



## **Occupational Health Referral - Guidance for Employees (Q & As)**

### **Why am I being referred to Occupational Health (OH)?**

Your manager or employer requires an assessment and opinion about your health and fitness for work. This can be for a variety of reasons, which they will discuss with you, including:-

- If you have developed a health problem which might be work related.
- If you have had a number or repeated short term or recurring health problems.
- If you are on long term sick leave.
- If you are hoping to return to work following sickness absence.
- If your health is affecting your fitness, safety or capability to do your job or some elements of your job.
- If you have a long standing health problem which affects your long term fitness to work
- If ill health retirement is being explored.

### **How long will it take?**

The consultation itself normally lasts between 30 and 45 minutes.

### **Can I bring someone with me?**

The consultation is confidential. We don't mind if you do wish to have the support of a companion but you may wish to discuss this referring manager too. However, your companion would not normally be expected to contribute to the discussion.

### **Do I need to bring anything with me?**

Please bring details of any medication, tests or treatment you are having and / or relevant General Practitioner / specialist appointment details.

### **What questions will I be asked?**

The OH Practitioner (Dr or Nurse) will ask questions about you and your health. This will include information about your current health problems including symptoms, investigations and treatment.

The OH Practitioner will also seek to understand how your health problem affects you in general and your fitness for work. They may need to gather information about previous health problems and general lifestyle where relevant.

### **Will I have a physical examination?**

This depends on the nature of your health problem and why you have been referred.

### **What about confidentiality?**

The information provided to the OH Dr or Nurse will be treated as confidential, as with any other nurse or doctor. Your manager will probably already be aware of the broad



nature of your health problem, e.g. from GP medical certificates or from previous discussions you have had with them. We will only disclose medical information with your prior consent.

### **What information is provided to your manager / HR?**

OH will provide a report to your line manager and/or HR with any recommendations and guidance about your health and fitness for work following the appointment.

Your manager will have asked specific questions and for an OH advice and opinion at the time of the referral.

The OH Practitioner will advise you of the broad outline of the OH management report at the end of your appointment. You will be asked if you would like to see a copy of this before it is sent back to your company.

Additional services such as counselling or physiotherapy may be recommended, dependent on your employer's local arrangements.

A further appointment may be suggested for you to review your progress.

### **Will you need to write to my own GP or Specialist?**

In some cases the OH Practitioner might consider that requesting further medical details from your GP or Specialist will assist in providing the best possible OH advice to management.

In these circumstances your written consent is required before we can write to your General Practitioner / Specialist.

In cases where an application for Ill Health Retirement appears likely, report(s) from your medical practitioners will definitely be required.

You will not be expected to pay for any medical reports requested by us.

### **What happens afterwards?**

Your manager is likely to want to discuss the report provided by the OH Practitioner with you, in particular any recommendations or advice which may help you to continue in work or return to work, for example, to agree a return to work rehabilitation plan with you or some specific adjustments to your job or equipment.

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