

Sickness Absence Procedure

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Sickness Absence Procedure

1 Introduction

Absence due to sickness is a matter of concern for both managers and staff as it can have a disruptive effect on patient care, departmental and individual performance. Sickness absence needs to be monitored and reviewed by managers, so that all departments can contribute towards fulfilling the objectives of the Trust and department.

2 Purpose

The purpose this procedure is to:

- a. Ensure that all staff are dealt with fairly and consistently in a sensitive and confidential manner.
- b. Ensure that all staff with poor sickness records are given the opportunity to improve.
- c. Ensure that frequent and continuing sickness absence is investigated and long term sickness examined and supported.
- d. Ensure that staff do not feel obliged to attend work when they are ill.
- e. Ensure that all employees involved in managing sickness absence are fully conversant with –
 - i. their responsibilities within this policy
 - ii. the trust's agreed procedures
 - iii. the consistent application of the procedures

- iv. and have attended the in-house managing sickness absence training programme

- f. Comply with employment legislation, case law and good business practice in this area of human resource management

3 Scope

This procedure applies to all staff employed by the Trust.

4 Definitions

Health at Work Centre

The Trust's outsourced occupational health and wellbeing service.

Fit note

A certificate issued to an employee by the GP, previously known as a sick certificate.

Long term absence

A period of absence likely to last five calendar weeks or more.

Self Certificate

A form which must be completed by staff who have been absent for three days or more.

Short term absence

A period of absence less than five calendar weeks.

Trigger point

This is a level which commences monitoring through this procedure. The level is 6 days of sickness in the previous 6 month period.

5 Duties and responsibilities

Employees' responsibilities

In order that we can manage our clinical and operational services employees are responsible for reporting when they are unwell and cannot attend work. Employees should ensure that they personally let their manager or supervisor know by telephoning them, or, if this not possible asking a relative or friend.

Where an employee is absent for 8 calendar days or more they will obtain a fit note from the GP or appropriate clinician.

If an employee has an accident at work then they will promptly complete an incident form.

Where an individual needs to take time off for medical appointments they will arrange these to cause minimum disruption.

Line managers' responsibilities

Managers will ensure that sickness absence is managed in accordance with this procedure and to ensure that they create a positive working environment which ensures staff health and wellbeing.

In applying this procedure managers will develop effective relationships with their staff and engage in open discussion and explain when sickness becomes a cause for concern. This should also help to focus the employee on how either their frequent or long term absence impacts their colleagues or service users.

It is important that managers refer staff to the most appropriate clinical service as early as possible, this may be to the Health at Work Centre or to the Staff Advice and Counselling Service.

Managers will maintain contact with staff absent from work to ensure they are kept aware of developments at work and also to understand when a member of staff might return and the support they will need.

Managers will maintain accurate records and ensure that absence returns are sent to the Payroll Department by the required deadline each month. This will also include conducting a return to work meeting two calendar days after each episode of sickness.

Where industrial injuries occur, the manager will complete an incident form.

Human resources advisers' responsibilities

An HR adviser will support managers to apply this procedure by providing advice, guidance, training and coaching.

Where the formal stages of this procedure are commenced then an HR adviser will be present at meetings to act in an advisory capacity and take note.

The HR team will analyse and report on sickness absence information which is collated through the monthly absence returns.

Health at Work Centre responsibilities

The role of the Health at Work Centre nurse adviser, physiotherapist and the physician in occupational medicine is to provide advice, guidance and assessment on the following;

- Advise regarding the presence or absence of an underlying health condition and prognosis which will include an assessment of the likely long term effects.
- Detail whether the condition is likely to recur and if so, over what timescale.

- Confirm whether an employee is medically fit to undertake the full range of their duties or if restrictions apply and whether workplace controls or adjustments are required.
- Advise whether alternative employment should be sought.
- Consider and advise whether an application for ill-health retirement is appropriate.
- Provide an assessment of employee's disability and advice on reasonable adjustments to be made.

The Staff Advice Consultation Service's responsibilities

To provide staff with a confidential counselling and support service.

6 Procedures

a) An employee's guide to reporting sickness absence

Sickness absence is an important but difficult issue to address. If it is not handled effectively it may, in the long run, lead to problems within the team.

The trust will do all it reasonably can to ensure that working conditions do not adversely affect the health of staff and will assist staff wherever possible to help them maintain good levels of attendance.

