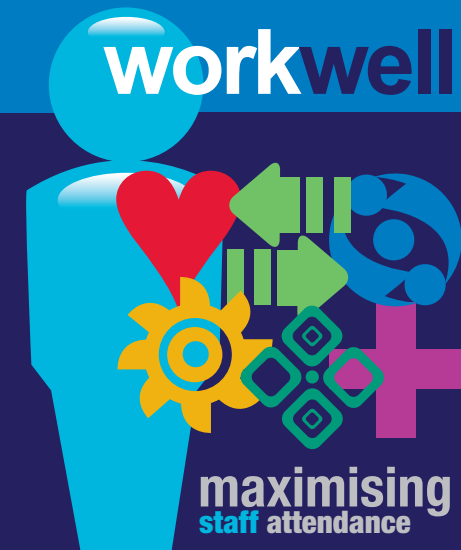


# Managing Attendance

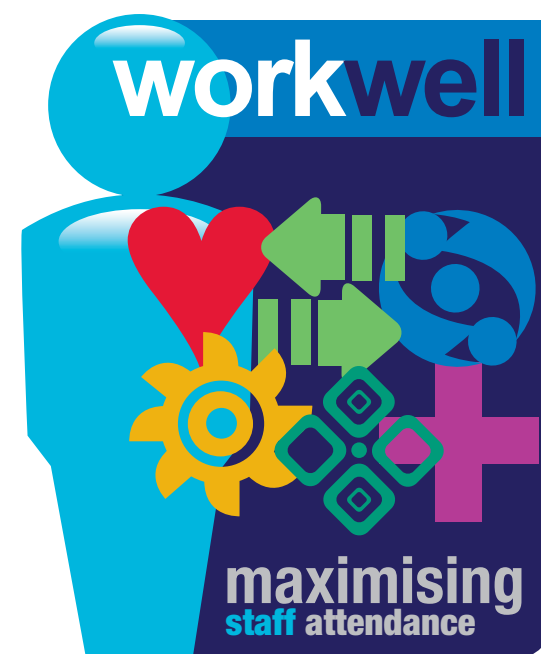
A Guide for all Managers and Employees



## Long Term Sickness Guide



STRONG HERITAGE | STRONG FUTURE  
**RHONDDA CYNON TAF**  
TREFTADAETH GADARN | DYFODOL SICR



**Human Resources,**  
The Pavilions, Clydach Vale, CF40 2XX

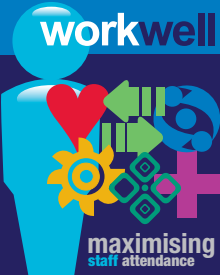
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# Managing Attendance

## A Guide for all Managers and Employees



### LONG TERM SICKNESS

Long Term Sickness Absence is one of several guides that have been designed to provide practical advice and guidance to managers and employees around Managing Attendance. Each guide supports the Council’s Absence Management Policy by answering the most common questions that both managers and employees have about their own sickness absence, and managing the absence of others.

For the purpose of this guide long term absence will be classified as any absence extending beyond 28 consecutive days.

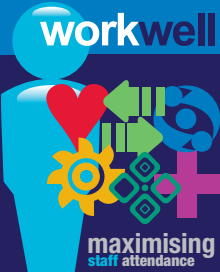
Employee Responsibilities	Manager / Supervisor Responsibilities
<p>This guide provides the answers to the following questions: <b>Page</b></p> <p>1. How do I report as absent due to sickness? ..... <b>3</b></p> <p>2. When will I be referred to the Occupational Health and Wellbeing Unit? .. <b>5</b></p> <p>3. Why will I be referred to the Occupational Health and Wellbeing Unit? <b>5</b></p> <p>4. What happens to my Occupational Health and Wellbeing report? ..... <b>6</b></p> <p>5. When will I be classed as being on long term sick? ..... <b>6</b></p> <p>6. What type of questions should I expect my manager to ask me? ..... <b>7</b></p> <p>7. Why does my manager ask these questions? ..... <b>8</b></p> <p>8. Can my manager request further medical reports for me? ..... <b>8</b></p> <p>9. What support is available? ..... <b>9</b></p> <p>10. What medical papers do I need to submit? ..... <b>9</b></p> <p>11. What if I have a return to work plan from the “Fit For Work” service? <b>10</b></p> <p>12. What if my absence continues? ..... <b>10</b></p> <p>13. What is a case conference? ..... <b>11</b></p>	<p>This guide provides the answers to the following questions: <b>Page</b></p> <p>1. What do I do when the employee reports as absent due to sickness? .. <b>3-4</b></p> <p>2. When do I refer the employee to the Occupational Health and Wellbeing Unit for a medical assessment? ..... <b>5</b></p> <p>3. How do I refer the employee to the Occupational Health and Wellbeing Unit? ..... <b>5-6</b></p> <p>4. Can I see the employee’s Occupational Health and Wellbeing report and can I share employee medical reports with other managers? ..... <b>6</b></p> <p>5. When will the employee be classed as being on long term sick? ..... <b>6</b></p> <p>6. What are my responsibilities around maintaining contact with the employee on long term sick? ..... <b>7-8</b></p> <p>7. Why must I ask these questions? ..... <b>8</b></p> <p>8. Can I request further medical reports for the employee? ..... <b>8</b></p> <p>9. What support is available for the employee? ..... <b>9</b></p> <p>10. What medical papers does the employee need to submit? ..... <b>9</b></p>

