

POLICY DOCUMENT

Policy Title:	Sickness Absence Policy
Policy Group:	Human Resources
Policy Owner:	Human Resources Manager
Issue Date:	30 July 2024
Review Period:	36 months earlier if there are changes in employment legislation affecting this policy.
Next Review Due	30 July 2027
Author:	S. O'Rourke
Cross References:	Staff Handbook, Statement of Main Terms Conditions of Employment, Payroll policy, Induction, Absence Reporting policy/procedure
Evidence:	Delafield Consulting, ACAS, Department for Work and Pensions
How implementation will be monitored:	Financial report 3 yearly review HR Metrics
Sanctions to apply for breach:	Retraining, Disciplinary Action
Computer File Ref.	O:newpolicybook/humanresources/sicknessabsence
Policy Accepted by MT	30 th July 2024
Sign-off by	

1. Introduction

This policy provides guidance to Employees in relation to sickness absence including correct reporting procedure.

2. Statement of Purpose:

The good health and wellbeing of the Hospital's employees is important and the Hospital aims to work with employees who may be unwell to help support them back into the workplace, improve attendance at work and lessen the impact of staff absence on the quality of care delivered to our patients.

The Hospital operates a discretionary sickness benefit scheme, as detailed in the Main Statement of Terms and Conditions of Employment, which entitles employees, who meet certain conditions, to be paid when they are absent from work through genuine sickness or injury preventing them from undertaking their duties.

This policy sets out the basic conditions to be met; gives information on how this benefit is calculated and describes what steps employees must take to claim Benefit. The hospital reserves the right to withdraw or amend this benefit at any time.

Formal absence management procedures are set out below

This policy does not form part of your contract of employment, unless otherwise stated, and can be amended at any time. We may also vary the processes within this policy, including any time limits, as appropriate in any case.

The Objectives are to:

- Ensure Employees are aware of the notifications they must provide when they are unable to attend work due to sickness.
- Provide procedures to manage sickness absence in a fair and consistent way which enables Holy Cross Hospital (HCH) to understand the reason(s) for Employees' sickness absence and provide support to those Employees who are genuinely sick, with the aim of helping them return to work as soon as possible and minimising sickness absence levels at HCH.

3. Policy Statement:

Regular attendance at work is critical to the success of HCH and Employees are expected to take responsibility for achieving and maintaining good attendance. Absence, whether short-term or long-term increases costs and places an additional work burden on other Employees. Employees' sickness absence record therefore must be taken into account in determining remuneration, progression opportunities and retention.

The policy sets out the process that HCH will follow when addressing sickness absence in most instances. However, HCH reserves the right to adapt and amend the process according to particular circumstances of the case. Except where otherwise indicated, this policy is non-contractual.

4. Scope

This Policy only applies to individuals employed by HCH under a contract of employment.

5. Definitions

- SSP: Statutory Sick Pay
- Basic Pay: Basic hourly rate of pay (without enhancements)
- Maternity related absence: Unable to attend work for reasons connected to pregnancy

6. Responsibilities

Human Resources: are responsible for:

- Reviewing and revising this Policy to maintain compliance with legal and regulatory requirements;
- Giving guidance to managers on the application of this Policy; and
- Assisting with the formal absence management procedures including attending meetings where appropriate.

Managers/Line Managers: are responsible for:

- Administering this Policy in a consistent and fair manner.

Employees: are responsible for:

- Providing the required notifications regarding sickness absence;
- Communicating with Line Managers regarding the status of their absence and their expected date of return, and
- Providing documentation required under this Policy.

7. Reporting Sickness Absence

7.1 Reporting absence

7.1.1 If an employee becomes ill while at work and feels that they cannot continue to work, they must report to their Line Manager and ask for permission to leave work. If their Line Manager is not available, the Employee should contact the next level of management. The Employee must not leave work without prior permission.

7.1.2 If an Employee is unable to attend work because of illness or injury they must telephone their line manager (or the Nurse in Charge of the Hospital outside of their hours) and Human Resources

as soon as possible on their first day of absence and a minimum of 2 hours before their normal start time. We do however request whenever possible as much notice is provided to organise suitable replacement for absence. It is the employees' responsibility to ensure that their line manager is informed of their absence, the reasons for the absence and when the Employee is likely to return to work. **Only in exceptional circumstances** – such as the staff member has been hospitalised or physically cannot communicate will calls reporting sickness, or any other type of absence, be taken from a third party.