This procedure is to ensure that all employees are fairly treated and that there is consistency in approach. The procedure you should follow if you are absent from work is set out below.

Notifying us if you are sick

If you are unable to attend work, it is essential that your line manager, supervisor or head of discipline for clinical staff is made aware as soon as possible, i.e. within one hour of your start time at the latest, so that they can make arrangements to cover your work. If you are scheduled to work on a night or afternoon shift, then you must inform your line manager of

your intended absence as soon as you are aware that you will not be reporting for duty.

All staff should follow the guidelines below:

Day 1	<p>You (or someone else if you are too unwell) should contact your line manager or, in their absence their deputy (or nominated person e.g. supervisor), to let them know you will not be in work. This should be done prior to your starting time.</p> <p>Notification should be by phone and not text message or email. It is acceptable to leave an answer phone message to ensure that your message is received as quickly as possible, in which case you must then phone and speak to your line manager in person, unless your illness prevents you from doing so, in which case someone else may call on your behalf. Each employee is responsible for ensuring this is done without delay.</p> <p>You will not be expected back at work before you are fit to work (especially if you have a contagious disease). In order to help the department make the appropriate arrangements, you will need to tell your manager/supervisor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the nature of your illness• how long you think you will be off work• whether you are going to the doctor• whether your condition is a result of an injury sustained at work <p>If you cannot come back to work the following day or on the day you specified, you will need to contact your line manager again. Your line manager should also know in advance when you will be returning to work.</p> <p>If you are likely to be off for more than three days, your line</p>
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	manager may ask you to contact them again to see what progress you are making.
Day 4	<p>Contact your manager again to keep them informed of your progress</p> <p>At this stage you will be required to complete a <u>self-certificate</u> (see below).</p>
Day 8	<p>Contact your manager to inform them of your progress</p> <p>After the eight days, you will need to provide a fit note (see below). This and your self-certificate should be forwarded to your manager to enable you to be paid correctly. A fit note does not replace the need to complete a self-certificate.</p>
Every further 7th calendar day	You should contact your manager to report that you are still unable to attend work and when you may expect to return.
After 5 weeks	After five weeks, your manager or HR department may contact you to arrange a meeting with you. The purpose of which will be to see how you are, to offer any help they can and to discuss when you may be likely to return.

Fit Notes / Medical Certificates

It is essential that you follow both the reporting procedure and the advice below regarding certificates as failure to do either may affect your pay. Employees should note that the Trust does not accept retrospective certificates.

For pay purposes, sickness absence is calculated on the number of calendar days irrespective of a person being full or part time.

1–3 calendar days sickness absence

As long as you have followed the notification procedure, a certificate will not normally be required if you are off for less than 4 calendar days.

4–7 calendar days sickness absence

As long as you have followed the notification procedure and you have been off sick for more than 3 but less than 8 calendar days, when you return to work you will need to:

- report to your line manager
- complete a self-certificate form (can be obtained from HR or <http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/forms/sc2.pdf>)

8 calendar days or more sickness absence

If you are off sick for more than 8 calendar days you will need to:

- obtain a fit note from your doctor (on the 8th day or before) and send it to your line manager.
- complete a self-certificate for your sickness after the 4th day.
- This can be completed when you return to work, unless you are going to be away for a long time, in which case you may need to obtain one or your head of department will send you one.

Sickness during annual leave

If you are unwell while on annual leave, your annual leave may be regarded as sick leave provided you notify your line manager as soon as you fall ill (when it is practicable to do so) and obtain a medical certificate to cover you for the whole period of absence.

Annual leave accruals whilst sick

Whilst on sick leave you will continue to accrue annual leave. If your sickness absence spans over a leave year and you are not able to take

annual leave then this will automatically be rolled over in to the next leave year. You can accrue up to a maximum of 18 months leave.

If you wish to take paid annual leave whilst off sick, then you should request this via the normal procedures with your line manager.

Failure to Follow the Trust Procedure

It is important that you follow the steps outlined for notifying your sickness and for providing certificates. If you do not you will be considered absent from work and will not be paid.

Absence without reasonable cause is a disciplinary offence and may lead to action being taken in accordance with the trust's disciplinary procedure.

