

Cystic Fibrosis in the Workplace



People with cystic fibrosis (CF) work in diverse areas of employment and are fully capable of independently managing their health.

A supportive, understanding employer can be extremely helpful for someone living with CF.

What is Cystic Fibrosis?

CF is one of the most common genetic diseases affecting people in Australia. It affects everybody differently with varying degrees of severity. Approximately 1 in 25 people are carriers of the CF gene. Both parents need to carry the gene to have a child with CF.

Despite managing a chronic health condition, many people will not show any symptoms however, may exhibit the following when unwell:

Common symptoms include:

- Persistent coughing which is not contagious
- Recurrent lung and sinus infections
- Digestive system issues

Management of CF

Most CF management occurs outside of the workplace; including daily airway clearance and many medications. However, hospital appointments and admissions may be required at times to maintain optimal health.

Infection Prevention

For people with CF, some bacteria and viruses can cause major lung infections, resulting in hospital admissions and permanent lung damage. Part of everyday life for a person with CF involves reducing the risk of catching an infection, through good hand hygiene practices and avoiding people who are unwell.

How Can We Support People with CF in the Workplace?

It's important to provide a space to have open, honest communication. It may be helpful to have a discussion around flexibility for attending hospital appointments. Encouraging all staff to maintain good hand hygiene and stay home when unwell would be very helpful.

More Information

Cystic Fibrosis WA are available to provide support and advice. Contact our Services Manager on **08 6224 4100** or check out our resources on our website www.cfwa.org.au.

Useful Resources

- [Information for Employers](#) (CFStrong)
- [CFTalk short video- Careers](#) (CFWA)