- 7.1.3 The Line Manager should also ask the Employee if there is any information they need to know about the Employee's current work to enable cover to be arranged where necessary.
- 7.1.4 It is HCH's policy to keep in reasonable touch with Employees during all periods of absence whatever their length. The employee must continue to update their Line Manager regularly (every day unless told otherwise by their Line Manager) regarding their absence and when they expect to return to work. If the Employee does not do this then HCH may contact the Employee to ask about their health and when they are likely to return to work.
- 7.1.5 If the Employee fails to give notice of their absence in accordance with this Policy it may result in the Employee's absence being treated as unauthorised. It will then be dealt with under the Disciplinary Policy and it may result in disciplinary action being taken against the Employee and Hospital Sick Pay being withheld.

7.2 Evidence of Incapacity

- 7.2.1. If the Employee is unable to attend work because of illness or injury they must provide evidence of their incapacity.
- 7.2.2. If the Employee is absent from work for 7 calendar days or less they must complete an Incapacity to Work (self-certification) form.
- 7.2.3. The completed form should be sent or presented to their Line Manager as soon as possible. The Line Manager will then discuss the form with them in their return to work meeting (see **section 7.12** below).
- 7.2.4. In certain circumstances (for example, where there is a concern about the reasons for the Employee's absence) the Employee may be asked to produce a medical certificate to cover absences of 7 calendar days or less. HCH will cover the costs incurred in obtaining such a certificate on production of a doctor's invoice.
- 7.2.5 If the Employee's period of absence lasts for more than 7 calendar days they must provide a Statement of Fitness for Work (also known as a Fit Note) from their doctor. This should be sent or presented to HR as soon as possible. If the Employee's absence continues, they must provide further Fit Notes to cover the whole period of absence and each Fit Note must be provided before the last one expires. All Fit Notes must be sent or provided to HR.
- 7.2.5. A Fit Note allows the doctor to state that the Employee is "not fit for work", but it also allows them to state that the Employee "may be fit for work" taking into account the doctor's advice in the Fit Note. If the Employee's doctor states that the Employee may be fit for work then HCH will discuss the Fit Note with the Employee to see if any changes need to be agreed to help the Employee come back to work sooner.
- 7.2.6. If it is not possible for HCH to provide the support the doctor says the Employee needs to return to work - for example, by making the necessary workplace adjustments - then the Fit Note will be used in the same way as if the Employee's

doctor had advised that the Employee is "not fit for work".

- 7.2.7. If the Employee fails to provide evidence of their incapacity in accordance with this Policy it may result in the Employee's absence being treated as unauthorised. It will then be dealt with under the Disciplinary Policy and it may result in disciplinary action being taken against the Employee and Hospital Sick Pay being withheld.

7.3 Compulsory Sickness Absence

Any Employee who is absent from work with any contagious medical conditions for example Diarrhoea and/or Vomiting, must refrain from attending for work for at least 48 hours after the last symptoms. Catering staff must refrain from work for 72 hours after the last symptoms. Further information about specific, contagious medical conditions and length of absence from work can be obtained from the Director of Patient Services in the first instance.

7.4 Employee's entitlement to Statutory Sick Pay

- 7.4.1 Employees who are unable to attend work because of illness or injury will be entitled to receive Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) if they satisfy the relevant statutory requirements. The qualifying days will be Monday to Sunday.

- 7.4.2. SSP is not payable for the first 3 consecutive days of qualifying absence. It starts on the fourth consecutive qualifying day of absence and may be payable for up to 28 weeks.

7.5 Employee's entitlement to Hospital Sick Pay

- 7.5.1 In addition to the Statutory Sick Pay Scheme, the Hospital operates a discretionary Sick Pay Scheme for employees, details of which are as follows.

- 7.5.2 Employees who are unable to attend work because of illness or injury will be entitled to payment of their basic salary at the full rate in respect of such illness or injury in any rolling 12 month period (whether the absence is intermittent or continuous) for a period (in total) of:

Length of Continuous Service	Full Pay Weeks	Half Pay Weeks
Up to 6 months'	SSP only	Nil
7- 12 months	4 weeks	Nil
13 – 24 months	4 weeks	4 weeks
25 – 36 months	8 weeks	8 weeks
37 – 48 months'	16 weeks	16 weeks

- 7.5.3 Sickness payment is calculated using the basic rate of pay.

7.6 The 'Rolling' year

The rolling year, for sick pay purposes, is calculated by going back 1 calendar year from the first day of the current period of sickness. Hospital sick pay entitlement will be calculated by reference to this rolling year.

A letter of notification or email will be sent from Payroll with details of the dates when entitlement to full, half or zero sick pay changes.

- 7.6.1 For Employees working part-time sick pay entitlement will be pro-rated. Thereafter, Employees will not be entitled to any further payment from HCH (other than SSP) until the resumption of their duties, unless and to the extent that any absence thereafter is for substantially the same illness or injury or is related to or a consequence of it, in which cases it will attract SSP only.

