Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee

People Management: Sickness Absence Monitoring Report – End of Year 2018/19

13th June 2019

Contents

People Management

Sickness Absence Performance Monitoring Report

End of Year 2018/19

Introduction

The Authority Performance Indicator (PI) for sickness absence measures the number of working days lost due to sickness absence per full time equivalent (FTE) headcount per annum. The target set by Corporate Management Team for improvement for 2018/19 was 9.6 FTE.

In June 2017 departmental targets were also agreed to support a reduction in sickness absence and these targets have been maintained for 2018/19. Both the corporate and departmental targets are monitored half yearly via Corporate Management Team (CMT) and quarterly via Departmental Management Teams (DMT). The targets were calculated by reference to the average Full Time Equivalent (FTE) headcount figure and End of Year (EOY) results over the preceding 3 years less 5%.

What has changed during 2018/19 to date?

It is the responsibility of all DMTs to maintain a high profile on attendance management, monitor performance on a quarterly basis, to set clear expectations of all its managers to manage sickness absence proactively and to foster a healthy working environment that encourages improved attendance from all employees.

From a corporate perspective People Management has focused its energies during 2018/19 on supporting in the following areas:

a) Improved corporate working

Since the start of the Corporate Health and Wellbeing project the Wellbeing Co-ordinators have been working with DMTs and managers to develop wellbeing action plans using qualitative and quantitative data and health and wellbeing information from the specific service areas. The plans have been finalised and implemented and as a consequence health and wellbeing has been prioritised by leaders, managers and staff and a key message at conferences, staff briefings and health events led by each Director.

The data within this full year report demonstrates a reduction in sickness absence rates within the 3 departments funding the initiative with 2 departments meeting performance target. The performance to date will be reviewed by Corporate Management Team and a decision made regarding extension of the funding for the project to remaining departments.

b) Health & Wellbeing Project

Managing the Health and Wellbeing Project which is funded by 3 departments, Communities, Environment and Education & Children. There are currently 2 part time Health and Wellbeing Coordinators each spending 1 day a week in each of the 3 departments.

The Health and Wellbeing project's overall aim is to improve the health and wellbeing of employees by ensuring they have access to health and wellbeing resources and advice. A selection of proposed interventions are being trialled whilst also looking at employees' working environment and how these contribute to an improvement in the overall culture of the department and our organisation towards health and wellbeing.

The effectiveness of the proposed interventions to improve employees' individual health and wellbeing are being monitored to evaluate the impact on overall employee wellbeing, improved productivity and reduction in sickness absence.

As part of this project we have undertaken the following activities:

Corporate

➢ Monthly health promotion initiatives on various health and wellbeing topics to raise awareness and engage employees to think about their own health and wellbeing (27 topics). 10+ events/activities have also been held including breast cancer and ovarian cancer awareness sessions, tea and talk sessions and blood pressure checks around the various offices.
➢ The current network of Health and Wellbeing Champions is being enhanced with expression of interests being received by other employees. An action plan for the recruitment of further champions is being compiled and will be launched over the next 2 months. Champions across the Authority have been organising walks and promoting events. A 'None to Run' running group has been set up in Llanelli that has gone from 5 members of staff to around 25 with several members regularly running outside of the group, doing park runs and entering events when they have never run before.
➢ Health and Wellbeing presentations have been undertaken at various stress management briefings across the departments.
➢ Worked with Estates Manager to supply outdoor seating areas in Parc Dewi Sant for staff.

Targeted

➢ Sickness absence and other data has been analysed and an option paper for determining actions and priorities to improve employee health and wellbeing has been produced for each of the three departments.
➢ A schools options paper is being compiled and will be presented to Education and Children.
➢ Raining the profile of the project through attending various DMTs and Business Management Team (BMT) meetings, People Manager Events, the Corporate

Employee Relations Forum with Trade Unions, Heads of Services and their managers and various teams across the 3 Departments.

➢ Key learning from each project plan will be evaluated and where there are benefits for the wider organisation these will be shared.

➢ Continue working with multidisciplinary teams and business partners to understand qualitative information alongside the quantitative data and to put in place suitable support and interventions, which will ultimately lead to improved attendance.

Environment

➢ Environment option paper produced, presented and agreed at DMT

➢ Property action plan produced and agreed at BMT. Waste and Environmental Services and Business Support Action Plans are in draft.

➢ Stretch and Strength sessions
   o As part of the action plans, stretch and strength sessions have begun in Trostre 3 times a week and Parc Myrddin once a week to target MSDs in operational and office based staff as well as improving mental health within Business Support. The aim of the project is to help staff to stretch out tight muscles and mobilise and strengthen joints to reduce current and future back and joint pain, reduce chance of injuries and delay or even prevent joint issues. This should in turn support staff to remain fit and in work, reduce incidence and duration of sickness, lengthen working lives and enable staff to enjoy a healthy retirement when they chose to retire.
   o Baselines have been undertaken to measure the success of strength sessions with the aim of reducing musculoskeletal absence from work. Outcomes and results reviewed over the next 6 months. So far those attending have found it very beneficial for both their body and mind and are learning techniques they can use outside the sessions. More work needs to be done to ensure the operational staff are attending.
   o One member of staff has noted that they feel better prepared to deal with the working day and manage their time as well as feeling more comfortable during the day as they have stretched. Another noted that it has really helped them with flexibility and comfort, particularly in the shoulders. They are also more aware of their posture now whilst sitting. It has also helped staff change some of their lifestyle habits with one participant noting they eat better on the days they do yoga.
   o One participant stated the sessions have 'helped make me be aware of how I hold myself (posture). As someone who suffers with shoulder and back issues, the weekly sessions help with stretching and strengthening these areas' and 'with a small family at home, I rarely get a chance to switch off and have 'me' time. Yoga has certainly helped, I feel more relaxed. I find the breathing techniques very useful.' Many have noted how they would like the sessions to continue and one said: 'A really helpful and well delivered initiative and very positive approach from our employer.'