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## LONG TERM SICKNESS

### Employee Responsibilities

#### 1. How do I report as absent due to sickness?

You must contact your manager on Day 1 of your absence. If you advise your manager that you have a musculoskeletal i.e. injuries and disorders that affect movement or musculoskeletal system (*i.e. muscles, tendons, ligaments, nerves, discs, blood vessels, etc.*), or mental health condition you may be referred to the Occupational Health and Wellbeing Unit for an assessment.

If your absence continues you will be required to contact your manager on day 4, day 7, upon receipt of your fit note, day 14 and weekly thereafter.

The reason for these frequent notification periods is that evidence suggests that ongoing communication with the workplace helps to prevent barriers developing that may prevent a speedy return to work.

### Manager / Supervisor Responsibilities


#### 1. What do I do when the employee reports as absent due to sickness?

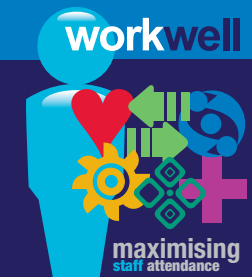
An employee will contact you on Day 1 of their absence. When you speak to them you will need to determine:

- If the employee has a musculoskeletal i.e. injuries and disorders that affect movement or musculoskeletal system (*i.e. muscles, tendons, ligaments, nerves, discs, blood vessels, etc.*), or mental health condition, for which they have not previously been referred to the Occupational Health and Wellbeing Unit, they should be advised that they may be referred for a medical assessment. The employee should be advised that this will support their wellbeing and their return to work
- If their absence is disability related. If it is, it should be recorded as such in Vision
- If the employee needs any support or workplace adjustments to support their return to work
- How long they are likely to be absent? This will assist you in making cover arrangements
- Remind the employee that if their absence continues they are required to contact you on day 4, day 7, upon receipt of the fit note, day 14 and weekly thereafter and remind them of what documentation they will need to provide

# Managing Attendance

## A Guide for all Managers and Employees

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Employee Responsibilities	Manager / Supervisor Responsibilities
	<p>You must ensure the absence details are recorded accurately on Vision. This ensures that the employee is paid in accordance with statutory and occupational sick pay. It also provides data for sickness absence reporting which is monitored regularly by service area management teams.</p> <p> Please refer to the separate guide on using the Vision system.</p>