It should be noted that under current terms and conditions of employment, the Trust can require a member of staff to produce a medical certificate from the first day of absence through sickness after due notice has been given. If the employee occurs a charge for obtaining the certificate this will be reimbursed by the trust.

Returning to work

You should have informed your manager of your intended return and on this day you should go and see your manager as they will carry out a return to work interview with you, to discuss how you are and any reasons for your absence. This is also to ensure that you are actually fit for work.

b) Managing Short Term Absence

Frequent short-term absences may be defined as relatively short, but persistent periods of absence. Employees should be interviewed by their manager under stage 1 of the procedure following each absence when they have:

- Taken a total of 6 days' sickness absence in the previous 6-month period; or
- A regular pattern of sickness absence (e.g. usually sick Monday, Friday or following a day off)

Stage 1 – informal sickness absence discussion

Where an employee's absence record reaches one of the trigger points above, the line manager will require the employee to attend an informal sickness absence discussion. The aim of the discussion is to:

- Allow the manager and employee to have a discussion about the employee's health and welfare.
- Establish whether there are any underlying problems at work or home which may be affecting attendance.
- Offer help and support where possible.
- Review the absence record.
- Consider a referral to the HaWC.
- Consider whether further monitoring is required. If monitoring is required, a review period of between 6–12 weeks will be set; during which the employee will be expected to maintain a satisfactory attendance.

If an employee's attendance improves following informal monitoring, their manager will meet with them to advise that they will be removed from monitoring, however, if there is a rise in absence levels within 6 months then their monitoring will be re-activated at stage 2 of the procedure.

Although it is not usually expected that a representative from Human Resources or a colleague or trade union representative to be invited at this stage both managers and staff are encouraged to seek advice if this is felt to be appropriate.

Stage 2 – formal sickness absence interview

If the employee's sickness absence continues to be a cause of concern during or at the end of the monitoring period, the manager should refer the employee to the Health at Work Centre if this has not already occurred, and a formal stage 2 sickness absence interview will be convened. The meeting will be scheduled on receipt of the Health at Work Centre report and the employee will be given 7 days' notice of their requirement to attend the meeting. The aim of the meeting will be to:

- Inform the employee that their level of sickness absence is still not acceptable and explain the impact it is having on service delivery.
- Discuss support and assistance which may be provided to improve the employee's attendance.
- Inform the employee of the potential consequences, including the possibility of dismissal on the grounds of ill health due to incapability if they fail to improve their attendance at work.

If the Health at Work Centre report states that there is no underlying medical condition, the manager may require the employee to produce a doctor's certificate to cover all future sickness absences from the first day of sickness absence on every occasion.

On production of a receipt, the cost of the doctor's certificate will be reimbursed by the trust. Other than when the employee confirms that their GP will not provide a certificate in such circumstances if such a requirement is imposed, any subsequent sickness not covered by a doctor's certificate will be deemed unauthorised absence and sick pay may be withheld.

If the Health at Work Centre report states that there is an underlying medical condition, the manager will review the sickness in light of:

- Medical advice
- HR advice
- The employee's anticipated level of future sickness absence
- The employee's ability to carry out work
- The Equality Act (2010)

The manager should consider whether there may be any reasonable adjustments which could be made – for example, counselling support, a change to working hours or modifications to the working environment. Where necessary, medical redeployment may also be considered.

In all circumstances, the needs of the service will be a key factor in determining any agreements about adaptations or medical redeployment;

At the end of the meeting the manager may:

- Inform the employee that their level of sickness absence will continue to be monitored for a further period of between 6 to 12 weeks.
- Inform the employee that if their level of sickness absence does not improve, it may be necessary to arrange a stage 3 formal sickness absence hearing and their continued employment may be at risk.

- Inform the employee of any agreed changes to their work.

In any event, the manager will confirm the outcome of the sickness absence interview in writing within 7 calendar days unless there are exceptional circumstances.

At the end of the agreed monitoring period, the formal sickness absence interview will be reconvened to consider the level of sickness absence during the monitoring period.

If there has been no sickness absence during the monitoring period, then the employee will be advised that monitoring will cease, however, if there is a rise in absence levels with 12 months then they will be referred to a stage 3 hearing.

If there has been an improvement, but there continues to be some sickness absence during the monitoring period, there will be a further monitoring period of between 6 and 12 weeks. The formal sickness absence interview will again be reconvened at the end of the further monitoring period and the same options apply.