➢ Back and joint pain leaflets have been produced and distributed to cleaners via their supervisors.

- Other actions have been agreed which will be implemented over the next 6 months such as a Supervision Action Learning Set across the Department, attendance at tool box talks and stretch sheets for operational staff.
- Health Days across 5 key Environment sites were attended where health checks to include blood pressure, cholesterol and glucose testing have been undertaken on 190 employees and healthy lifestyle measurements and advice was given. Several staff attend each time and use it as a good marker to measure their health and wellbeing. Many staff attending where attempting to make positive lifestyle changes.

Communities

- Following the Communities Options paper, a Pilot Project was developed to trial targeted interventions with individuals in job roles with higher rates of sickness absence.
- The Health and Wellbeing (H&WB) Pilot Study is part of the Communities departments drive to help improve the health and wellbeing of our employees. The aim is to provide employees within the pilot study to have access to H&WB resources and professional advice that will enable them to work healthier and happier. The desired outcome of the study is to prove that with regular targeted H&WB interventions employees can improve their feeling of wellness, both physically and mentally whilst in work and at home in a sustainable way. Eventually it is hoped that we will be able to extend the study and roll out the interventions to all employees within the department.
- 5 service areas were chosen based on sickness absence data and to lead by example: one care home, one domiciliary care team, DMT plus other managers, a group of business support staff and one day care centre. In all, 95 employees received baseline lifestyle readings and set lifestyle goals. Feedback from staff during and following the baselines was positive once the process had been explained fully. It was also agreed for each team to try and have a team level goal such as 'a daily mile'. 3 months in to the project, each employee has been loaned a Garmin activity tracker. Reviews are also underway to provide an update on how staff are getting on and review their goals. Readings will be monitored over the next 6 months.
- Results so far has been very positive. Generally staff are being more active, particularly walking more at lunch times or at home and although some have not lost weight, have reduced cm off their waist. Some have lost a significant amount of weight. Most staff can also now do more sit-stands meaning their leg strength and endurance has improved. All of this will help to reduce risks of serious health issues and functional mobility issues.
- Some staff have even highlighted how it has completely changed their life. One member of staff has developed from having evenings of complete exhaustion and low mood to feelings of control and energy. Another member of staff has lost a significant amount of weight that has both dropped their blood pressure and almost completely alleviated their hip pain. Several staff have noted that just by saying their current lifestyle out loud has made it real and pushed them to make changes. One participant said 'I feel that this project has definitely made me more aware of how active I need to be and that the small changes in your lifestyle can make a big

difference' and 'I feel like since I have been signed up to the project I am trying to be more active and eating healthier'. Another said 'the sports band has given me the option to track my steps and reminded me to move more frequently rather than sitting at the desk for long periods'. Some participants were waiting for the Garmin's before they made changes and so we will likely see their improvements in the next review.

➢ Feedback and recommendations are gathered from staff and discussed with management in order to link in to the projects overall objectives of improving individual staff wellbeing, the working environment and the overall culture of the organisation, and the departments towards health and wellbeing.

➢ Have also attended Communities' Staff Events which was focussed on Wellbeing.

Education & Children's Services

➢ Education & Children option paper has been presented to DMT and follow up meetings have been undertaken with Access to Education and Children's Services. Meetings are currently being planned with some on their managers and teams with the highest sickness absence to discuss and start drafting action plans.

➢ A joint meeting was held between Catering and Cleaning to see whether there were any way of working to support these staff with similar challenges.

➢ Health and Wellbeing group set up for schools and first meeting undertaken.

➢ Attendance and presentations at Primary and Secondary Heads meetings and healthy schools conferences.

➢ Health and Wellbeing presentation was carried out to New and Acting Heads.

➢ Meetings held with special schools to discuss the Health & Wellbeing project going forward.

➢ Meeting held with some Head teachers who have implemented positive wellbeing initiatives so that good practice can be shared.

➢ Health checks undertaken in some schools

➢ Collecting information on staff who have expressed an interest in becoming Health and Wellbeing Champions within Schools.

c) <u>Mental Health Awareness</u>

To support managers in managing staff attendance funding streams have now been secured to roll out mental health awareness to managers and employees to supplement the existing e-learning modules. This includes funding via trades unions Wales Union Learning Fund (WULF), corporate funding and grant funding for the following:

- Mental Health First Aid Training; 3 levels of training, suitable for staff across all departments;
- Managing Mental Health in the Workplace briefings; for our people managers;
- Mental Health Co-ordinator to develop a project delivery and sustainable development plan prioritising CCCs high risk areas in the first instance. Funded for 12 months to raise the profile of the support and initiatives,

coordinate staff awareness events, communicate to all staff groups, develop resources and signposting.

