

# Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee

## People Management: Sickness Absence Monitoring Report – Half year 2019/20

2<sup>nd</sup> December 2019



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2018



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## **People Management**

### **Sickness Absence Performance Monitoring Report**

#### **Half year 2019/20**

##### **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 2019/2020 is 9.63 FTE.

In June 2017 departmental targets were also agreed to support a reduction in sickness absence and these targets have been maintained for 2019/20. 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 2019/20 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 to date during 2019/20 supporting in the following areas:

##### **a. Improved corporate working**

Since the start of the Corporate Health and Wellbeing project the Wellbeing Coordinators 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 half year report demonstrates an increase in sickness absence rates within 2 out of the 3 departments funding the initiative with no departments meeting performance target.

##### **b. Health & Wellbeing Project**

The Health and Wellbeing Project which is funded by 3 departments, Communities, Environment and Education & Children. There are now two Health and Wellbeing Coordinators, one part-time who has been spending one day a week on each of the

three departments and funding has been agreed to extend the project for two years and will cover all 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**

- The current network of volunteer Health and Wellbeing Champions has now gone from 15 to 50 champions being recruited across the authority. The official launch of these new champions was made by the Chief Executive on the 19<sup>th</sup> November.
- The Champions have attended a day's induction training session where they covered health topics such as Physical Activity, Nutrition, Smoking and Alcohol; MECC training which equips them to have effective conversations with colleagues relating to their health and wellbeing. The Champions across the Authority continue to be directed by the Health and Wellbeing Coordinators working from the health events calendar to promote and raise awareness of various monthly health topics.
- Since the last report the authority's champions have continued to assist with the delivery of wellbeing initiatives across the authority, 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. Additional walking/ running groups have started up and are regularly occurring across the authority in locations such as Parc Myrddin, Spilman Street and Ty Elwyn/Llanelli Town Hall. They have also facilitated events such as fruit smoothie taster sessions, Cycle to Work day activities, healthy eating days, and a 'Let's Talk About Menopause' session. We have also shared our good practice Menopause Guides for Managers and Employees with our HRD colleagues via the WLGA
- Health and Wellbeing presentations have been undertaken at various 'Stress and Mental Health Management' briefings across the departments.
- Monthly health promotion initiatives on various health and wellbeing topics to raise awareness and engage employees to think about their own health and wellbeing. Blood pressure checks, Breast Cancer awareness sessions, Ovarian Cancer awareness sessions, Tea & Talk Mental Health awareness sessions, walking/step challenges and hydration challenges have all been organised and

delivered to coincide with health promotion awareness days/months. Prostate Cancer awareness talks have also been arranged during November.

- Health and wellbeing presentations have been delivered as part of the IOSH course.
- A corporate Wellbeing questionnaire has been produced and will be promoted to all employees. Working with the Corporate Management Team, results of this will be reviewed and analysed.
- General health and wellbeing presentations have been delivered to both Audit and Procurement teams.

### **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.
- Raising 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.
- Some work has commenced in other departments as mentioned above.
- 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 & Environmental Services Action Plan discussed at BMT, recommendations for changes made and will be taken back to BMT.
- Highways & Transport Action Plan drafted and discussed with Head of Service, draft to be taken to BMT for discussion.
- Draft Environment Action Plan produced and sent to Director.
- Business Support Action Plans are in draft.
- As part of the action plans, stretch and strength sessions began in Trostre 3 times a week and Parc Myrddin once a week to target Musculoskeletal 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.
- Baselines were undertaken to measure the success of strength sessions with the aim of reducing musculoskeletal absence from work. Outcomes, results and feedback have been reviewed over the last 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.

- Strength and stretching reviews undertaken; Positive feedback continues from those who are attending.
- Previous report noted more work needs to be done to ensure the operational staff are attending with the aim of reducing 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.
- First 'tool box talk' has now been completed for operational staff within Property Maintenance.
- Plans for additional strength and stretching session in Cillefwr depot is underway.
- Property Maintenance MMT attended and actions produced including attendance at tool box talks and office staff days.

### *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 into 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 from the first set of reviews (conducted at the 6-month mark) were 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.

Below are a few of the headline results from the reviews and Fitrockr. Many of the results indicate improvement. The results show;

- an increase in self-reported amount of time sitting;
- an increase in self-reported time walking (periods of 10 mins or more);
- Y Plas are currently doing the most steps on average per day (although this is taken from 3 staff members), and Manor Rd next. Dom Care are on average doing the least steps;
- an increase in the duration standing on one leg, both with eyes open (25.4 to 28.7 secs) and closed (8.5 to 9.5 secs);
- an increase in the number of sit-stands completed across all teams, with the average increasing from 13.5 to 19;
- the average no. of hours sleep has increased from 6.3 to 6.7 hours a night. The amount of staff achieving 7-8 hours' sleep has increased from 44% to 54%;
- 80% of staff rated their health as Excellent, very good or Good, compared to 70% in the baselines;
- there has been an overall decrease in BMI and waist circumference;
- a decrease in muscular skeletal disorders since the baseline, with the largest being a 15% decrease in problems with backs and 10% hips and legs, with a 33% decrease in MSD issues overall;
- when looking at the stress, there has been a reduction in staff feeling nervous or stressed. When asked 'In the last month, how often have you found that you could not cope with all the things that you had to do?', again there has been an improvement;
- an increase in water consumption from an average of 4.3 to 5.7 glasses of water per day and been an increase in the amount of fruit and veg consumed (6 to 7.3 portions);
- there has been no difference in the number of smokers. There were 5 smokers who didn't complete that section, so it is unclear whether they are still smoking;
- there has been a decrease in the number of staff stating that they consume over 14 units of alcohol a week in most areas apart from Business Support.
- The average rate towards achieving their goals was 48.8%.
- The second review period (conducted at the 9-month mark) is underway and will be completed by mid-November.
- An evaluation focus group has been created to assist with and feedback on the review process.
- Feedback and recommendations are gathered from staff and discussed with management in order to link into 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.
- Communities department hosted a 'Staff Wellbeing Achievements' ceremony, to recognise their staff's efforts throughout the year.

