

# Managing ill-health and sickness absence

Two 90-minute webinars

## Overview

These webinars are designed to provide managers and HR professionals with the knowledge and confidence to manage ill-health and sickness absence fairly and objectively in line with organisational policies. They focus on the importance of supporting employees using a positive and empathic approach as well as the need to take appropriate action to minimise impact at work. The webinars cover a range of topics including how to manage short-term persistent absence and long-term absence. They also cover particularly challenging issues such as managing disability, stress and mental health as well as adjustments to practice in relation to Covid-19 where appropriate.

The first webinar focuses on equipping the fundamentals of managing sickness and ill-health.

The second webinar gives an opportunity to apply the learning from the first webinar to a series of case studies on a range of challenging issues, as well as showing progression through the informal and formal stages of managing sickness. There is an option to extend the webinar to allow participants to prepare and conduct a return to work interview or review meeting in small groups.

## Audience

Anyone in an organisation of any sort with responsibility for managing staff – or with responsibility for advising managers:

- HR professionals
- Line managers

## Special feature

This programme can be tailored to particular settings.

## Expert trainer

This programme was designed and is delivered by **Rosanne Bernard**, our lead trainer in this area. See her profile [here](#).

## **Webinar one**

### **Learning objectives**

On completion of this highly practical session participants will:

- Understand the impact of sickness absence
- Be able to manage ill-health fairly and consistently, engaging with employees throughout
- Understand the key stages of managing sickness and ill-health in line with internal policies
- Be able to manage different types of absence, including short-term and long-term absence
- Have built confidence in managing sensitive issues, eg, disability, stress and mental health

### **Webinar outline**

#### **1 Welcome, agenda, overview**

#### **2 Managing ill-health and sickness absence**

- Balancing supporting employees and minimising impact
- Extent of absence and causes of absence, including presenteeism.
- Key principles and best practice
- Roles and responsibilities – employee / manager / HR / Occupational Health
- Engaging positively with employees

#### **3 Legal requirements**

- Disability and the law
- Unfair dismissals

#### **4 Sickness absence**

- Notification and certification of absence
- Keeping in touch
- Return to work interviews
- Absence for non-sickness related reasons

#### **5 When to take action**

- Monitoring and reporting absence
- Trigger points for absence
- Other considerations and when to get advice

#### **6 Managing short-term absence**

- Informal and formal action
- Getting medical input
- Providing support and adjustments

#### **7 Managing long-term absence**

- Keeping in touch
- Informal reviews and formal action
- Potential to dismiss on capability grounds

#### **8 Challenges**

- Ensuring a consistent approach whilst taking into account individual circumstances
- Adjusting the approach, eg, Covid 19
- Sensitive issues, eg, stress / mental health

#### **9 Action plans and next steps**

## **Webinar two**

### **Learning objectives**

On completion of this highly practical session participants will have built confidence in managing ill-health issues through case study examples. These can be tailored to suit organisational needs and can cover a range of topics as shown below.

### **Webinar outline**

#### **1 Welcome, agenda, overview**

#### **2 Case study 1**

- A progressive case to reinforce key stages within policies
- Consideration of when to escalate
- Brings a mix of short-term and long-term absence related to a potential disability.
- Optional: Preparation and practice of a key element, eg, return to work interview or a review meeting

#### **3 Case study 2**

- Focus on mental health / stress and behaviour at work
- The need to take early action
- Obtaining medical advice with guidance on working with medical / Occupational Health
- Capability and conduct at work

#### **4 Other case studies**

- These can focus on areas most relevant to the audience, eg, physical injury and phased returns; long-term absence and dismissal, etc

#### **5 Open forum**

- Other challenges and questions

#### **6 Action plans and next steps**

For a no-obligation discussion about running these sessions for your organisation on an in-house basis, just give us a call on **01582 463462**.