



Criteria for referral

1. Three **health** related absences in any six month period.
2. Emerging patterns of absence e.g. Mondays and Fridays.
3. Any stress, anxiety or depression related absence. *
4. Any musculo-skeletal related absence. *
5. Any absence exceeding five days with no return to work date identified
6. Any health issues affecting performance at work including workplace accidents.
7. Other concerns about employees

* NB – numbers 3 & 4 are automatic referral to Occupational Health

Criteria for referral

In cases of short-term frequent sickness absence cases, have you:

- Fully investigated the reasons for the absence in a 1 to 1 meeting and documented the outcome?
- Established with the individual that there may be an underlying health condition causing the absence?

You don't have to refer everyone – only where there is a health issue which may cause unforeseen issues, for example:

- Where an employee is going to be off work for a planned absence (e.g. for surgery or treatment in hospital), or
- When someone has been off for more than 5 working days for a short illness (such as flu) but returns to work fully recovered.

If there is an underlying health condition relating to an absence then a referral may be appropriate. If there is not an underlying health condition then the reasons for absence should be managed locally in conjunction with HR.

Other things to check:

- Ensure that the individual has consulted their own GP prior to referral.
- Report any concerns about the workplace to facilities or health and safety.
- Has the individual had an appropriate risk assessment and/or training?

Remember

- Is the referral relevant? If unsure discuss with your site Occupational Health Adviser
- Occupational health is not a GP or treatment service. Appointments must be made.
- Is all documentation complete and correct?
- Don't refer agency staff to Occupational Health (unless they are employees)

Further Information

Keep employee informed of reasons for referral and what questions are being asked and why