#### *Education & Children*

- 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 was any way of working to support these staff with similar challenges.
- 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.
- Meetings held with all Children Services managers to look at sickness absence data and possible health and wellbeing related interventions.
- Health and Wellbeing presentation delivered at function group meeting
- Action plan created for Catering division.

### *Schools*

- An option paper has been compiled through analysis of sickness absence and other data, for determining a list of priority schools to embark on a pilot project aimed to improve the health and wellbeing of employees.
- The options paper was presented at Education and Children DMT and was approved.
- Introductory meetings have been held with the pilot schools, which includes Ysgol Rhydygors, and the first stage of the pilot project has commenced which includes staff surveys, creating a staff wellbeing policy and creating wellbeing action plans for each school.
- Schools Health and Wellbeing group has been established bringing in various key officers to include HR, challenge advisors, project link officers, health and safety to ensure all relevant information is accessible when meeting with schools and developing the action plans.
- The Health and Wellbeing Champions scheme has been promoted to schools and information distributed.
- Health and Wellbeing presentation was carried out to New and Acting Heads.
- Attendance and presentations at Primary and Secondary Heads meetings and healthy schools' conferences.
- Two Wellbeing Support Practitioners have attended Canolfan Bro Tywi for two group sessions.
- Occupational Health will be attending Heol Goffa in November for their annual Health Day which includes, BMI, Height, Weight, Blood Pressure testing, Glucose and Cholesterol testing as well as information and advice on healthy lifestyles.
- A Schools Staff Wellbeing Conference is being organised for January 2020, where a Wellbeing Coordinator will present as part of the conference.

### c. Mental Health Awareness

To support managers in managing staff attendance, mental health awareness development has commenced for managers and employees to



supplement the existing e-learning modules. This includes corporate and grant funding for the following:

- Managing Mental Health in the Workplace briefings for our people managers commenced November 2019;
- Mental Health First Aid Training, 3 levels of training, suitable for staff across all departments commences January 2019;
- We are in the process of recruiting a 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.
- Invitations have been circulated to members for Mental Health First Aid Training;
- We are refreshing our Time to Change pledge in February 2020;
- Stress and Mental Health Management briefings will be rolled out across the Environment department

d. Review of the Sickness Absence Policy and Procedures

The Sickness Absence Policy has been reviewed and consulted with our recognised trades union representatives and departmental management teams. The feedback from this consultation exercise with our recognised trades unions and manager is currently being evaluated and the policy being revised prior to consideration by CMT and Executive Board Member.

Key change recommended are as follows:

- Move to a fixed 3 month review period for 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> Attendance Management Meeting (AMM) with the flexible review period of up to 3 months for the 3<sup>rd</sup> and final AMM ;
- Recommendation to reduce the subsequent monitoring period from 6 months to 4 months, with the exception of cases where an employee develops a pattern of dropping out of formal process only for sickness absence to become a concern again;
- Inclusion of paragraph on how pregnancy related absence is managed, ie. continuing with the informal Return to Work and Employee Support Meetings but excluding pregnancy related absence from any formal absence management triggers as pregnancy is a protected characteristic and any detriment to a woman as a consequence is automatically unfair and discriminatory legally;
- Inclusion of paragraph on managing work related accidents and incidents;
- Inclusion of paragraph on managing mental health in the workplace;
- Live hyperlinks to all associated policies and guides;
- Strengthening the emphasis on wellbeing support available to support and improve regular attendance;
- Updated paragraph on managing ill-health retirement;

- Clarity on the interaction between short term and long term sickness absence and the need to seek up to date Occupational Health advice where the absence reason changes due to a disability and the employee being maintained at the same stage of the process until such time as advice has been received on reasonable adjustments and these are implemented where practicable.

e. 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.

All 22 Heads of Service have attended the forum to discuss performance in relation to sickness absence to maintain progress and profile of positive attendance management. Progress update reports have been requested from the first five Heads of Service that attended the forum and will be reviewed on receipt by the panel.

A report detailing the findings and key recommendations at a corporate, managerial and operational level is being finalised to be discussed at Heads of Service Forum. One key recommendation made is for Heads of Service to lead the development of a strategy to reduce sickness absence. People Management will provide advice and support to enable it to fulfil this objective.

f. Resourcelink Reporting Service (RRS)

Development work for the launch of a new reporting tool within Resourcelink known as RRS is continuing. 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. Pilot tests are currently underway 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.

g. Purchase of Additional Annual Leave Scheme

The Purchase of Additional Annual Leave Scheme was adopted by Executive Board on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 and fully launched to our staff during October 2019 following a pilot period to test procedures.

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, e.g. 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.

Since the launch date in October 2019 the Attendance Team has received a large number of enquiries about the scheme and as at the date of writing the report 15 applications had been received and all had been approved.