Recent discussions with Regional Trades Unions WULF Representatives have been very positive and are supportive of the Council's strategic and integrated approach to tackling mental health in the workplace. They have confirmed their intention to recommend the Carmarthenshire model to Welsh Government as a model of best practice for other authorities to emulate.

d) Review of the Sickness Absence Policy and Procedures

The Sickness Absence Management Policy is currently under review and in draft pending discussion and consultation with key managers via a Customer Experience Group. Their feedback will be considered alongside feedback from our recognised Trades Unions and P&R Scrutiny Members to finalise the policy for recommendation to Corporate Management Team and Executive Board for adoption.

e) Attendance Management briefings for managers

The content of the Attendance Management briefing is currently under review as part of the review of the Sickness Absence Policy. Whilst ad hoc briefings continue to be delivered to managers and Head Teachers, once the revised policy is adopted, a rolling programme of briefings will be launched to support managers and Head Teachers with their understanding of any key policy and procedural changes.

f) Challenge & Review Attendance Forum

Continuing support to the 'Challenge & Review (C&R) Attendance Forum', chaired by the Deputy Leader Cllr. Mair Stephens and attended by Cllr. Giles Morgan, Chair of P&R Committee. The aim of the forum is to provide challenge and support to Heads of Service and Senior Managers to maintain a high profile on attendance management, to discuss performance in relation to sickness absence and what strategies have been or could be utilised to seek improvement.

Of the 22 Heads of Service and Senior Managers invited to attend, the forum has met with 14 to discuss performance in relation to sickness absence to maintain progress and profile of positive attendance management. The next forums are scheduled for 11th and 26th June 2019.

g) Resourcelink Reporting Service (RRS)

We are in the process of developing a new reporting tool within Resourcelink known as RRS. This tool will provide the facility for all users to run reports direct from My View (our online employee system). The reports will therefore be available to Managers on demand and be based on real time data. Attendance management information is an essential part of the suite of reports that will be available via this system. These reports are therefore being prioritised for inclusion. We aim to conduct pilot tests over the next few months with a view to full implementation by the end of the year. Once available it will provide a valuable additional source for sickness absence data to supplement our performance management information.

h) Disability Confidence

Maintained CCCs accreditation as a Disability Confident Employer for a third year which provides a commitment to supporting applicants and employees with a disability in gaining and maintain employment.

i) Purchase of Additional Annual Leave Scheme

The Purchase of Additional Annual Leave Scheme was adopted by Executive Board on 1st April 2019 and the People Management team are currently developing the application and eligibility checking procedures plus translating documents prior to launching to the organisation.

By introducing this scheme the Authority will generate salary and employers national insurance savings in a creative and financially manageable way whilst complementing the range of supportive policies and benefits available to employees. This scheme will assist employees in balancing work and home life by providing greater flexibility in respect of planned time off work and may contribute to a reduction in levels of sickness absence as experienced by other local authorities who have implemented a purchase of additional leave policy.

There may be instances for example where a member of staff:
- is planning a special event or trip;
- would benefit from additional leave to balance personal circumstances, eg. caring responsibilities at a particular time;
- simply would like more annual leave.

This scheme does not replace or restrict the discretion of line managers to grant paid or unpaid leave in line with the provisions of the Time Off Policy or other flexible working policies and procedures.

j) Employee Wellbeing Employee & Managers Guides to the Menopause

People Management has recently launched supportive guidance for women and guidance for managers on how to support women through the menopause. Whilst the menopause is a normal transitionary period for women the symptoms can be wide ranging, sometimes embarrassing and uncomfortable. These guides have been developed to enable healthy conversations in the workplace to normalise this time in a woman's life and to enable practical adjustments to be made to the workplace to make life easier. For some women symptoms can be severe and disabling and may impact on attendance but with the range of adjustments that can be considered and accommodated reduce the impact on individuals and support positive attendance.

k) Maternity & Paternity Leave Policies (Premature Birth)

People Management is currently reviewing its Maternity and Paternity Policies to consider how it can support the 'Employer with a Heart' pledge being promoted by

'The Smallest Things', a charity supporting parents who experience premature birth. Currently, maternity leave commences the day after the birth of a premature baby rather than the date planned. Some premature babies may be hospitalised as a consequence leaving parents spending the start of what should be a joyous time by the side of their baby in a hospital environment. The pledge encourages employers to enhance maternity and parental leave and pay provisions in these circumstances and extend maternity and paternity pay provisions by one week for each week a premature baby is hospitalised prior to the planned start date. This will support employees' under such circumstances during what is an emotional and also financially challenging period due to additional expenses incurred during a period of hospitalisation. Also, 40% of mothers experience post-natal depression following neonatal intensive care, compared to 5-10% of mothers who give birth without complication at full term, with more reporting symptoms of PTSD such as anxiety and flashbacks. By being a supporting employer and alleviating some of the anxieties this may go some way towards alleviating the impact, maintaining employee wellbeing when planning a return to work and reducing the incidence of sickness absence.

l) Stress Management briefings for managers
Continued the role out of stress management briefings to managers using the Health & Safety Executive Stress Management Tool and linking in with Sickness Absence and Management of Mental Health policies. Focus over the last six months has been supporting managers in Information Technology, Regeneration and Policy and preparation for delivery within Environment.

m) Schools' Staff Absence Scheme (SSAS)
Continued promotion of the SSAS to all primary schools and proactive support and advice to Head teachers and Chairs to ensure compliance with Schools' Model Attendance policies and procedures.

90 CCC primary schools now participate in the scheme and the attendance team maintain regular communication with those that are yet to join to encourage their participation. This compares to 60 original entrants in 2017/18 and 78 during 2018/19.

n) Performance management information
Maintained the provision of improved performance management information, benchmarking and ranking data, and summaries of main reasons for absence at an authority, departmental, divisional and team level, all school, primary, secondary and secondary school level to inform CMT, DMTs, BMT's and Governing Bodies to enable improved performance monitoring an action planning.

HR Business Partners continue to discuss performance management information at Departmental Management Teams, Primary and Secondary Head Teachers' meetings and offer support and advice to agreed appropriate actions for improvement.

<u>Has this made a difference?</u>

Performance indicates that 2 departments have met their 2018/19 End of Year (EOY) target. As the agreed targets have been set to support a reduction against previous 3 year average performance by 5%, 2018/19 EOY result should ideally be below EOY targets for all departments.