## LONG TERM SICKNESS

Employee Responsibilities	Manager / Supervisor Responsibilities
<p><b>2. When will I be referred to the Occupational Health and Wellbeing Unit?</b></p> <p>If you advise your manager that you have a musculoskeletal i.e. injuries and disorders that affect movement or musculoskeletal system (i.e. muscles, tendons, ligaments, nerves, discs, blood vessels, etc.), or mental health condition you may be referred to the Occupational Health and Wellbeing Unit for an assessment on day 1 for support. If you have not previously been referred for an Occupational Health assessment on Day 1, you will be referred on Day 14.</p>	<p><b>2. When do I refer the employee to the Occupational Health and Wellbeing Unit for a medical assessment?</b></p> <p>You should ensure that the employee is referred on a timely basis using the following guidelines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Day 1 – you may refer for Musculoskeletal or Mental Health conditions</li> <li>• Day 14 – for all absences.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. Why will I be referred to the Occupational Health and Wellbeing Unit?</b></p> <p>The purpose of referring you for an assessment is to support your health and wellbeing. The assessment will be undertaken by a medically qualified practitioner. During the assessment you will discuss your ill health condition to identify an anticipated time frame in which you are likely to return to work and determine any support or workplace adjustments required. Attendance at occupational health and wellbeing assessments is part of your contractual obligations.</p>	<p><b>3. How do I refer the employee to the Occupational Health and Wellbeing Unit?</b></p> <p>Referrals should be submitted through the online referral form. (Please seek assistance from Human Resources where required). <b>Managers should be aware that any information contained within the referral may be shared with the employee and therefore should be detailed, factual and ideally already discussed with the employee.</b></p> <p>The referral will provide the personal details of the employee, the date they reported absent and the reason for absence. You should also aim to give as much information as possible about the workplace, job duties, work patterns etc. Depending on your discussions with the employee you may want to ask some additional questions, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would workplace adjustments assist the employee return to work?</li> <li>• Does the employee need any specific managerial support on their return to work?</li> <li>• When is the likely return to work date?</li> </ul>

# Managing Attendance

## A Guide for all Managers and Employees

### LONG TERM SICKNESS

Employee Responsibilities	Manager / Supervisor Responsibilities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Will the employee be fit to undertake all their duties?</li><li>• Are there any restrictions to duties that should be observed?</li></ul>
<p><b>4. What happens to my Occupational Health and Wellbeing report?</b></p> <p>With your consent, a copy of your occupational health and wellbeing report will be sent to your manager and a HR representative. It is beneficial for your manager to have a copy of the report, as this will give them a greater understanding of what support you require. A welfare visit will be arranged with you to discuss the contents of the report. The purpose of the visit is to maintain contact with you, discuss your wellbeing and discuss any support or workplace adjustments that you may require.</p>	<p><b>4. Can I see the employee's Occupational Health and Wellbeing report and can I share employee medical reports with other managers?</b></p> <p>You will only have access to the employee's Occupational Health and Wellbeing report if they give their consent that you can see it.</p> <p>With regards to sharing the report with other managers, you cannot do this unless you have consent from the employee to share this information.</p> <p>The Occupational Health and Wellbeing Unit will ask the employee for consent to release their Occupational Health and Wellbeing report to their manager and HR.</p> <p>If you pass on this information without consent you will be in breach of the data protection act.</p>
<p><b>5. When will I be classed as being on long term sick?</b></p> <p>You will be classified as being on long-term sickness absence at 28 days. This is consistent with other organisations and helps us provide accurate reports to our senior managers.</p>	<p><b>5. When will the employee be classed as being on long term sick?</b></p> <p>The employee will be classified as being on long-term sickness absence at 28 days. This is consistent with other organisations and helps us provide accurate reports to our senior managers.</p>





## LONG TERM SICKNESS

### Employee Responsibilities

#### 6. What type of questions should I expect my manager to ask me?

You should expect your manager to ask you questions during your Day 1 notification, and subsequent telephone calls. These may include:

- What is the nature of the illness?
- Is the absence related to your disability?
- When did you become ill?
- How long are you likely to be absent?

Your manager may also:

- Remind you that if your absence continues you will be required to contact them on day 4, day 7, upon receipt of a fit note, day 14 and weekly thereafter
- Let you know what documentation you will need to provide
- Refer you to the Occupational Health and Wellbeing Unit for an assessment, discussing the referral content with you

It is your responsibility to stay in touch with your manager on day 1, day 4, day 7, upon receipt of a fit note, day 14 of the absence and weekly thereafter. You should agree with your manager who is initiating the weekly contact after the 14 day notification.

### Manager / Supervisor Responsibilities

#### 6. Can I see the employee's Occupational Health and Wellbeing report and can I share employee medical reports with other managers?

It is the employee's responsibility to stay in touch with you on day 1, day 4, day 7, upon receipt of a fit note, day 14 of their absence and weekly thereafter. You should agree with the employee who is initiating the weekly contact after the 14 day notification.

You will be asking the employee questions during the Day 1 notification, and subsequent telephone calls. These may include:

- What is the nature of the illness?
- Is the absence related to your disability?
- When did they become ill?
- How long are they likely to be absent?

