

## Sickness Absence Management Policy Advisory Group - Action Plan

	Recommendation	Response/Proposed Action	Lead Officer	Completion Date
<b><u>Manager's Role</u></b>				
1.1	Based on the evidence we received, the Policy Advisory Group (PAG) <b>concluded</b> that it is essential that the Authority tackle the inconsistencies in the approaches adopted by managers in relation to the management of sickness absence.	<p>A global message delivering the authorities expectations about approach, standards and behaviours to be announced to all staff.</p> <p>New guidance and revised manager toolkit to be rolled out to standardise approach to the handling of sickness absence, to underpin revised standards and the performance required.</p> <p>Corporate approach to be taken in the delivery of absence management training, incorporating an e-learning tool.</p> <p>All senior managers to be required to sign up to a workforce accountability statements which will include responsibility for ensuring that team managers and team leaders comply with the policy, guidance and process in a fair and equitable way.</p>	Jann Russell	By September 2010

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1.2	<p>As such, we <b>recommend</b> a programme of training/awareness raising about the policies/procedures available in order to improve standardisation and enforcement.</p>	<p>An e-learning package addressing expected absence standards and the management of policy application to be in place and rolled out across all services.</p> <p>Manager workshops designed and developed for roll out.</p>	Richard Taylor / Lynne Phillips	<p>From September 2010.</p> <p>From September 2010</p>
1.3	<p>We also <b>recommend</b> that the training on the Managing Attendance policy guidance becomes part of a mandatory managers' induction process and that the importance of keeping records up to date is emphasised as a key part of the manager's role. This training would cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Return to work discussions.</li> <li>• The need for absence warnings to be issued consistently at the appropriate times in line with the policy.</li> <li>• Capability on the grounds of ill health processes are considered and initiated, in discussion with Directorate HR, at the set period of absence as per the policy.</li> <li>• The need for referrals to the OHU to be made after the appropriate level of absence is reached and the referral process is adhered to as part of managing sickness absence.</li> <li>• specific messages in respect of the council's excellent provision to support employees to remain in work</li> </ul>	<p>The identified skills/capabilities gap in managing attendance – identified as part of the Workshop and E learning roll out - to be addressed as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) part of a managers training workshop,</li> <li>(ii) as an integral part of the induction programme for all new managers and team leaders.</li> </ul> <p>Where capability needs cannot be addressed in-house, appropriate development solutions will be considered in discussion between employee and line manager as part of the PPR process.</p>	Richard Taylor / Lynne Phillips	From September 2010.

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1.4	We also <b>recommend</b> that a formal system of regular contact/interviews with absent employees is introduced, which managers must adhere to.	The importance of communications and engagement by the line manager with employee whilst on sick leave will be reinforced through management training workshops and in policy guidance notes.	Lynne Phillips	July 2010
1.5	We <b>recommend</b> that Managers are made accountable for managing sickness absence in their role and are provided with appropriate support to ensure prompt and appropriate handling of sickness absence. The management of sickness absence should become an integral part of managers Job Descriptions and Personal Performance Review.	Accountability will be specified under professional accountabilities in job descriptions and person specs.	Richard Taylor / Cherie Cuthbertson	By September 2010
1.6	We <b>recommend</b> the introduction of accountability statements for senior managers which covers the management of employee issues including performance, capability, development, health & safety and welfare of people they manage.	To design and implement personal performance accountability statements for senior managers to cover the management of workforce issues.	Jann Russell	End of July 2010
<b><u>Communications</u></b>				
1.7	We <b>recommend</b> the development of a communication strategy to raise awareness of individual accountabilities within the Managing Attendance at Work Policy, both of managers and staff, and promotion of good attendance figures within the organisation.	A communication / engagement strategy will be developed to support the roll out of the revised policy and toolkit.	Jann Russell/ Richard Taylor	End of July 2010

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		A combined approach will be undertaken via Chief Executive's update/blog, Inspire magazine and the HR intranet site to reinforce key messages and signpost support available.		
<b><u>Sickness Absence Recording</u></b>				
1.8	We <b>note</b> the need for improving sickness absence reporting. We recognise one of the barriers to recording sickness absence is through the SAP system. We <b>recommend</b> the development of current SAP functionality where possible or the introduction of a more user friendly reporting system.	[SAP development is on hold pending upgrade.]  Development requirements to be sent through to SAP Development Management Group (PALI).	Andrew Noonan/ Richard Taylor	July 2010
<b><u>Physiotherapy Service</u></b>				
1.9	We <b>recommend</b> that provision of an external physiotherapy service is commissioned to reduce levels of absence and cost due to muscular skeletal disorders. This should be on a, on a 12 month trial funded by the authority and any identified savings reinvested in the HR service to support the management of sickness absence.	Contract arrangements for external provision of services to be put into place to support services already provided by the OH Service, once endorsement to approach agreed.  Development of policy/process for the monitoring of this contract to enable monitoring and analysis of provision, impact on absence and cost and savings.	Alison Smith Lead OHU Nurse  Alison Smith Lead OHU Nurse	September 2010  From October 2010.