However, the EOY figure for the whole Authority of 9.83 is below the 2017/18 EOY result of 10.15. There has been a decrease of 0.32 FTE days lost by average employee FTE headcount indicating a continuing downward trend. (see Table 1).

Table 1: Departmental performance ranking Q4 EOY 2018/19

Department	Average Employee FTE Headcount	Short Term Lost FTE Days	Long Term Lost FTE Days	Total Lost FTE Days	FTE Days Lost by Average Employee FTE Headcount	Ranking	2017-18 Q4 Performance		Target	On Target?
Corporate Services	207.9	631.80	817.20	1449.0	7.0	1	6.1	0.9	6.3	No
Chief Executives incl Regen & Policy	410.0	1500.7	1505.4	3006.1	7.3	2	7.9	-0.6	6.9	No
Education & Children	3231.5	12631.50	16332.80	28964.3	9.0	3	9.1	-0.1	9.0	Yes
Communities	1342.6	6076.60	9015.20	15091.8	11.2	4	12.6	-1.4	11.6	Yes
Environment	894.3	3561.70	7197.60	10759.3	12.0	5	12.2	-0.2	11.2	No
Authority Total	**6073.3**	**24599.7**	**35095.1**	**59694.8**	**9.83**		10.15	-0.32	9.63	No

Table 2: Average number of days lost per FTE – whole Authority

Following the launch of the Sickness Absence policy and targeted interventions there was a marked reduction in 2014/15. This increased slightly during 2015/16 and 2016/17. Q4 2017/18 result indicated a continuing downward trend following introduction of greater accountability of sickness absence performance established through the Sickness Absence Management Framework and targeted interventions as reported at end of year. Cumulative results at Q4 EOY 2018/19 demonstrates a sustained continuing downward trend.

Average Number of days lost per FTE
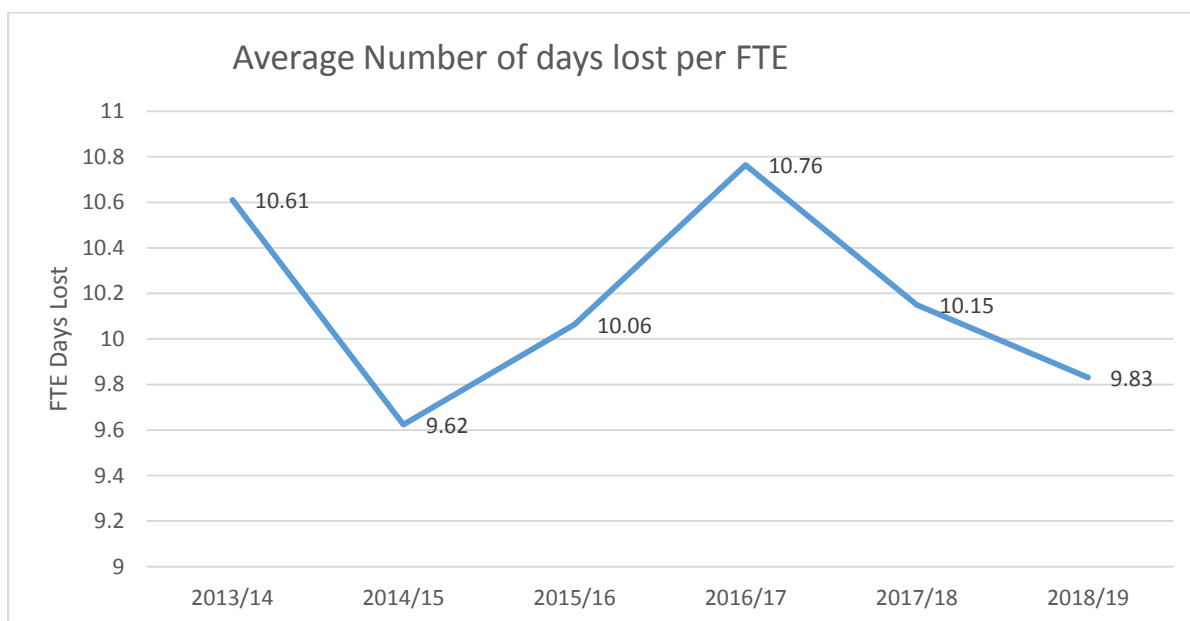
It is evident that where Heads of Service have been proactive and set clear expectations in relation to positive attendance management that improvements have been made. Whilst this forum has previously focused on those divisions where performance was in the lowest quartile, all Heads of Service need to ensure they maintain the profile of positive attendance management, set clear expectations with their managers and monitor consistency of application of the authority's Sickness Absence Policy and procedures. All Heads of Service have either attended or received invitations to attend the forum to discuss divisional progress to ensure all services are contributing towards a reduction in the level of absence. The Heads of Service for each of service areas below have provided a report on performance and progress against for review by the Deputy Leader and Chair of P&R Scrutiny Committee.

Division	Average Employee FTE Headcount	Short Term Lost FTE Days	Long Term Lost FTE Days	Total Lost FTE Days	FTE Days Lost by Average Employee FTE Headcount	Performance 2017/18	Difference in year on year figures
Homes & Safer Communities	597.6	2660.4	4261.9	6922.3	11.6	13.8	-2.2
Property	286.7	1124.0	2677.5	3801.5	13.3	11.9	1.4
Waste and Environmental Services	186.6	927.6	1793.5	2721.1	14.6	16.7	-2.1
Information Technology	65.0	310.6	586.6	897.2	13.8	9.9	3.9
Access to Education	180.3	750.2	1584.7	2334.9	12.9	12.8	0.1
Curriculum & Wellbeing	121.1	490.6	631.7	1122.3	9.3	8.7	0.5
Education Services	98.4	352.4	458.6	811.0	8.2	10.8	-2.6
Leisure	229.8	835.4	1744.5	2579.9	11.2	10.6	0.6
Planning	76.7	206.4	208.0	414.4	5.4	5.2	0.2
Integrated Services	125.5	575.8	394.0	969.8	7.7	10.5	-2.8
Regeneration & Policy	202.2	868.9	688.2	1557.1	7.7	7.8	-0.1
People Management	85.1	362.0	417.7	779.7	9.2	7.6	1.5
Authority	**6073.3**	**24599.7**	**35095.1**	**59694.8**	**9.83**	**10.15**	**-0.32**

The table below compares the performance of CCCs primary, secondary and special schools between 2017/18 and 2018/19. There is a reduction of 0.4 FTE days lost by average FTE headcount in the secondary sector and 5.6 in the special school sector which are significant reductions. Unfortunately there has been an increase of 0.5 FTE days in the primary school sector, however there has been improved recording and reporting of sickness in this area as a consequence of the work of the Schools' Staff Absence Scheme so we are now more confident that this is a true reflection of the absence level within this sector. The People Management Division continued to support schools during 2018/19 to secure continued and sustained improvement.

Division	Average Employee FTE Headcount	Short Term Lost FTE Days	Long Term Lost FTE Days	Total Lost FTE Days	FTE Days Lost by Average Employee FTE Headcount	Performance 2017/18	Difference in year on year figures
Secondary Schools	1035.1	4151.8	4132.2	8284.0	8.0	8.4	-0.4
Primary Schools	1304.9	4442.1	6723.0	11165.1	8.6	8.0	0.5
Special Schools	92.0	669.2	513.4	1182.6	12.8	18.4	-5.6

Table 5: Departmental Analysis

When departmental performance is compared to that of the previous year (Table 1) it can be seen that performance has improved the most within Communities Department where a reduction of 1.4 days has been achieved. In fact a reduction of between 1.4 and 0.1 days in 5 departments and an increase in 2 departments.

Average Number of days lost per FTE
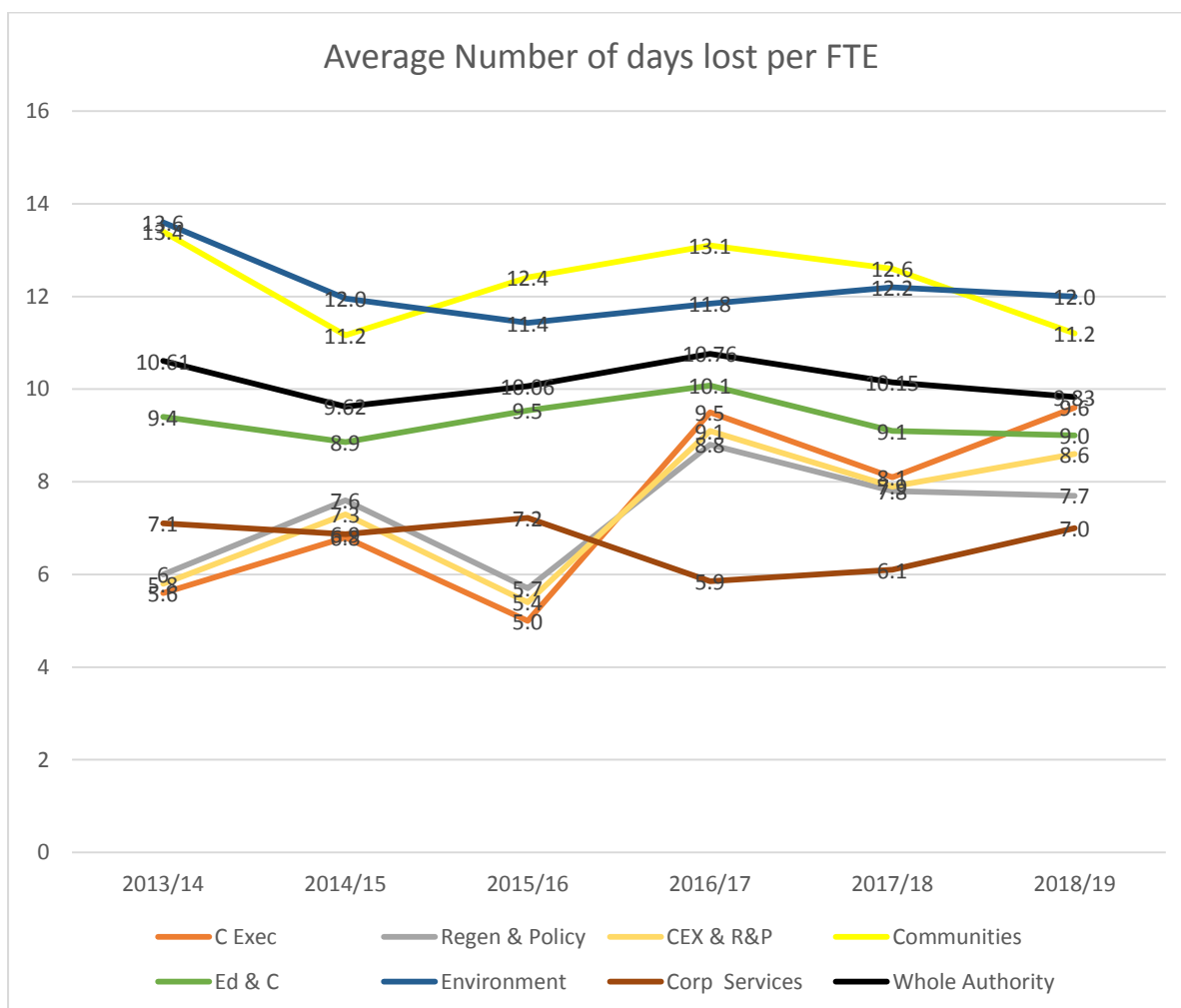
The service areas with the greatest variance (decrease - /increase +) compared to 2017/18 are:

Department	Division	Difference
Environment	Business Support & Performance	-7.0
Education & Children	Special Schools	-5.6
Regeneration & Policy	Media and Marketing	-3.9
Communities	Integrated Services	-2.8
Communities	Business Support & Service Improvement	-2.8
Chief Executives	Information Technology	3.9
Chief Executives	People Management	1.5
Environment	Property	1.4
Corporate Services	Revenues and Financial Compliance	1.1

* *Service areas listed above are those with over 50 FTE*

Table 6: Cost of Absence

The table below illustrates the cumulative cost of occupational sick pay for Q1 to Q4 since 2016/17. This excludes additional costs that may be incurred by divisions as a consequence in particular those delivering e.g. Overtime costs, agency costs; other replacement costs.

Occupational Sick Payments (OSP)

Department	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Chief Executives	£190,654	£167,000	£192,582
Communities	£1,614,757	£1,641,795	£1,454,597
Corporate Services	£117,063	£97,025	£117,532
Education & Children*	£3,510,511	£3,149,773	£3,279,935
Environment	£832,911	£881,966	£915,161
Regeneration & Policy	£176,695	£148,464	£147,427
Total	**£6,442,590**	**£6,086,022**	**£6,107,234**

Including schools

Table 7: Occupational Health Appointment Data

Fig.1

Number of Employees seen at the Occupational Health Centre			
	Number of Employees Attended Q4 Cumulative		
Department	**2016/2017**	**2017/2018**	**2018/2019**
Chief Executives	85	91	107
Communities	654	653	741
Corporate Services	66	56	44
Environment	763	997	1001
Education & Children	571	643	748
Regeneration & Policy	10	23	31
External	281	301	472
Total	**2430**	**2764**	**3148**

The table above indicates the number of employees being referred and supported by the Employee Wellbeing Centre. Each employee will attend at least one appointment with either the Occupational Health Advisor or Physician. Depending on the recommendations made, a proportion will be offered a further referral for an Initial Assessment to the Wellbeing Support Service and supported using a range of interventions and strategies which may include: CBT / CBT informed approach, counselling/active listening, coping skills and problem solving. If they are accepted to the service they are then offered up to a further 6 sessions (these further sessions/appointments are not included in the table below above)

As can be illustrated by the data above (Fig.1) there has been a 13.9% increase in the total number of employees seen at the Centre in Q4 2018/19 compared to Q4 2017/18

The totals include Statutory Health Surveillance appointments to the nurse.

New Employment Questionnaire screens and Night Worker Questionnaire screens by the nurse are not included in the totals. Teachers' pension administration by the practitioners are also not included.

Fig.2

Number of Appointments Attended at the Occupational Health Centre			
	Number of Appointments Q4 Cumulative		
Department	**2016/2017**	**2017/2018**	**2018/2019**
Chief Executives	144	136	200
Communities	920	1038	1201
Corporate Services	120	103	59
Environment	705	991	940
Education & Children	1071	1168	1641
Regeneration & Policy	7	46	63
External	263	280	431
Total	**3230**	**3765**	**4535**

The table above indicates the total number of Appointments attended at the Occupational Health Centre. These further sessions referenced above **are** included in the table above (Fig.2).

The totals include Statutory Health Surveillance appointments to the nurse.

As can be illustrated by the data above (Fig.2) there has been a 20.45% increase in the total number of appointments to the Employee Wellbeing Centre.

Appointments Attended – Reason breakdown:

Figures 3, 4 and 5 below show a breakdown of the reasons by number of employees that have attended the Employee Wellbeing Centre.

Fig. 3

Breakdown: Total Number of Appointments Attended the Occupational Health Centre Q4 Cumulative 2016/2017						
	Appointment Reason					
Department	**OHA**	**OHP**	**All WSS Appts**	**H/S**	***Other**	**Totals (1185)**
Chief Executives	34	17	89	1	3	144
Communities	222	134	496	36	32	920
Corporate Services	25	16	74	0	5	120
Environment	77	77	121	413	17	705
Education & Children	169	117	760	1	24	1071
Regeneration & Policy	4	3	0	0	0	7
External	65	70	51	61	16	263
Total	**596**	**434**	**1591**	**512**	**97**	**3230**

Fig.4

Breakdown: Total Number of Appointments Attended the Occupational Health Centre Q4 Cumulative 2017/2018						
	Appointment Reason					
Department	**OHA**	**OHP**	**All WSS Appts**	**H/S**	***Other**	**Totals**
Chief Executives	31	24	79	0	2	**136**
Communities	224	126	591	29	68	**1038**
Corporate Services	16	12	68	0	7	**103**
Environment	112	82	250	520	27	**991**
Education & Children	243	120	750	0	55	**1168**
Regeneration & Policy	9	6	30	0	1	**46**
External	55	55	56	93	21	**280**
Total	**690**	**425**	**1824**	**642**	**181**	**3765**

Fig.5

Breakdown: Total Number of Appointments Attended the Occupational Health Centre Q4 Cumulative 2018/2019						
	Appointment Reason					
Department	**OHA**	**OHP**	**All WSS Appts**	**H/S**	***Other**	**Total (1626)**
Chief Executives	39	24	132	0	5	**200**
Communities	255	136	747	24	39	**1201**
Corporate Services	14	8	29	0	8	**59**
Environment	115	109	194	493	29	**940**
Education & Children	244	107	1255	3	32	**1641**
Regeneration & Policy	7	5	48	1	2	**63**
External	112	95	101	98	25	**431**
Total	**786**	**484**	**2506**	**619**	**140**	**4535**

