

Agenda item:

Title of meeting: Employment Committee

Date of meeting: 6th January 2015

Subject: Sickness Absence - Quarterly Report

Report by: Jon Bell - Head of HR, Legal & Performance

Wards affected: N/A

Key decision: No

Full Council decision: No

1. Purpose of report

The purpose of this quarterly report is to update and inform Employment Committee on actions being taken that have an effect on the levels of sickness absence across Services.

2. Recommendations

- To continue to monitor sickness absence, on a quarterly basis, and to ensure appropriate management action is taken to address absenteeism.

3. Background

- 3.1** The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) survey states that the average sickness absence rate for the public sector is 7.9 days per person per year. This compares with 5.5 days per person per year in the private sector and 7.4 days per person per year in the voluntary sector.
- 3.2** The annual survey from the Health and Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC) indicates that the NHS Sickness Absence rates were 14.8 average days per person per year in 2013-14.
- 3.3** In the period since the last quarterly update in September 2014 the level of sickness absence has decreased from 8.21 to 7.90 average days per person per year. This is against a corporate target of an average 8 days per person per year.
- 3.4.** Absence levels by Services for the period from 01 December 2013 to 30 November 2014 compared to figures prepared in August 2014 are attached in Appendix 1.

3.5 6 of the 16 Service areas are over the corporate target of an average 8 days per person per year. 3 Services are over 10 days per person per year.

3.6 At the Employment Committee on 16th September 2014 members heard presentations from six heads of services whose sickness absence levels were higher than eight days per year in August 2014.

4. Occupational Health

4.1 There is an ongoing process for managers and HR staff to meet with our provider (NHS) to discuss the service and how both parties can work together to fully utilise the service.

4.2 Fit for Work

Health Management Limited has been appointed to deliver Fit for Work in England and Wales on behalf of the UK Government. Fit for Work provides an occupational health assessment and general health and work advice to employees, employers and General Practitioners (GPs) to help individuals stay in or return to work.

Fit for Work will complement, rather than replace, existing occupational health provision and will fill the gap in support where that currently exists.

We are awaiting further guidance on how this government led provision will dovetail with our existing occupational health supplier.

5 Health and Well Being

5.1 Flu Jabs

Public Health has been co-ordinating the flu jabs vaccination campaign for 2014. The cost of vaccinations has been covered by Services.

The levels of flu jabs uptake by Service for 2014 compared to 2013 is attached in Appendix 2. These figures are still subject to final uptake data from QA.

This year 21.8% of employees, excluding schools, have taken advantage of organised clinics or vouchers. This year has seen an increase from 15.4% employees, excluding schools, who took advantage of the vaccination during the 2013 campaign. This promotion will also assist in working days lost to viral illnesses, especially if there is an increased level of flu infections over the winter.

6. Reasons for recommendations

The continued monitoring of sickness absence and the identification of good management practices is an important part of maximising attendance, which will in turn increase productivity, improve engagement and build resilience.

7. Equality impact assessment (EIA)

A preliminary Equality Impact Assessment has been completed.

8. Legal implications

There are no immediate legal implications arising from this report.

9. Finance comments

There is no significant cashable saving resulting from the reduction in sickness absence. However there will be an improvement in productivity in terms of total days worked.

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Signed by:

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Sickness Absence by Service

Appendix 2: Uptake of flu jabs by Service in 2014

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location
CIPD Sickness Absence Survey	CIPD website
Health and Social Care Information Centre - Absence statistics	HSCIC website

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/ rejected by on

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Signed by: