



Occupational health  
referral information  
for employees.

The Occupational Health Service is an independent, confidential health service provided by Nuffield Health to support an employee's health at work.

The Occupational Health Service is delivered by a team of health professionals who specialise in occupational medicine; the branch of medicine that deals with the relationship between work and health. Working to high professional standards, you can expect the team to treat all employees courteously and with respect for privacy and dignity.

### **Why have I been referred to the Occupational Health Service?**

Your manager has referred you to the Occupational Health Service because of concerns around your health at work. This may be because you have had several episodes of sickness absence over a period of a few months, or because you are currently off sick. Alternatively, you may be at work but either you or your manager has concerns about your fitness for aspects of your role. If you are not sure why you have been referred, please ask your HR team or manager to clarify this.

### **What information will the Occupational Health (OH) Practitioner need?**

- Details of your current health status;
- Details of your job role;
- Details of any current prescription medication from your doctors;
- Any relevant health information, such as diabetic glucose monitoring diaries, peak flow diaries for asthmatics, mood diaries for psychological disorders if relevant;
- Names of any specialists you are under the care of, and details of any forthcoming outpatient appointments or operation dates awaited;

- If you have had any recent reports of investigations, blood tests, x-rays or scans, it would be very helpful to know if these demonstrated any abnormalities (you may wish to ask your GP about this); and
- Details of when your current medical certificate expires

### **How long does my appointment take?**

Consultations take approximately 30-45 minutes. Please allow yourself enough time to find the medical centre or hospital where your appointment has been arranged. If your consultation is on the telephone, please ensure you are somewhere private and quiet to take the call. Please contact the Nuffield Health Occupational Health Service as soon as possible if you cannot attend or are running late for your appointment.

### **Recording of calls**

If you have a telephone consultation, then this will be recorded for training and audit purposes. If you do not wish your consultation to be recorded, please let your OH clinician know. Recordings are kept for 3 years. This is in line with the NHS Litigation Authority guidance. At the end of this time the call is automatically deleted. If you wish the call to be deleted before this time period, this can be arranged. Voice recordings are not shared outside of the OH team without your informed consent.

### **What happens during my appointment?**

Prior to your assessment, your manager will have written to the OH Practitioner who is due to see you, to explain the circumstances of your referral and, to clarify the questions that the consultation is intended to address. The OH Practitioner may ask you questions about your job role and lifestyle and then they will assess your specific health issues.

A key role of the OH Practitioner is to assess when you may be fit

enough to return to work and if any adaptations are needed to help you work. Sometimes, following a serious illness or because of limitations caused by the nature of the health problem, a rehabilitation plan can be developed with a phased reintroduction to work or changes to duties to help you to work. Any suggested plan has to be discussed and agreed with your manager. Most decisions about your fitness to work can be made at the time of the appointment but occasionally the OH Practitioner may ask your permission to liaise with your treating doctors if further information is required.

### **What does the Occupational Health Service report back to my manager?**

OH Practitioners are bound by professional codes relating to medical confidentiality. This means that your health is not discussed with your manager without your permission. The OH Practitioner will discuss the information that they intend to share with your manager at the appointment. Your manager may wish to share a copy of your report with HR and you will be asked to give consent for this at the appointment.

If you give permission, you have the right to see any report before it is sent to your manager. If you choose to see the report before it is sent this will be e-mailed to you and a response is required within 48 hours. If no comment is received within the timeframe, we will assume that you are in agreement with it and we will forward the report to the named representative of your employer (usually your manager or your HR team). If you do not have access to a personal e-mail account, the report will be posted and you will have 5 days to respond.

Please note that once you have received the report, you can ask for

errors of fact to be changed, but you cannot ask for the professional opinion to be altered. You also have the option of choosing not to see the report before it is sent to your manager, although you retain the right to see it at the same time as your manager or at a later date if you choose. You can withdraw your consent for the report to be sent, but you need to be aware that managers will then make decisions about your ability to work without the benefit of occupational health advice.

### **What happens to my Occupational Health Records?**

Your records are treated with the strictest confidence. Only OH personnel involved in your care will have access to the records. Telephone consultations are recorded for training and monitoring purposes. You will be reminded of this at the beginning of the call. If you would prefer for the consultation not to be recorded, please tell the clinician at the beginning of the call. Telephone consultations are kept for 3 years and written records are kept for 7 years from the date of the last entry. You can make a request to access your OH records at any time – proof of identity will be required and an administration charge could be applied.

**“This means that your health is not discussed with your manager without your permission.”**

## **How to contact the team.**

In the first instance please contact your local OH Adviser either by email or telephone

Further details can be found on the company's intranet page or through your local Human Resources co-ordinator / manager.