*These appointments include: Chair Assessments, Ill Health Retirement Appointments with the pensions doctor, Case Conference

Table 8: Number of employees dismissed on the grounds of capability (health)

Valuing our employees by supporting good health and wellbeing is one of the authority's core values. There is much research to demonstrate that attendance at work contributes to positive health and wellbeing. The authority aims to support its employees by providing a safe and healthy workplace and promoting a culture where regular attendance can be expected of all. Absence from work is unlikely to be a positive experience for the absent employee(s) or his / her colleagues, so the authority actively manages and supports those employees who experience ill health during their employment in line with its Sickness Absence Management policy.

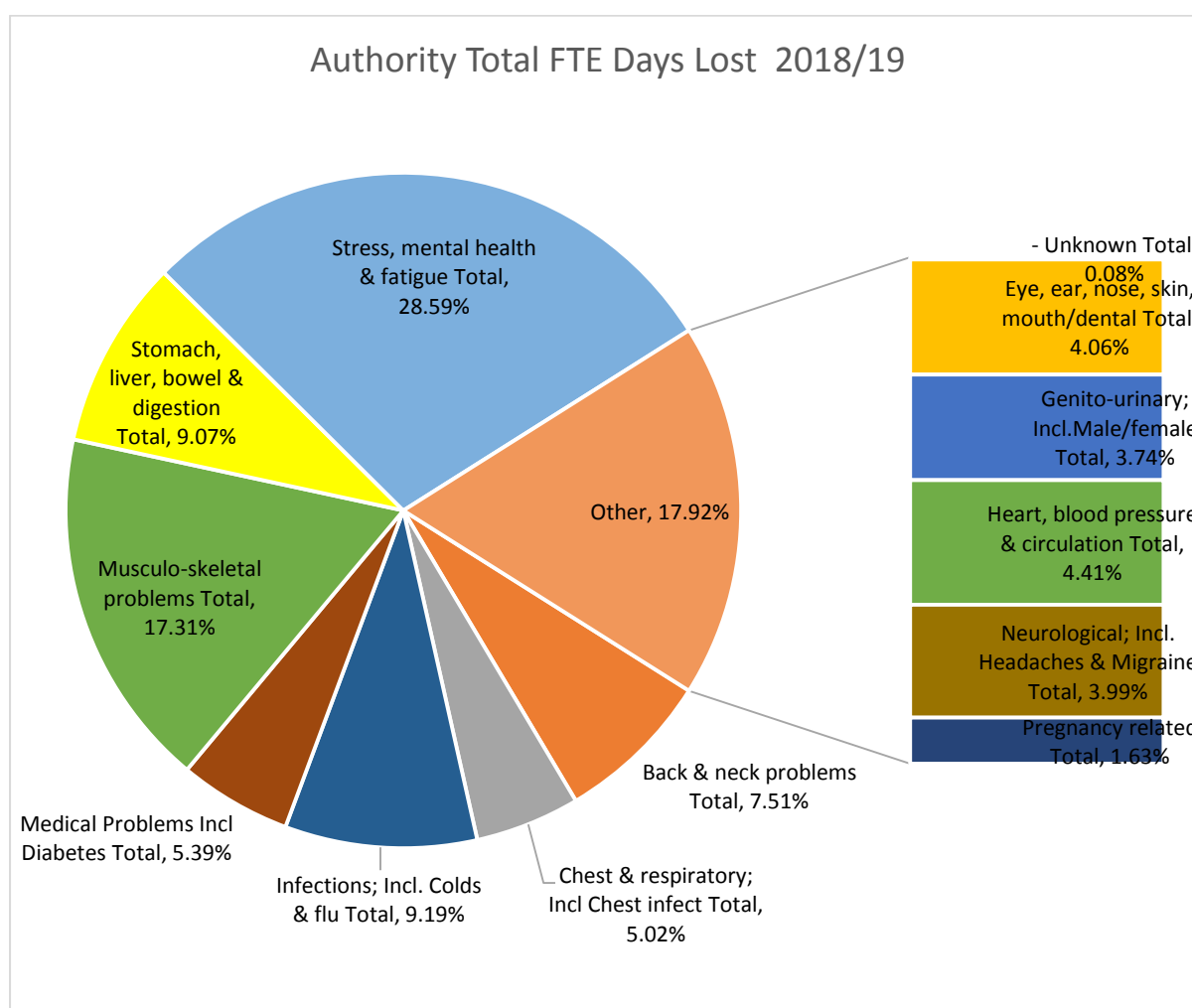However, there are occasions where an employee cannot be supported back to work to his/her substantive role or redeployed into suitable alternative employment due to the nature of the illness or condition and in such circumstances an employee will be dismissed on the grounds of capability (health). Table 8 below details the number of employees that have been dismissed on the grounds of capability (health) over the last four years:

	2015/16 EOY	2016/17 EOY	2017/18 EOY	2018/19 EOY
Total	70	59	69	63

Table 9: Causes of absence – half year cumulative Q4 EOY 2018/19

Stress, mental health & fatigue is the most common cause of absence within the authority (29%) followed by musculoskeletal problems (17.3%). Other reasons for absence are as detailed within the pie chart below and will vary from one reporting period due to seasonal variations, e.g. infections - including colds & flu (9.19%) compared to (11%) at end of year 2017/18 and this will impact on percentage variations between reporting periods.

