks. The figures come from research conducted by Aviva amongst its own employees to examine the impact of equal parental leave, two years after Aviva was one of the first major UK companies to offer such a policy.

Since its introduction in November 2017, 1380 Aviva employees in the UK have made use of the policy, of which 680 were dads. Aviva in the UK offers all new parents 12 months parental leave, with six months at full basic pay.

In 2019 there was an 11% rise in the amount of paternity days taken compared to 2018, and an increase of 23% in the number of fathers taking the leave compared to 2018.

#### Lindsey Rix, Aviva CEO UK Savings and Retirement, said:

“When barriers are removed, and the right culture is in place, men are keen to take more time out of work to care for their young families. Equal parental leave can be a powerful catalyst for changing workplace culture and the experience of new parents.”

“We believe our approach to parental leave is working because of a number of factors. First, there is active and vocal support from senior leaders, who themselves take months, not weeks, of parental leave. Second is the simplicity and ease of the policy, there's no small print. Third, there is support beyond the paternity period itself - when colleagues come back to work there is broad availability for flexible working. Finally, we work hard to normalise it - the more people who see colleagues taking lengthier parental leave, the more they feel able to do so as well.”

The Aviva research also reveals that 43% of dads were worried it would impact negatively on their career, (compared to 20% of women). Yet despite this, the increase in men taking the leave suggests it did not deter them. This is likely to reflect the fact that colleagues describe strong line manager support: 92% of those colleagues questioned said their line manager was supportive of their decision to take parental leave.

There is a marked difference however on how parents return to work. More women still 'formally' change their working hours than men, with only 2% of men changing their contracted hours, compared to 29% of women.

However, 32% of men questioned said they work flexibly or condensed hours when returning to work, in most cases 'informally'.

Lindsey Rix commented:

“Many male colleagues have said equal parental leave has helped them to better understand what returning to work has long been like for new mums. We will be tracking this over the coming years to see exactly how it might have a positive impact on the shape of our business. We are also seeing an increase in the number of dads wanting to work more flexibly when they return, suggesting that equal parental is influencing that.”

Nevertheless, women at Aviva continue to take a significantly longer period of parental leave compared to men (311 days v 158 days), and only 18% of women said they didn't change their original working hours, compared to 62% of men.

Lindsey Rix continues:

“We're just two years into Equal Parental Leave at Aviva, and we're still learning about its impact. However, what is clear is that it is helping to remove barriers and it is helping to create a more diverse and inclusive culture which benefits everyone. We will continue to help people understand how it can work for them and encourage people to use it.”

*Case studies of male and female employees who have taken / plan to take parental leave are available.*

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**Notes to editors:**

\*“Approximately 31% of eligible new fathers (203,000 men) used paternity leave in the last year\* versus 32% (213,000 men) in the previous year.” **Source** \*Year end March 31 2019. Source: HMRC

Data since the introduction of the equal parental leave policy relates to 19 November 2017 to 30 December 2019.

Findings are taken from a study of 343 employees who have made use of Aviva's parental leave policy.

**About Aviva's parental leave policy:**

In the UK, Aviva offers up to one year of leave, of which 26 weeks' is at full basic pay for each parent employed by the company within the first 12 months of a child's arrival. This applies to employees in all UK offices and locations, with no eligibility criteria relating to service length or earnings threshold. Aviva's new parental leave policy entitlement includes:

- Equal amount of paid and unpaid parental leave when a new child arrives.
- Is available to full-time and part-time employees across all levels of the company.
- No requirement to share the parental leave between parents.
- If both parents are employees of Aviva, each has their own entitlement to leave and pay, which they can take at the same time.
- The new parental leave policy has been offered to Aviva employees who have become parents since 19 November 2017.

## Aviva family-friendly policies:

- **Returning to work:** All new parents are entitled to take five hours of leave per week, for the first 12 weeks, after returning to work following parental leave.
- **First day of school:** All parents in the UK are entitled to half a day of additional leave to support their child's first day at a new school.
- **Caring commitments:** UK employees have been able to take up to 10 days of pro-rated, paid leave per year, with five days of emergency leave and five days of planned leave, taken in as little as one-hour chunks. They can also take up to three months of unpaid leave.

## Enquiries:

Media:

Heleana Greeves

+44 (0)7392 138791

Marion Fischer

+44 (0)7800 693219

## Notes to editors:

- Aviva is a leading international savings, retirement and insurance business. We exist to be with people when it really matters, throughout their lives – to help them make the most of life. We have been taking care of people for more than 300 years, in line with our purpose of being 'with you today, for a better tomorrow'.
- Our vision is to earn our customers' trust as the best place to save for the future, navigate retirement and insure what matters most to them. In 2018, we paid c.£33 billion in claims and benefits on behalf of our 33 million customers.
- We operate through five business divisions: Investments, Savings & Retirement; UK Life; General Insurance; Europe Life; and Asia Life; and focus on three strategic priorities: deliver great customer outcomes, excel at the fundamentals and invest in sustainable growth.
- Total group assets under management at Aviva group are £501 billion (as at 30 June 2019) and our Solvency ratio is 195% (3Q19). Our shares are listed on the London Stock Exchange and we are a member of the FTSE 100 index.
- For more details on what we do, our business and how we help our customers, visit [www.aviva.com/about-us](http://www.aviva.com/about-us)
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