If there has been no significant improvement, a stage 3 formal sickness absence hearing will be convened and the employee will be informed in writing.

Stage 3 – formal sickness absence hearing

If the employee's sickness absence continues to be a cause of concern during or at the end of the monitoring period, a stage 3 formal sickness absence hearing, chaired by a manager with the authority to dismiss (see Appendix C) will be convened to decide the appropriate action to take. An HR representative will also be present at the meeting to advise the chair of the hearing. The employee will have a right to be accompanied at the meeting by a trade union representative or work-place colleague. Seven days' notice will be given to the employee of the date of the meeting.

The employee's line manager must prepare a written statement of the case for the hearing and this must include:

- The employee's sickness absence record
- Health at Work Centre reports
- Work problems caused by the sickness absence, including service delivery issues.
- GP or other medical reports obtained, including, where appropriate, underlying medical reasons, disabilities and anticipated further sickness absence
- Details and outcome of previous sickness absence interviews or hearings
- Job description
- Assistance and adaptations considered and progress made – what has been explored, agreed, refused and the effect
- Recommendations

The employees and their representative will have the opportunity to respond at the hearing. If the employee or their representative wishes to submit written evidence, this should be submitted to the chair of the hearing through the HR department at least two calendar days in advance of the hearing.

Following the hearing the panel may:

- Dismiss the employee with paid notice on the grounds of incapability due to ill health; or
- Set a further monitoring period of between 6 and 26 weeks and at the end of the monitoring period the hearing will be reconvened or

- Make recommendations about redeployment or reasonable adjustments.

Following any further monitoring, the hearing will be reconvened and the following options will apply:

- If there is no significant improvement at the end of the monitoring period, the employee may be dismissed with paid notice on the grounds of incapability due to non-attendance/ill health, or
- If a significant improvement has been achieved, the panel may make a decision to take the employee out of the formal procedure.

In any event, if an employee's sickness absence continues to be a cause of concern during the agreed monitoring period following a stage 3 formal sickness absence hearing, the manager retains the right to convene a further stage 3 hearing.

The chair of the panel will normally confirm the outcome of the sickness absence hearing in writing within 7 calendar days unless there are exceptional circumstances.

An employee may appeal to the Director of Human Resources against termination of employment on the grounds of ill health, in accordance with the HR appeals procedure.

c) Managing long-term sickness absence

Long-term sickness due to a serious illness or injury needs to be handled sensitively, fairly and on an individual basis. Where it is evident that an employee is going to be absent from work on a long-term basis (i.e. more than 5 calendar weeks) due to ill health, employees should be interviewed by their manager under stage 1 of the procedure.

Stage 1 informal sickness absence discussion

As soon as it becomes evident that the absence will exceed 5 calendar weeks, the employee's medical condition should be established and the line manager must refer the employee to Health at Work Centre. Upon receipt of the report a stage one informal sickness absence discussion should be arranged.

For stages 1, 2 and 3 of this procedure, a home visit may be appropriate if the employee is unable to attend a meeting at work and advice should be sought from Health at Work Centre and the HR department. The home visit will be attended by a HR representative and line manager

The aim of the meeting is to:

- Find out how the employee is feeling and the progress they are making.
- Determine whether any help or support can be provided by the trust.
- If any adjustments can be made to facilitate an earlier return to work, including the option of phased return (see below).
- Establish the likely duration of the sickness absence, an indication of when they will be able to return to work and/or the anticipated next step in their treatment.

- Keep the employee up to date on what's happening at work whilst they are away.
- Dates on which sick pay reduction will take effect.

It should be noted that following the completion of a stage 1 meeting one of the following avenues could be followed:

- In the event the employee's sickness absence is likely to continue, a stage 2 formal sickness absence interview will be convened.
- If Health at Work Centre advice indicates that a return to work is not anticipated in the near future, and all options to facilitate a return to work – including adaptations and medical redeployment – have been fully explored, stage 2 of the process could be bypassed by mutual agreement and a formal stage 3 sickness absence hearing will be convened.
- The employee returns to work.
- If the employee has two years or more superannuable service, he or she may retire on the grounds of ill health (see below).