Your may also:

- Remind them that if their absence continues they will be required to contact you on day 4, day 7, upon receipt of a fit note, day 14 and weekly thereafter
- Let them know what documentation they will need to provide
- Refer them to the Occupational Health and Wellbeing Unit for an assessment, discussing the referral content with them

If they do not contact you on any of these notification periods you should contact them by telephone to establish the reasons they have not been in touch. Some employees will have requested alternative methods of contact, e.g. text, email but these should have been agreed beforehand

# Managing Attendance

## A Guide for all Managers and Employees

### LONG TERM SICKNESS

Employee Responsibilities	Manager / Supervisor Responsibilities
	and only be used if the employee is unable to make contact via telephone. You should be mindful that if an employee is in hospital they may not be able to contact you on the notification dates.  If you are unable to contact the employee by telephone or other agreed means you should contact your HR representative for further advice.
<b>7. Why does my manager ask these questions?</b>  Your manager is concerned about your wellbeing so at the earliest opportunity they will want to establish if they can provide you with any support or workplace adjustments. They may be able to refer you for assessment for physiotherapy, counselling services or general medical advice or support to help treat your condition at an early stage.  Long term sickness can be difficult for managers. This is because often cover arrangements need to be put in place, so managers need to establish the likely length of absence, to ensure appropriate arrangements can be made.	<b>7. Why must I ask these questions?</b>  As a Council we are concerned about the wellbeing of every employee, so at the earliest opportunity we want to establish if we can provide the employee with any support or workplace adjustments.  You may be able to refer the employee for assessment for physiotherapy, counselling services or general medical advice or support to help treat their condition at an early stage.  Long term sickness can be difficult for managers. This is because often cover arrangements need to be put in place, so you need to establish the likely length of absence, to ensure appropriate arrangements can be made.
<b>8. Can my manager request further medical reports for me?</b>  If your absence continues, the Occupational Health and Wellbeing Unit may arrange further assessments. Your manager should continue to arrange welfare visits on receipt of the occupational health reports. If in the meantime, you contact your manager with a change of circumstances, they will contact the Occupational Health and Wellbeing Unit to provide them with an update.	<b>8. Can I request further medical reports for the employee?</b>  If the employee's absence continues, the Occupational Health and Wellbeing Unit may arrange further assessments. You should continue to arrange welfare visits on receipt of the occupational health reports. If in the meantime, the employee contacts you with a change of circumstances, you should contact the Occupational Health and Wellbeing Unit to provide them with an update.



## LONG TERM SICKNESS

### Employee Responsibilities

#### 9. What support is available?

Depending on your medical condition you may be offered:

- Physiotherapy including acupuncture, ultrasound scans and injection therapy
- Counselling
- Work place adjustments
- Programmes such as Mind, Body and Balance, Mindfulness
- Recommendations on a rehabilitation programme
- Managing my life course
- Self help courses
- Ongoing manager support

#### 10. What medical papers do I need to submit?

You must cover all sickness absence with certification from Day 1. If you do not do this it may affect your sick pay entitlements.

**Day 1 to day 7** – you must be covered by a self certification (SA3) form (available from your manager), if your absence is not already covered by a “fit note”.

**Day 8 onwards** – you must be covered by a GP “fit note”. Upon receipt of your fit note you should contact your manager to notify them of the fit note details. Your fit note should be provided to your manager on time, with no gaps, as again this may affect your sick pay entitlements.

### Manager / Supervisor Responsibilities

#### 9. What support is available for the employee?

Depending on the employee’s medical condition they may be offered:

- Physiotherapy including acupuncture, ultrasound scans and injection therapy
- Counselling
- Work place adjustments
- Programmes such as Mind, Body and Balance, Mindfulness
- Recommendations on a rehabilitation programme
- Managing my life course
- Self help courses
- Ongoing manager support

#### 10. What medical papers does the employee need to submit?



The employee must cover all sickness absence with certification from Day 1. If they do not do this it may affect their sick pay entitlements.

**Day 1 to day 7** – the employee must be covered by a self certification (SA3) form (available from you), if their absence is not already covered by a “fit note”.

**Day 8 onwards** – the employee must be covered by a GP “fit note”. Upon receipt of the fit note the employee should contact you to notify you of the fit note details. The fit note should be provided to you on time, with no gaps, as again this may affect their sick pay entitlements.