Whilst stress, mental health & fatigue is the main cause of absence within CCC and an area of significant concern, the level of absence for this reason is comparable with other public sector organisations including health, education and civil service.

Authority Total FTE Days Lost 2018/19

Stress, mental health & fatigue Total, 28.59%
Stomach, liver, bowel & digestion Total, 9.07%
Musculo-skeletal problems Total, 17.31%
Medical Problems Incl Diabetes Total, 5.39%
Infections; Incl. Colds & flu Total, 9.19%
Chest & respiratory; Incl Chest infect Total, 5.02%
Back & neck problems Total, 7.51%
Other, 17.92%
- Unknown Total, 0.08%
Eye, ear, nose, skin, mouth/dental Total, 4.06%
Genito-urinary; Incl.Male/female Total, 3.74%
Heart, blood pressure & circulation Total, 4.41%
Neurological; Incl. Headaches & Migraine Total, 3.99%
Pregnancy related Total, 1.63%

Carmarthenshire directly employs approximately 7,820 employees in a range of occupations including catering, cleaning, residential / domiciliary care, refuse and leisure services. In many of the local authorities listed below these services are contracted outside of the authority and therefore not included in the respective calculations. It should be noted that, according to benchmarking figures, these occupations generally have higher sickness absence rates either due to the physical nature of the work or being more susceptible to illness due to interaction with service users/customers.

It should also be noted that the actual make up of local government reported sickness figures can also vary considerably i.e. first 3 days removed, long term sickness removed; Carmarthenshire County Council include both.

All Wales Comparative benchmarking data for 2018/19 will be published once audited in September 2019. As previously reported comparisons of end of year results 2017/18 indicated that Carmarthenshire had improved its ranking position from 14th to 12th and is currently median in the table compared to 3rd quartile at end of year in 2016/17. Early indication of unaudited results for EOY 2018/19 indicate a continue all Wales improvement and movement towards the upper quartile.

Local Authority	EOY 2017/18		EOY 2016/17	
Merthyr Tydfil	7.8		5.5	↓
Denbighshire	8.4		8.7	↑
Gwynedd	8.7		9.0	↑
Flintshire	8.9		9.8	↑
Neath Port Talbot	9.5		9.9	↑
Powys	**9.7**	Upper quartile	9.0	↓
Conwy	9.7		11.3	↑
Isle of Anglesey	10.0		9.8	↓
Carmarthenshire	**10.1**	Median	10.8	↑
The Vale of Glamorgan	10.1		8.8	↓
Newport	10.1		9.8	↓
Pembrokeshire	10.2		10.5	↑
Swansea	10.8		9.7	↓
Bridgend	10.8		10.7	↓
Wrexham	**10.9**	Lower quartile	11.3	↑
Monmouthshire	10.9		11.5	↑
Torfaen	11.1		10.8	↓
Blaenau Gwent	11.2		12.5	↑
Cardiff	11.3		10.8	↓
Caerphilly	12.3		12.2	↓
Ceredigion	13.6		10.4	↓
Rhondda Cynon Taf	-		-	

Benchmarking with English Unitary Authorities 2016/17 (This is the still the latest data available)

Sickness absence FTE days per employee - Rationale:

This indicator is collected through the Local Government Workforce Survey conducted in England between June and September each year. The question is: 'Please complete the following table and provide the sickness absence rate for the current financial year?';

- The sickness absence calculation includes all staff (including school based support staff), but <u>excludes</u> teachers. The performance indicator reported by the 22 authorities within Wales <u>includes</u> teachers.
- During 2016/17 25 of 52 English Unitary Authorities participated in the survey question relating to sickness absence;
- The average number of days lost per FTE published for 2016/17 was 9.7 per employee. 2017/18 figures are not yet published.
- This compares to 9.0 in 2015/16 and 9.5 in 2016/17 illustrating declining performance in England over the last three years.

Table 11: Sector comparisons by percentage working time lost v FTE days lost

XpertHR is a reference tool for HR professionals with information on compliance, legislation, best practice and benchmarking. It undertakes annual benchmarking exercises on sickness absence rates and costs, and focuses on absence figures according to industry, organisation size and sector.

The latest survey results was conducted in 2016 and published in 2017 and approximately 600 employers participated from all industry sectors. 2018 data is pending publication and will be reported in 2018/19 half year report.

Among the survey respondents that provided data on absence rates, the national average stood at 2.8% of working time in 2016, equivalent to 6.3 days per employee.

When broken down by sector survey respondents, the national average for the public sector stood at 3.8% of working time in 2016, equivalent to 8.6 days per employee with local government averaging at 4%, equivalent to 9.0 days per employee.

In terms of Carmarthenshire, our end of year 2018/19 figure of 9.83 FTE days lost per employee as a percentage of working time lost is 4.35%.

Within the published data there are sector and occupational differences illustrated. The table below attempts to match similar occupational groups to similar divisions and service areas within the Authority.

Private, public and	Average days lost	Similar occupational	End of Year	2018/19

non-profit sector comparators	per employee per year	group within CCC	2017/18	cumulative Q4
Care services/ Housing association	11.3 7.9	Homes and Safer Communities (includes Care & Support)	13.8	11.6
IT services	4.0	Information Technology	9.9	13.8
Transport distribution & storage	7.8	Transportation & Highways	10.6	11.3
Hotels, catering and leisure	5.3	Access to Education (includes Catering) Leisure	12.8 10.6	12.9 11.2
Professional Services (accountancy, advertising, consultancy)	5.9	Finance Revenues & Compliance People Management Admin & Law	5.0 7.2 7.6 6.5	5.7 8.3 9.2 4.5
Media (Broadcasting and Publishing)	4.4	Media and Marketing	13.2	9.4