Return to work after long-term sickness

It should be noted that if an employee has been on long-term sick leave, it can sometimes be very difficult to make the transition back to work. The opinion of the Health at Work Centre nurse may be required in addition to that of the GP before the employee resumes work. In these circumstances, it may be possible to start back at work on a part-time basis for a maximum of up to two months, gradually increasing hours and thus easing back into full-time employment. This should be discussed with the employee, departmental manager and HR department.

Stage 2 formal sickness absence interview

In the event that an employee's sickness absence is likely to continue, a stage 2 formal sickness absence interview will be convened. This interview will normally be scheduled to follow a review by the Health at Work Centre. The employee will be given 7 days' notice to attend the interview or, where appropriate, a mutually agreeable date for a home visit is agreed.

At this stage a member of the Human Resources Department will attend the meeting and the member of staff has the right of representation from a recognised trade union or a colleague in support.

The purpose of the interview is to:

- Discuss the latest Health at Work Centre report and the employee's anticipated further sickness absence.
- Discuss the employee's ability to carry out their work.
- Explore assistance or reasonable adaptations that may be provided – for example, counselling, changes to working hours and/or modification to the working environment or working practice.
- Agree further review dates.
- If appropriate, the manager should inform the employee of the potential consequences, including the possibility of dismissal on the grounds of ill health due to incapability if they fail to improve their attendance.
- Where appropriate, explore the option of alternative employment and/or retirement on the grounds of ill health.

Alternative employment

If an employee is unable to resume their duties due to ill health, the trust has an obligation to see if the employee's existing job can be modified or if they can be accommodated in another job in the trust. This will depend on the type of incapacity the employee has, the length and nature of the employee's service and the availability of other suitable work. Please refer to the equality, diversity and inclusion policy, if appropriate.

If a return to work is anticipated within the near future:

- The parties may agree assistance or reasonable adaptations to aid recovery and assist return to work.
- The manager should keep the employee's sickness absence under review.
- The employee should be referred to Health at Work Centre prior to return to work to assess fitness to return to work and for advice on any reasonable adaptations.

Both the employee's line manager and the HR adviser supporting the absence management are responsible for identifying roles which an employee may be redeployed to.

The member of staff should also review the trust's job vacancies sites for roles which may offer a suitable redeployment to.

If a member of staff is redeployed to a post of a lower grade, they will be entitled to receive a period of pay protection. The time periods of protection will be the same as those detailed in the employment change procedure.

Stage 3 formal sickness absence hearing

A formal stage 3 sickness absence hearing will be convened if Health at Work Centre advice indicates that a return to work is not anticipated in

the near future and all options to facilitate a return to work –including adaptations and medical redeployment– have been fully explored. The employee will be given 7 days’ notice to attend the interview or, where appropriate, a mutually agreeable date for a home visit is agreed.

A formal stage 3 sickness absence hearing will also be convened if the employee fails or refuses to attend Health at Work Centre for an assessment without a satisfactory reason.

The hearing will be chaired by a manager with authority to dismiss (see appendix C). An HR representative will also be present to advise the chair of the hearing.

The employee’s line manager must prepare a statement of case to present at the hearing. The information to be included in the statement is as listed in Stage 3 – formal sickness absence hearing. The case is to be provided to the chair and the employee at least 7 calendar days in advance of the hearing.

The employee will have the right to be represented at the meeting by a trade union representative or work–place colleague and the employee’s representative will have the opportunity to respond at the hearing. If the employee or their representative wishes to submit written evidence, this should be sent to the chair of the hearing, through the HR department, at least two calendar days in advance of the hearing.

Following the hearing the panel may:

- Dismiss the employee with paid notice on the ground of incapability due to ill health; or
- Determine a further appropriate sickness absence review period and/or
- Make alternative recommendations.

The chair of the panel will normally confirm the outcome of the hearing in writing within 7 calendar days unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Dismissal on grounds of ill health

Whilst this is an unlikely outcome to an employee's sickness absence, there may come a point when, all other possible courses of action having failed, the trust will consider dismissal on the grounds of ill health. This relates strictly to the inability of the individual to fulfil their contract of employment through their incapacity. There will have been an ongoing need for the trust to cover and/or fill the post of the sick employee and a business need to resolve the absence situation to ensure continuity of the trust's services.

An employee may appeal against termination of employment on the grounds of ill health, in accordance with the HR appeals procedure.