#### h. Management of Stress for People 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 & Corporate Policy and Regeneration and preparation for delivery within Environment.

A Managing Stress in the workplace E-learning module which will be accessible to all staff is being developed.

#### i. 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.

92 out of 96 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.

The current ledger position of income and predicted expenditure is estimating that the scheme will be in a positive financial position at outturn for the 2019/20 financial

year. This is dependent on sickness absence levels during the last two quarters of the financial year.

j. 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 special school level to inform CMT, DMTs, BMT's and Governing Bodies to enable improved performance monitoring and 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 on appropriate actions for improvement.

k. Email etiquette

At P&R Scrutiny on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2019 members made reference to the need to discourage or even prevent the sending of work related emails outside normal working hours and particularly late at night or early morning in view of concerns that this could be stressful for both the sender and the recipient.

This matter has been discussion with departmental Health & Wellbeing project teams and model health and wellbeing behaviours developed:

- Only sending emails inside period of contractual hours / flexi-time period;
- Not regularly working outside of contractual hours / flexi-time period;
- Holding walking meetings;
- Having periods of standing in meetings;
- Taking phone calls standing;
- Taking at least 30 minute lunch breaks, ensuring you leave your desk (driving to another meeting doesn't count!);
- Eating a healthy lunch;
- Bringing fruit/vegetables and healthy dip to meetings instead of biscuits;
- Having caffeine free drink options at meetings;
- Trying to get out for a walk a couple of times a week;
- Allowing enough time between meetings to ensure don't have to rush;
- Be regularly active in and outside of work – ideally at least 150 minutes moderate exercise;
- Not smoking or visibly smoking if you are a smoker;
- Drinking plenty of water (at least 1.5 litres a day);
- Establish a positive working environment

As a result of comment/observations from P&R Committee, IT Services have developed guidance for Microsoft Outlook users which is published on the intranet on how to turn off notifications within outlook on all devices and other tips on managing communication.

## Has this made a difference?

**Table 1: Departmental performance ranking Q2 2019/20**

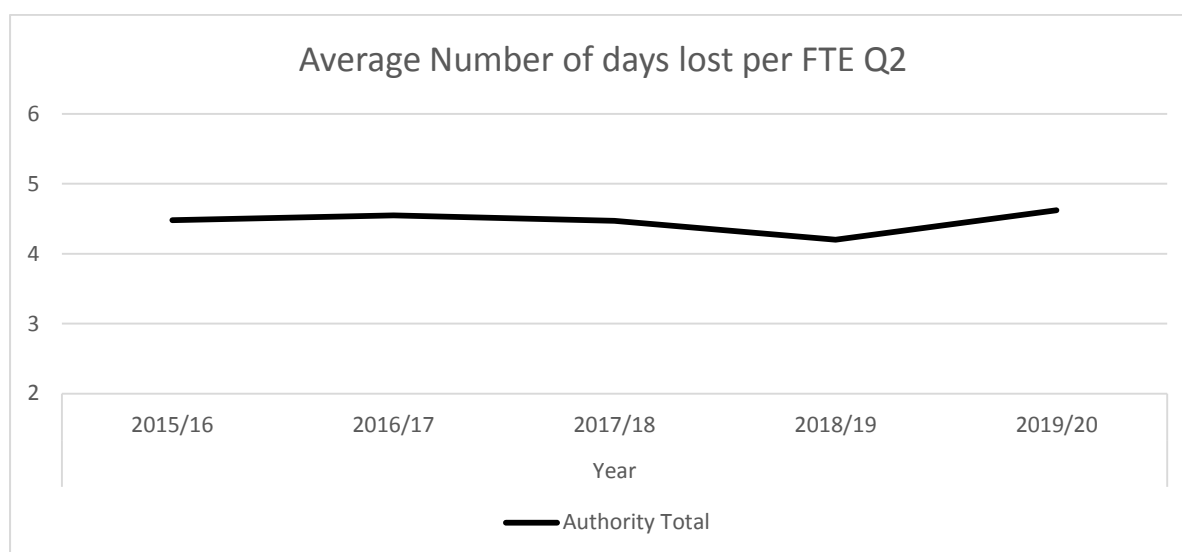
Performance indicates that no department has met their 2019/20 Q2 target. As the agreed targets have been set to support a reduction against previous 3 year average performance by 5%, 2019/20 Q2 result should ideally be below the seasonally adjusted targets for all departments.

The Q2 figure for the whole Authority of 4.62 is above the 2018/19 Q2 result of 4.20. There has been an increase of 0.42 FTE days lost by average employee FTE headcount. (see Table 1).

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	2018-19 Q2 Performance		Target	On Target?
Corporate Services	204.2	264.1	379.0	643.1	3.1	1	3.4	-0.3	2.9	No
Chief Executives	404.0	562.6	952.6	1515.2	3.8	2	3.6	0.2	2.8	No
Education & Children	3191.7	4999.1	7235.5	12234.6	3.8	2	3.6	0.2	3.7	No
Environment	882.3	1380.9	3312.0	4692.9	5.3	4	5.3	0.0	4.6	No
Communities	1371.0	3146.9	5759.6	8906.5	6.5	5	5.3	1.2	4.8	No
<b>Authority</b>	<b>6053.2</b>	<b>10353.6</b>	<b>17638.7</b>	<b>27992.3</b>	<b>4.62</b>		4.2	0.4	4.00	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 (not shown on graph). Since then the trend line indicates an annual increase in 2015/16 and 2016/17 but a slight decrease in 2017/18. The Q2 2018/19 was the best level achieved since 2014/15. However, the Q2 2019/20 result indicates an upward trend compared to the last 3 reporting years.