# Managing Attendance

## A Guide for all Managers and Employees

LONG TERM SICKNESS	
Employee Responsibilities	Manager / Supervisor Responsibilities
<p><b>11. What if I have a return to work plan from the “Fit For Work” service?</b></p> <p>You will still need to provide a GP “Fit Note” to certify your absence. It is useful to share your return to work plan with your manager so that they can determine if they are able to support the recommendations.</p>	<p><b>11. What if the employee has a return to work plan from the “Fit For Work” service?</b></p> <p>The employee will still need to provide a GP “Fit Note” to certify their absence. It is useful for them to share their return to work plan with you so that you can determine if you are able to support the recommendations.</p>
<p><b>12. What if my absence continues?</b></p> <p>You and your manager will already be in weekly contact throughout the notification periods. From day 14, or certainly on receipt of your 1st medical report your manager will contact you to arrange a welfare visit. The welfare visit will be arranged at a workplace location or depending on your medical condition, it could be arranged at your home.</p> <p>If you feel you need some support at your welfare visit, you may have a trade union representative or work colleague attend.</p> <p>As previously mentioned the purpose of the welfare visit will be to maintain contact, discuss your wellbeing and discuss support or workplace adjustments that you may require.</p> <p> <b>There is a separate guide on welfare visits which you should refer to for more information.</b></p>	<p><b>12. When and how do I undertake welfare visits?</b></p> <p>Welfare visits should be arranged where it is known the absence will extend beyond 28 days. Often the 1st welfare visit will take place following receipt of the 1st occupational health report, however, you can arrange a visit at an earlier stage.</p> <p>Welfare visits are face to face meetings and will normally take place at the workplace. However you should be sensitive to the employee’s medical condition when determining a suitable venue.</p> <p>The employee may want a trade union representative or work colleague to attend with them and this should be allowed.</p> <p>At the welfare visit you should discuss the content of the occupational health report, enquire about the employee's wellbeing, discuss what support and/or workplace adjustments could be made to assist the employee return to work, keep the employee up-to-date with work developments within the team and remind the employee that they will still need to keep in touch with you on a weekly basis.</p> <p> <b>There is a separate guide on welfare visits which you should refer to for more information.</b></p>



## LONG TERM SICKNESS

### Employee Responsibilities

#### 13. What is a case conference?

If your absence continues you may be invited to attend a Case Conference. Case conferences give all the relevant individuals i.e. you, your manager, HR, clinician and, where necessary a trade union representative, the opportunity to get together to discuss your illness, consider the medical prognosis and identify the most beneficial treatment or recovery programme that is required to help you to successfully return to work.

#### 14. What is a case discussion?

Case discussions are similar to a case conference but occur when you are too ill or unable to participate in a case conference. The purpose of the meeting is to ensure that your manager is clear on how to manage your ongoing absence.

### Manager / Supervisor Responsibilities

#### 13. What is a case conference?

If the employee's absence continues you may, through discussions with HR, decide to convene a case conference. Case conferences give all the relevant individuals i.e. the employee, manager, HR, clinician and, where necessary a trade union representative, the opportunity to get together to discuss the employee's illness, consider the medical prognosis and identify the most beneficial treatment or recovery programme that is required to help the employee to successfully return to work. Case Conferences can be arranged through Human Resources and will be recorded by the HR representative in attendance.


#### 14. What is a case discussion?

Case discussions are similar to a case conference but occur when the employee is too ill or unable to attend the case conference. The purpose of the discussion is to ensure that you are clear on how to manage the employee's ongoing absence.

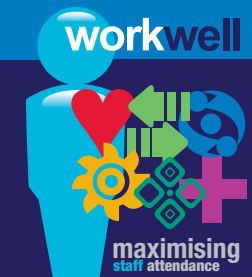
# Managing Attendance

## A Guide for all Managers and Employees

### LONG TERM SICKNESS

Employee Responsibilities	Manager / Supervisor Responsibilities
<p><b>15. What do I do when I am ready to return to work?</b></p> <p>You will need to contact your manager giving them sufficient notice of your return to work. This is to ensure that all necessary support arrangements are in place and that any agreed adjustments to your role or work hours can be put in place prior to your return. You may be coming to the end of your fit note from your G.P., or the Occupational Health and Wellbeing Unit may have deemed you fit to return to work prior to the date stated on your fit note.</p> <p>Your manager will undertake a return to work interview with you upon your return.</p> <p> <b>There is a separate guide on Returning to Work which you should refer to for more information.</b></p>	<p><b>15. What should happen when the employee is ready to return to work?</b></p> <p>The employee must give you sufficient notice of their return to work if they have been on long term sickness absence. If you feel you are not able to put the agreed support or workplace adjustments in place for the employee's return to work then you should contact your HR representative for advice.</p> <p>The employee's "fit note" will have expired or they will have been deemed as fit to return to work by the Occupational Health and Wellbeing Unit.</p>
<p><b>16. What if the Occupational Health and Wellbeing Unit deem me as fit to return to work prior to the date stated on my fit note?</b></p> <p>The decision of the Occupational health practitioner takes precedent over the GP fit note so you will be required to contact your manager to arrange a return to work in line with the Occupational Health recommendation.</p>	<p><b>16. What if the Occupational Health and Wellbeing Unit deem the employee as fit to return to work prior to the date stated on their fit note?</b></p> <p>The decision of the Occupational health practitioner takes precedent over the GP fit note so the employee will be required to contact you to arrange a return to work in line with the Occupational Health recommendation.</p>





## LONG TERM SICKNESS

### Employee Responsibilities

#### 17. What if I am unlikely to return to work in the foreseeable future?

If you have been seeing a specialist or consultant we may ask your consent to obtain a report from them, as well as your GP. This report will only be seen and reviewed by an Occupational Health practitioner. They will make recommendations based on a range of information which could include medical examinations, GP reports, specialist reports and discussions at welfare visits as to whether you are likely to return in work the foreseeable future. If the recommendation is you are unlikely to return in the foreseeable future you may be referred to the Independent Review Medical Practitioner or the Pension Fund Doctor (for those in the pension fund).

The appointment may result in a number of outcomes, which will be discussed fully with you following receipt of the medical reports, but could include:

- Fit to return to work with workplace adjustments and/or rehabilitation
- Redeployment to another job within the Council if available and suitable
- Service area to review with HR your continued employment
- Being declared permanently unfit
- Being declared temporarily unfit

### Manager / Supervisor Responsibilities

#### 17. What if the employee is unlikely to return to work in the foreseeable future?

With the employee's consent, further medical reports may be obtained from the employee's GP and/or specialist. You will not see a copy of the GP/specialist reports but you may receive a medical report from the Occupational Health and Wellbeing Unit outlining the prognosis.

Should medical advice suggest that the employee is unlikely to return to work in the foreseeable future then the employee will be referred to the Independent Review Medical Practitioner or the Pension Fund Doctor (for those in the pension fund). A welfare visit must be arranged with the employee to discuss this referral and what the impact of this could mean to their future employment with the Council. Managers are encouraged to seek advice and support from Human Resources prior to undertaking discussions of this nature with the employee.

A number of recommendations can be made, which could include:

- Fit to return to work with workplace adjustments and/or rehabilitation
- Redeployment to another job within the Council if available and suitable
- Service area to review your continued employment with HR
- Being declared permanently/temporarily unfit

Following receipt of the medical report you should seek advice from your HR representative.

## Managing Attendance

### A Guide for all Managers and Employees

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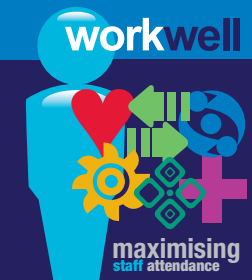
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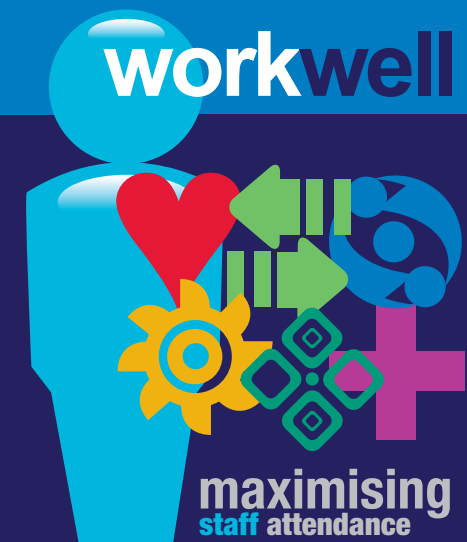
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## **Managing Attendance**

### **A Guide for all Managers and Employees**

#### **LONG TERM SICKNESS**

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