

CONTENTS

Page No

PREFACE

INTRODUCTION

I

RECOMMENDATIONS

7

- i. Caring responsibilities
- ii. Training
- iii. Financial and legal considerations
- iv. Practices of professional bodies
- v. Employers' schemes
- vi. Special needs of older women returners

7
7
7
8
8
9

CARING RESPONSIBILITIES

II

1. Sharing caring responsibilities
2. Childcare
3. Eldercare

11
12
16

TRAINING

19

1. National training policy
2. Information
3. Training and Enterprise Councils
4. Funding

19
22
24
25

FINANCIAL AND LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

27

1. Information
2. National Insurance position
3. National Insurance lower earnings limit
4. Company and personal pensions
5. Benefits trap
6. Tax exemption for individuals on all employer-provided childcare
7. Pro-rata employment rights for part-time workers
8. Parental leave

27
28
28
29
30
30
31
32

PRACTICES OF PROFESSIONAL BODIES	35
1. Professional status requirements	35
2. Contact during career breaks	36
3. Flexible working practices and age requirements	37
EMPLOYERS' SCHEMES	39
1. Flexible working patterns	42
2. Maternity rights	42
3. Childcare	44
4. Parental/caring leave	44
5. Training	45
6. Pro-rata rights for part-time workers	46
7. Removal of promotion barriers	47
SPECIAL NEEDS OF OLDER WOMEN	49
1. Confidence building after a long break	49
2. Training	49
3. Assistance with eldercare responsibilities	49
4. Removal of ageist practices	50
LOOKING TO THE FUTURE	51
REFERENCES	52
INDEX TO FIGURES	53
ANNEX A:	54
Composition of the working group	
ANNEX B:	55
Organisations consulted	
ANNEX C:	57
Example of the benefits trap	
ANNEX D:	59
Employers' schemes - examples of good practice	