Retirement on grounds of ill health

If the employee has two years or more pensionable service, then they may be eligible for retirement on the ground of ill health. The agreement of the employee is necessary for this option; it may be in their interest to do this if there is no prospect of them returning to work. Early retirement on health grounds requires approval from the NHS Business Services Authority Pensions Division.

d) Medical suspension

In very exceptional circumstances, there may be times where an employee's personal circumstances may prohibit them from safely discharging their duties. Examples can included, but are not limited to, when an occupational health practitioner has determined that an employee is not capable of fulfilling their duties or when an individual is displaying signs that their clinical practice is impaired.

In these circumstances it may be appropriate to consider suspending the employee, on full pay and without prejudice until such a time that:

- An occupational health report can be obtained;
- A period of clinically recommended isolation expires;
- A redeployment opportunity is identified; or
- A sickness absence review meeting or hearing can be scheduled.

Suspension is a serious matter and whilst being without prejudice it is unlikely to feel this way to the member of staff being excluded from the workplace.

Only an officer with the authority to dismiss may make the decision to suspend. Prior to doing so, they should seek advice from an HR adviser and complete a checklist to assess whether this course of action is the right one.

Suspensions should be for as short a period as possible and be reviewed every week.

A plan should also be agreed how to keep in touch with the suspended member of staff so that they do not become isolated.

e) Unauthorised absence and failure to follow this procedure

Unauthorised absence and failure to comply with the procedure for reporting sickness absence are misconduct issues and will be managed in accordance with the disciplinary procedure.

This procedure does not impose disciplinary sanctions for excessive sickness and seeks to address issues through monitoring and support. However, excessive absence unrelated to sickness or other acceptable reasons or where the reporting procedures have not been followed, may lead to disciplinary action being taken.

f) Counter fraud

It is an offence under section 2 of the Fraud Act 2006 for employees to take dishonest sick leave or carers leave.

Dishonest sick leave can include employees who undertake paid or voluntary employment whilst on sick leave or use their sick leave to attend academic courses. Employees who dishonestly take sick leave will be referred to the local counter-fraud specialist in line with the trust's counter fraud and corruption protocol. This could invoke a counter-fraud investigation which may result in disciplinary proceedings, civil or criminal action and, if appropriate, referral to the employee's professional regulatory body.

If a manager has concerns that an employee may be taking dishonest sick leave, they should refer their concerns confidentially to the local counter-fraud specialist. All concerns referred to the local counter-fraud specialist are dealt in the strictest of confidence. Employees who have concerns about colleagues who may be taking dishonest sick leave should raise these concerns with their line manager or their line manager's line manager.

7 Training Requirements

The human resources team will provide classroom based training at varying intervals for new and existing manager in how to apply the procedure and the relevant legal considerations. Training will be delivered in partnership with our Trade Union stewards.

Managers may access one to one coaching through their designated HR adviser.

When applying this procedure managers are encourage to seek guidance from an HR adviser.

8 Process for monitoring compliance with this Procedure

The Trust will use a variety of methods to monitor compliance with the processes in this document, including some or all of the following methods:

Measurable Policy Objective	Monitoring/ Audit method	Frequency of monitoring	Responsibility for performing the monitoring	Monitoring reported to which groups/ committees, inc responsibility for reviewing action plans
Managers maintain contact with absent employees	Random audit of absent employees to ensure contact is maintained	Annual	Human Resources Director	Executive Management Team
	Management review where required	Ongoing	Line Managers	N/A or HR
Staff with sickness absence exceeding the triggers set in the procedure will be managed according to the procedure	Random audit of return to work to ensure plans documented and implemented	Annual	Individual managers	Management Team
	Management review where required	Ongoing	Line Managers	N/A or HR
Workplace controls or adjustments will be made where required	Health at Work Centre report regarding controls and adjustments required	Annual	HR	Management Team

Measurable Policy Objective	Monitoring/ Audit method	Frequency of monitoring	Responsibility for performing the monitoring	Monitoring reported to which groups/ committees, inc responsibility for reviewing action plans
	at the Trust within a given timeframe.			
	Management review where required	Ongoing	Line Managers	N/A or HR
Sickness absence data will be analysed to enable actions to be taken where required	Reports to directorates/ managers on sickness rates and employees triggering the policy	Monthly	HR	Local Directorate meetings
Overview of performance on the management of sickness absence	Sickness absence data reported Summary of activity	Quarterly Annual	HR Director	Management Team
The Trust will monitor sickness absence against its targets, and as part of its organisational overview of sickness absence.	Workforce report to the Board	Quarterly	HR Director	Board of Directors

In addition to the monitoring arrangements described above the Trust may undertake additional monitoring of this procedure as a response to the identification of any gaps, or as a result of the identification of risks arising from the procedure prompted by incident review, external reviews or other sources of information and advice.

This monitoring may include commissioned audits and reviews, detailed data analysis or another focussed study, for example. Results of this monitoring will be reported to the committee and/or individual responsible for the review of the process and/or the risks identified.

Monitoring at any point may trigger a procedure review if there is evidence that the procedure is unable to meet its stated objectives.

9 References

None

10 Associated documents¹

Employment Appeals Procedure

Disciplinary Procedure

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Workplace Stress Procedure

Tavistock and Portman Counter Fraud Protocol

¹ For the current version of Trust procedures, please refer to the intranet.
Sickness Absence Procedure, v3.2, March 2020

Appendix A : Equality Impact Assessment

Completed by	Craig de Sousa
Position	Director of Human Resources and Corporate Governance
Date	03 April 2019

The following questions determine whether analysis is needed	Yes	No
Does the policy affect service users, employees or the wider community? The relevance of a policy to equality depends not just on the number of those affected but on the significance of the effect on them.	Y	
Is it likely to affect people with particular protected characteristics differently?	Y	
Is it a major policy, significantly affecting how Trust services are delivered?		N
Will the policy have a significant effect on how partner organisations operate in terms of equality?		N
Does the policy relate to functions that have been identified through engagement as being important to people with particular protected characteristics?		N
Does the policy relate to an area with known inequalities?	Y	
Does the policy relate to any equality objectives that have been set by the Trust?	Y	
Other?		N

If the answer to *all* of these questions was no, then the assessment is complete.

If the answer to *any* of the questions was yes, then undertake the following analysis:

	Yes	No	Comment
Do policy outcomes and service take-up differ between people with different protected characteristics?	Y		This policy does potentially impact pregnant women and also individuals with disabilities.
What are the key findings of any engagement you have undertaken?			
If there is a greater effect on one group, is that consistent with the policy aims?	Y		Women and staff with a disability
If the policy has negative effects on people sharing particular characteristics, what steps can be taken to mitigate these effects?			Regular reporting and review of sickness absence data plus monitoring of reasonable adjustments which have been implemented. Statistics will be produced and shared through the quarterly HR board reports.
Will the policy deliver practical benefits for certain groups?		N	
Does the policy miss opportunities to advance equality of opportunity and foster good		N	

relations?			
Do other policies need to change to enable this policy to be effective?		N	
Additional comments			

If one or more answers are yes, then the policy may unlawful under the Equality Act 2010 –seek advice from Human Resources.

Appendix B : Return to Work Form

RETURN TO WORK INTERVIEW

Name:

Post:

Department:

Line manager:

Date(s) of sick leave

Total number of days:

What was the cause of the illness? Did the staff member need to seek doctor's or hospital attention:

Have they suffered from this type of illness before in the past year? If so, when and how long did this last (approx).

Do they feel that they have fully recovered from their illness to return to work?

Is there anything else they would like to tell you, which is affecting their recovery or the likelihood of this illness happening again? Do they feel that there is anything you can do to support them? E.g. referral to the health at work centre or the staff consultation service

(Please note that the HR adviser for your department may also be able to give advice in respect of this).

If appropriate, remember to update the member of staff about work during their absence – eg, work transferred to colleague, new announcements/deadlines, meetings arranged

I confirm that I have not undertaken any other employment, paid or unpaid during the above period of sickness. I understand if I provide false information this may invoke an investigation by the counter-fraud service which may result in disciplinary, civil and or criminal action.

Signature of employee: Date:.....
Signature of line manager:..... Date:.....

Please note that the information on this sheet is likely to be considered as sensitive data and as such needs to be processed under the provisions of the Data Protection Act. Therefore, information contained in this document must be treated as strictly confidential.

Appendix C : Those with the Authority to Dismiss

The following officers hold the authority to dismiss

- Chair
- Directors who are members of the executive management team
- Director of Financial Operations
- Director of Estates, Facilities and Capital Projects
- Divisional Directors