### Table 3: Performance of Divisions that attended the C&R Attendance Forum

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 attended the C&R Attendance forum to discuss divisional progress to ensure all services are contributing towards a reduction in the level of absence.

It can be seen in the table that some Divisions, such as Waste & Environment, show a trend of consistently improving performance over the last 3 years. This is particularly encouraging for the Waste & Environment Division as it has traditionally had very high absence levels (In 2017/18 quarter 2 absence levels were 8.9 days per FTE). In most Divisions performance is more mixed reflecting the fact that managing sickness absence is challenging and requires constant vigilance and intervention if performance is to improve.

In some Divisions, e.g. Integrated Services, Leisure and Highways & Transportation, the trend is less encouraging as performance has been consistently declining over the last 3 years. These are all large Divisions with significant proportions of employees working in the field and non-office based staff. When interpreting this data please note the number of employees in each Division varies greatly so at times performance can be skewed by the small number of employees located in a particular Division.

Overall 13 Divisions have improved in performance between 2018/19 and 2019/20 and 19 Divisions show a decline in performance.

Division	2017-18 Q2 FTE days lost by avg FTE Headcount	2018-19 Q2 FTE days lost by avg FTE Headcount	2019/20 Q2					Difference (YR ON YR 18/19 TO 19/20)	
			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		
Regeneration	3.7	3.7	191.9	271.3	609.8	881.1	4.6	0.9	
People Management	2.1	3.3	89.6	129.2	164.0	293.2	3.3	0.0	
Administration and Law	1.8	1.8	44.7	32.5	34.0	66.5	1.5	-0.3	
ICT & Corporate Policy	3.1	4.6	76.8	129.6	144.8	274.4	3.6	-1.0	
Chief Executives Total	2.3	3.4	404.0	562.6	952.6	1515.2	3.8	0.4	
Education and Inclusion Services	6.3	4.9	98.9	103.9	119.9	223.8	2.3	-2.6	
Children Services	4.3	4.1	370.0	716.5	1190.1	1906.6	5.2	1.1	
Secondary Schools	3.5	3.1	1022.9	1803.8	1905.3	3709.1	3.6	0.5	
Primary Schools	3.7	3.4	1289.1	1570.0	2923.9	4493.9	3.5	0.1	
Special Schools	8.2	5.3	91.5	275.3	201.6	476.9	5.2	-0.1	
School Effectiveness	2.5	0.1	18.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	-0.1	
Curriculum & Wellbeing	3.7	4.7	121.6	142.2	221.1	363.3	3.0	-1.7	
Access to Education	5.7	5.1	176.6	387.4	673.6	1061.0	6.0	0.9	
Education & Children Total	4.0	3.6	3191.7	4999.1	7235.5	12234.6	3.8	0.2	
Finance	2.9	3.7	100.3	123.0	68.0	191.0	1.9	-1.8	
Revenues and Financial Compliance	3.9	2.7	101.9	141.1	311.0	452.1	4.4	1.7	
Corporate Services Total	3.4	3.2	204.2	264.1	379.0	643.1	3.1	0.0	
Leisure	5.3	5.4	238.6	380.7	1140.9	1521.6	6.4	1.0	
Business Support & Service Improvement	6.8	4.1	114.2	323.6	727.7	1051.3	9.2	5.1	
Mental Health & Learning Disability	4.1	6.8	224.6	438.4	843.8	1282.2	5.7	-1.1	
Homes & Safer Communities	6.2	5.2	646.2	1866.6	2441.2	4307.8	6.7	1.4	
Integrated Services	3.2	4.6	108.3	114.1	606.0	720.1	6.6	2.0	
Regional Collaboration	0.0	0.2	6.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	-0.2	
Commissioning	4.0	3.4	21.4	6.0	0.0	6.0	0.3	-3.1	
Performance Analysis & Systems Team	-	0.6	9.6	17.5	0.0	17.5	1.8	1.3	
Communities Total	5.3	5.3	1371.0	3146.9	5759.6	8906.5	6.5	1.2	
Business Support & Performance	9.5	5.6	58.3	134.5	204.0	338.5	5.8	0.2	
Waste and Environmental Services	8.9	6.9	189.4	363.4	620.5	983.9	5.2	-1.7	
Property	5.3	6.1	274.4	322.8	1140.0	1462.8	5.3	-0.7	
Highways and Transport	4.6	4.6	275.3	437.8	1151.5	1589.3	5.8	1.2	
Planning Services	2.3	1.0	77.0	105.4	155.0	260.4	3.4	2.4	
Business & Development	2.6	0.0	7.0	17.0	41.0	58.0	8.3	8.3	
Environment Total	5.8	5.3	882.3	1380.9	3312.0	4692.9	5.3	0.1	
Authority Total	4.47	4.2	6053.2	10353.6	17638.7	27992.3	4.62	0.4	

**Table 4: Impact of targeted interventions to support schools in managing sickness absence**

The table below compares the performance of CCCs primary, secondary and special schools between Q2 2017/18, 2018/19 and 2019/20. In the special school sector following a large increase in 2018/19 there has been a slight decrease of 0.2 FTE days. Unfortunately, there is a significant increase of 0.6 FTE days lost by average FTE headcount in the secondary sector and a marginal increase of 0.1 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 school sector. The People Management Division continued to support schools during 2019/20 to secure continued and sustained improvement.

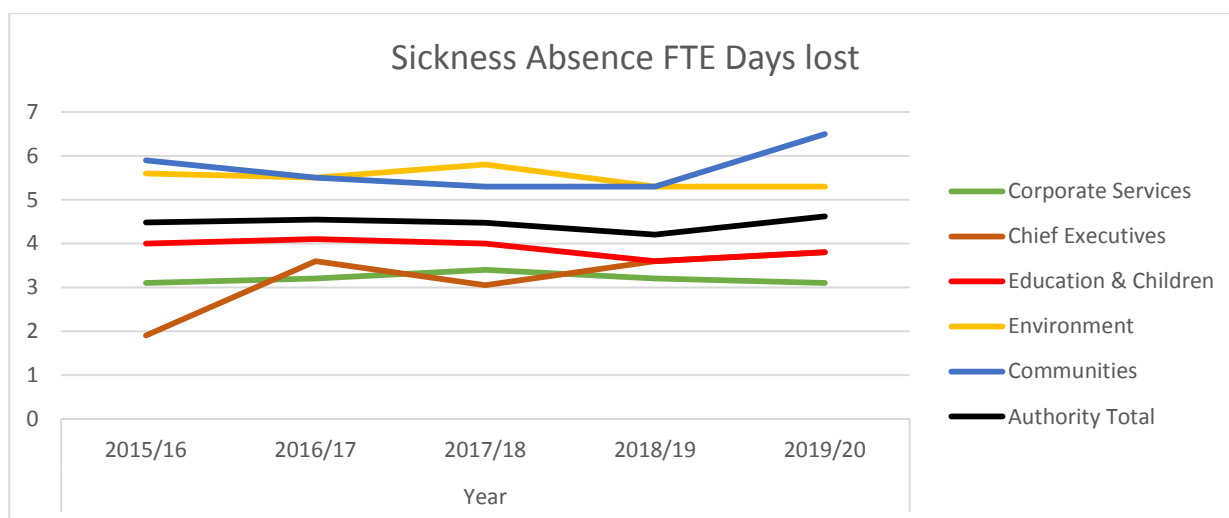
Division	2017-18 Q2 FTE days lost by avg FTE	2018-19 Q2 FTE days lost by avg FTE	2019/20 Q2					Difference (YR ON YR 18/19 TO 19/20)
			Employee FTE	Short Term Lost FTE Days	Long Term Lost FTE Days	Total Lost FTE Days	FTE Days lost by Employee FTE	
Secondary Schools	3.7	3.2	1,018.87	1,803.82	2,021.54	3,825.36	3.8	0.6
Primary Schools	3.8	3.4	1,275.67	1,570.04	2,945.71	4,515.75	3.5	0.1
Special Schools	3.7	5.5	89.97	275.34	201.61	476.95	5.3	-0.2

**Table 5: Departmental Analysis**

When departmental performance is compared to that of the previous year (Table 1) only 1 Department has improved absence levels: Corporate Services. However, performance is at the same level in the Environment department which is encouraging as Q1 indicated a slight increase in absence levels. However more needs to be done if targets are to be met.

Quarter 2	Year				
Department	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Corporate Services	3.1	3.2	3.4	3.2	3.1
Chief Executives	1.9	3.6	3.1	3.6	3.8
Education & Children	4	4.1	4	3.6	3.8
Environment	5.6	5.5	5.8	5.3	5.3
Communities	5.9	5.5	5.3	5.3	6.5
<b>Authority Total</b>	<b>4.48</b>	<b>4.55</b>	<b>4.47</b>	<b>4.2</b>	<b>4.62</b>





The service areas with the greatest variance (decrease - /increase +) compared to Q2 2019/20 are:

Department	Division	Difference
Education & Children	Education and Inclusion Services	-2.6
Corporate Services	Finance	-1.8
Environment	Waste and Environmental Services	-1.7
Education & Children	Curriculum & Wellbeing	-1.7
Communities	Mental Health & Learning Disability	-1.1
Chief Executives	ICT & Corporate Policy	-1.0
Communities	Leisure	1.0
Education & Children	Children Services	1.1
Environment	Highways and Transport	1.2
Communities	Homes & Safer Communities	1.4
Corporate Services	Revenues and Financial Compliance	1.7
Communities	Integrated Services	2.0
Environment	Planning Services	2.4
Communities	Business Support & Service Improvement	5.1

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

**Table 6: Cost of Absence**

The table below illustrates the cost of occupational sick pay for Q1 to Q2 cumulatively in each year since 2017/18. This excludes additional costs that may be incurred by divisions in particular those delivering e.g. Overtime costs, agency costs; other replacement costs.

Occupational Sick Payments (OSP)			
Quarters 1 and 2	Year		
Department	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Corporate Services	43,940	52,517	48,548
Chief Executives	128,806	145,224	156,268
Education & Children*	1,369,257	1,264,732	1,413,730
Environment	384,448	394,162	411,832
Communities	729,114	713,782	849,441

<b>Authority Total</b>	<b>2,655,565</b>	<b>2,570,417</b>	<b>2,879,819</b>
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\* Including schools

[Table 7: Occupational Health Appointment Data](#)

**Fig.1**

<b>Number of Employees seen at the Occupational Health Centre</b>			
<b>Department</b>	<b>Number of Employees Attended Q2 Cumulative</b>		
	<b>2017/18</b>	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>
Chief Executives	37	50	46
Communities	251	310	305
Corporate Services	23	11	26
Environment	320	489	389
Education & Children	257	283	281
External	131	130	281
<b>Total</b>	<b>1019</b>	<b>1273</b>	<b>1325</b>

The table above indicates the number of employees being referred and supported by the Occupational Health 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 4% increase in the total number of employees seen at the Centre in Q2 2019/20 compared to Q2 2018/19.

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**

<b>Number of Appointments Attended at the Occupational Health Centre</b>			
<b>Department</b>	<b>Number of Appointments Q2 Cumulative</b>		
	<b>2017/18</b>	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>
Chief Executives	88	128	126
Communities	465	625	616
Corporate Services	58	12	71
Environment	413	581	547
Education & Children	522	760	775
External	153	155	357

<b>Total</b>	<b>1699</b>	<b>2261</b>	<b>2492</b>
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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 10% increase in the total number of appointments to the Occupational Health Centre during cumulative period Q1 – Q2 2019/20 compared to 2018/19.

Over the last two years there has however been a 46.67% increase in total number of appointments at the Occupational Health 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**

<b>Breakdown: Total Number of Appointments Attended the Occupational Health Centre Q2 Cumulative 2017/18</b>						
<b>Department</b>	<b>Appointment Reason</b>					
	<b>OHA</b>	<b>OHP</b>	<b>All WSS Appts</b>	<b>H/S</b>	<b>*Other</b>	<b>Totals</b>
Chief Executives	17	15	55	0	1	<b>88</b>
Communities	102	67	272	2	22	<b>465</b>
Corporate Services	8	5	43	0	2	<b>58</b>
Environment	50	37	110	215	1	<b>413</b>
Education & Children	120	60	327	0	15	<b>522</b>
External	26	31	28	67	1	<b>153</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>323</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>835</b>	<b>284</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>1699</b>

**Fig.4**

<b>Breakdown: Total Number of Appointments Attended the Occupational Health Centre Q2 Cumulative 2018/19</b>						
<b>Department</b>	<b>Appointment Reason</b>					
	<b>OHA</b>	<b>OHP</b>	<b>All WSS Appts</b>	<b>H/S</b>	<b>*Other</b>	<b>Totals</b>
Chief Executives	24	11	88	0	5	<b>128</b>
Communities	128	74	390	14	19	<b>625</b>

Corporate Services	3	1	1	0	7	<b>12</b>
Environment	47	51	96	379	8	<b>581</b>
Education & Children	104	56	580	2	18	<b>760</b>
External	37	37	31	40	10	<b>155</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>343</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>1186</b>	<b>435</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>2261</b>

**Fig.5**

Breakdown: Total Number of Appointments Attended the Occupational Health Centre Q2 Cumulative 2019/20						
Department	Appointment Reason					Totals
	OHA	OHP	All WSS Appts	H/S	*Other	
Chief Executives	21	9	92	0	4	<b>126</b>
Communities	136	62	387	7	24	<b>616</b>
Corporate Services	11	5	53	0	2	<b>71</b>
Environment	53	38	180	269	7	<b>547</b>
Education & Children	111	54	590	0	20	<b>775</b>
External	121	58	92	70	16	<b>357</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>453</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>1394</b>	<b>346</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>2492</b>

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

### **Percentage of employees who have attended Occupational Health in Q1-Q2**

Following the request from P&R scrutiny committee the following table below shows the percentage breakdown of employees that have attended the Occupational Health Centre per department.

Percentages are based on overall headcount (October 2019)

Department	OHA	OHP	Wellbeing Support Service (Initial Assessment)	Health Surveillance	Other	Total
Chief Executives	4.9%	2.1%	4.2%	0%	1.2%	<b>12.4%</b>
Communities	7.9%	3.6%	4.5%	0.8%	1.4%	<b>18.2%</b>
Corporate Services	5.1%	2.3%	3.7%	0	0.9%	<b>12%</b>
Environment	4.5%	3.3%	2.7%	32.8%	0.6%	<b>43.9%</b>
Education & Children	2.5%	1.2%	2.2%	0	0.45	<b>6.35%</b>

As shown in the above table the Environment department have the highest number of employees who attend Occupational Health, this is due to their mandatory Health Surveillance which employees are required to undertake based on risk assessment.

Without Health Surveillance, the Environment department have 11.1% of employees accessing our services for sickness absence reasons and support.

### **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 three years:

	2017/18 EOY	2018/19 EOY	2019/20 Q2
Ill Health Capability	59	52	18
Ill Health Capability – Tier 1	7	9	14
Ill Health Capability – Tier 2	-	1	-
Ill Health Capability – Tier 3	1	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>33</b>

Quarter 2 figure indicates that end of year figure will be on a par with previous years.

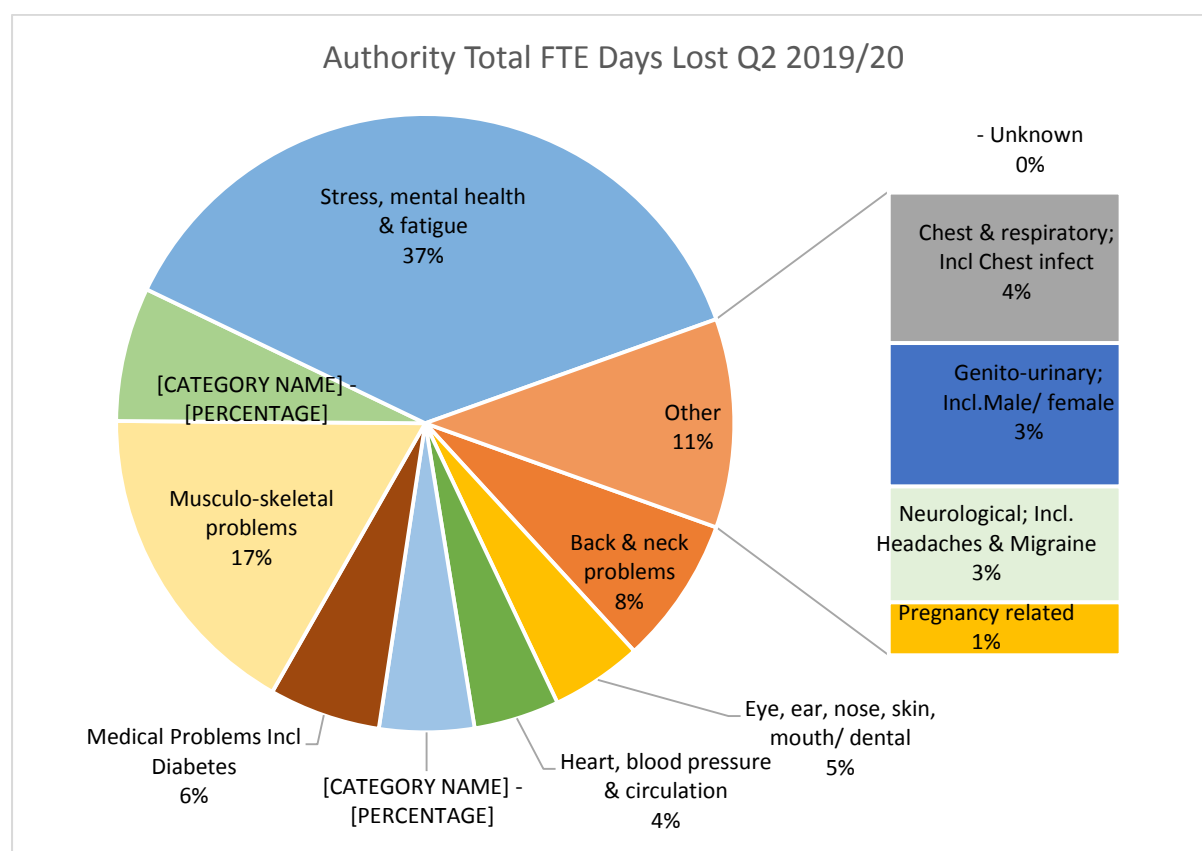
Table 9: Causes of absence – half year cumulative Q2 EOY 2019/20

Stress, mental health & fatigue is the most common cause of absence within the authority (37%) followed by musculoskeletal problems (17%). 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 (5%) compared to (9%) at Q4 2018/19 and this will impact on percentage variations between reporting periods.

The CIPD Health & Wellbeing at Work report published in May 2018 focusing on the public sector has found that more organisations include mental health amongst the most common reason for short and long term absence. Over half of respondents confirmed that reported mental health conditions had increased. A fifth of respondents confirmed that stress and mental health is the primary cause of long term absence and a third include stress in the top three causes of absence.

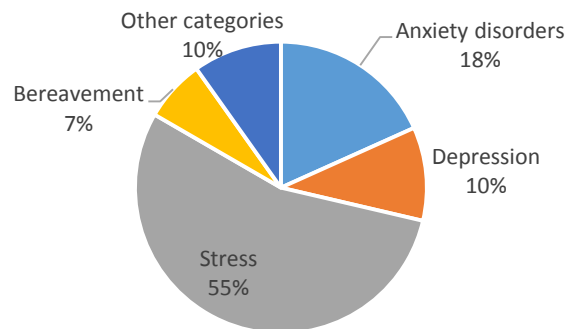
Whilst stress, mental health & fatigue is the main cause of absence within CCC and an area of significant concern, the level of absence for this reason is comparable with other public sector organisations including health, education and civil service.

It is acknowledged that current recording of reasons has limitations and development work is ongoing to review and rationalise the system and codes used to provide more effective management information.



The percentages displayed below relate to the category stress, mental health & fatigue only. In this instance stress, mental health & fatigue is 37% of all Authority sickness absence. Of the 37% stress constitutes 55%. (Stress is 20% of all sickness absence).

### Stress, mental health & fatigue - expanded reasons



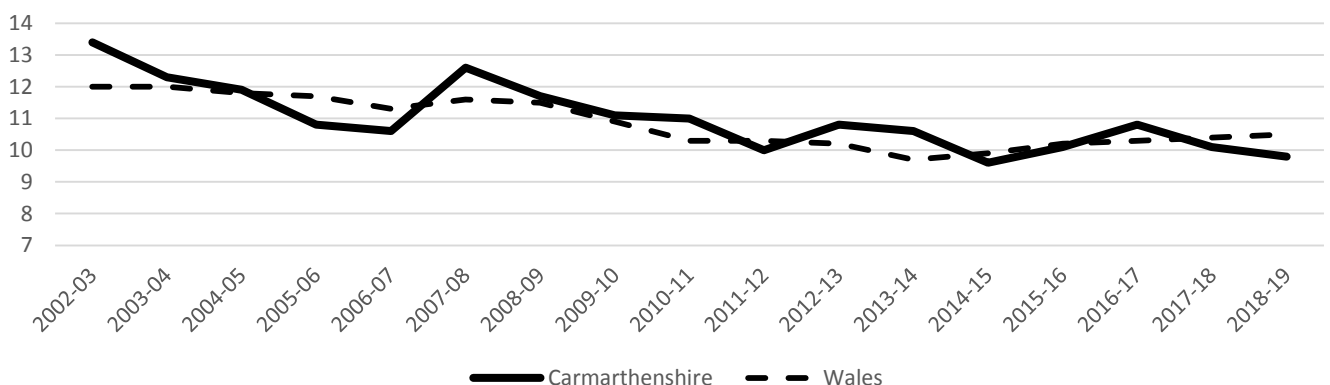
**Table 10: Comparative sickness absence performance indicator**

Carmarthenshire directly employs approximately 7,200 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 was published in September 2019. This is audited end of year data. In comparison to all other welsh authorities Carmarthenshire ranks 7<sup>th</sup> out of the 23. This is a marked improvement to previous years as we ranked 10<sup>th</sup> in 2017/18 and 15<sup>th</sup> in 2016/17. As an Authority we are now placed towards the top end of the second quartile whereas we were close to the median in 2017/18 and in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quartile in 2016/17.

### Carmarthenshire CC Number of working days lost to sickness absence lost compared to All Wales figure



	All staff					
	Number of working days lost to sickness absence per employee					
Local Authority	FY 2014-15	FY 2015-16	FY 2016-17	FY 2017-18	FY 2018-19	2018/19 Quartiles
Denbighshire	8.3	8.5	8.7	8.4	8.3	1
Merthyr Tydfil	6.7	6.6	5.5	7.8	8.7	
Powys	7.4	10.6	9	9.7	9.1	
The Vale of Glamorgan	9.4	9.6	8.8	10.1	9.1	
Pembrokeshire	10.2	-	10.5	10.2	9.3	
Gwynedd	8.6	8.4	9	8.7	9.5	
Carmarthenshire	9.6	10.1	10.8	10.1	9.8	2
Neath Port Talbot	9.4	9.7	9.9	9.5	9.8	
Conwy	10.9	10.3	11.3	9.7	10.1	
Newport	9.6	10.1	9.8	10.1	10.1	
Isle of Anglesey	11.5	12	9.8	10	10.3	
Flintshire	10.6	10.5	9.8	8.9	10.5	
Wales	9.9	10.2	10.3	10.4	10.5	3
Ceredigion	8.9	-	10.4	13.6	10.9	
Swansea	9.6	10.2	9.7	10.8	11	
Torfaen	10.6	10.1	10.8	11.1	11.2	
Caerphilly	10.7	11.7	12.2	12.3	11.3	
Wrexham	11.9	11.9	11.3	10.9	11.5	
Cardiff	10.1	9.6	10.8	11.3	11.5	4
Monmouthshire	9.8	11.6	11.5	10.9	11.5	
Bridgend	10.8	10.7	10.7	10.8	11.9	
Blaenau Gwent	11.5	11.3	12.5	11.2	12.7	

#### NHS Wales benchmarking data

Below is benchmarking data relating to 11 NHS organisations in Wales shown as a percentage. Data is extracted from the NHS Electronic Staff Record. Sickness absence rates by quarter for the period April 2018 to March 2019 and calculated by dividing the total number of sickness absence days by the total number of available days for each organisation.

- 4% is equivalent to 9 FTE days lost.
- 5% is equivalent to 11.25 FTE days lost.
- 6% is equivalent to 13.5 FTE days lost.
- 7% is equivalent to 15.75 days lost.

	Apr-Jun 2018	Jul-Sep 2018	Oct-Dec 2018	Jan-Mar 2019
	%	%	%	%
<b>All Wales</b>	6.87	6.84	7.51	7.43
Betsi Cadwaladr University LHB	5.17	5.61	6.12	6.27
Powys Teaching LHB	5.4	5.86	6.11	6.06
Hywel Dda University LHB	4.68	5.07	5.78	5.67
Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University LHB	4.8	5.14	5.57	5.57
Cwm Taf University LHB	4.63	5	5.41	5.43
Aneurin Bevan University LHB	4.34	4.88	5.43	5.28
Cardiff & Vale University LHB	4.7	4.53	4.98	5.22
Public Health Wales NHS Trust	4.38	4.56	4.51	4.63
Velindre NHS Trust	3.79	4.06	4.1	4.28
Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust	3.96	3.85	3.9	3.77
Health Education and Improvement Wales	.	.	1.68	2.86



## Benchmarking with English Unitary Authorities 2017/18 (This is 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 excludes teachers. The performance indicator reported by the 22 authorities within Wales in the earlier table includes teachers.
- During 2017/18, 23 of 52 English Unitary Authorities participated in the survey question relating to sickness absence;
- The average number of days lost per FTE published for 2017/18 was 9.6 per employee. 2018/19 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 2017 and published in 2018 and approximately 600 employers participated from all industry sectors. 2019 data is pending publication and will be reported in 2019/20 once published.

Among the survey respondents that provided data on absence rates, the national average stood at 2.8% of working time in 2017, 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 2017, 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 non-profit sector comparators	Average days lost per employee per year	Similar occupational group within CCC	End of Year 2017/18	End of Year 2018/19
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