- 7.6.2 The remuneration paid under 7.5.1 above will include any SSP payable and when this is exhausted it will be reduced by the amount of any Social Security Sickness Benefit or other benefits recoverable by the Employee (whether or not recovered).
- 7.6.3 HCH reserves the right to vary the entitlements set out at 7.5.1 above at its absolute discretion. However, in the event that HCH chooses to do so, any such exercise of its discretion will be considered on a case-by-case basis and will not create any entitlement, obligation, expectation or precedent in respect of any future circumstances or set of circumstances.

7.7 Withholding of Hospital Sick Pay

HCH reserves the right not to pay Employees Hospital Sick Pay (except for SSP) in the following circumstances:

- 7.7.1 Whilst the Employee is working out their notice period where the notice to be given by HCH under the Employee's contract of employment to terminate their employment is at least one week more than the Employee's statutory minimum notice requirement;
- 7.7.2 If the Employee fails to comply with the reporting requirements in this Policy;
- 7.7.3 If the Employee fails to provide evidence of their incapacity in accordance with this Policy;
- 7.7.4 If the Employee fails to cooperate with a referral to occupational health or a clinician appointed and paid for by HCH in accordance with this Policy; or
- 7.7.5 If the Employee is sick on a bank holiday in which they were scheduled to work or immediately before/after a day off, bank holiday or a period of holiday.

7.8 Medical Examinations

- 7.8.1 Employees are encouraged, at the request of HCH, to have a medical examination performed by occupational health or a clinician appointed and paid for by HCH.
- 7.8.2 If requested, Employees are encouraged to assist HCH in obtaining information from the Employee's own doctor (or other medical adviser), subject to the Access to Medical Reports Act 1988, about their health to the extent it has an actual or potential bearing upon the Employee's ability to perform their duties or in relation to any other aspect of the Employee's employment.

7.9 Occupational Health

Employees are responsible for ensuring their attendance at any Occupational Health appointment. Failure to attend or given incorrect notice of non-attendance/change of appointment date (minimum of two days notice before the appointment date) will result in a short notice cancellation fee which may be passed on to the Employee.

7.10 Conduct During Sickness Absence

- 7.10.1 During any period of sickness absence Employees are expected to act in a way that will help ensure a timely return to work. That includes full compliance with doctor's orders in relation to treatments, courses and rehabilitation.
- 7.10.2 Employees that are absent from work due to sickness should not take part in any sports, hobbies or other avoidable activities that could aggravate their condition or delay their recovery. This excludes specific activities recommended by the Employee's own doctor or other medical adviser to improve their health.

7.10.3 Employees should also not undertake any other employment, whether paid or unpaid, during any period of sickness absence. If any Employee fails to do this then it may result in disciplinary action being taken against them as well as Hospital Sick Pay being withheld.

7.11 Sickness Absence and Holidays

7.11.1 If any Employee becomes ill while on pre-arranged holiday which means that they would be unfit for work on that day, the Employee may ask HCH to treat the period of incapacity as sickness absence rather than holiday. The Employee must inform their Line Manager of their illness and its likely duration as soon as possible on the first day of sickness, even if the Employee is abroad.

7.11.2 The Employee will not be entitled to treat those days as sick leave instead of holiday or to receive Hospital Sick Pay (except for Statutory Sick Pay) unless they are able to provide a doctor's medical certificate or other evidence of incapacity at their expense to cover the whole period of absence. Replacement holiday may be required to be taken on days nominated by HCH.

7.11.3 If any Employee is absent from work due to sickness they may cancel any pre-arranged holiday that coincides with the period of sickness absence. The Employee must notify their Line Manager as soon as possible if the Employee wishes to do this.

7.12 Return to Work Meetings

7.12.1 An Employee who has been absent from work because of illness or injury will be invited to attend a return to work meeting with their Line Manager on their return to work at the start of their shift or at the earliest convenience on their first day back to work.

7.12.2 During the return to work meeting, the reasons for the Employee's absence will be discussed along with whether there are any underlying problems that may affect the Employee's ability to attend work on a regular basis and whether there are any reasonable steps that can be taken to reduce the likelihood of future absence. Any concerns that HCH has about the Employee's level of absence will also be discussed during the meeting along with any relevant documents (including self-certification forms and Fit Notes).

7.12.3 Depending on the reasons for the Employee's absence, it may be appropriate to refer the Employee to occupational health or a clinician appointed and paid for by HCH.

7.13 Disciplinary Action

7.13.1. If at any time HCH believes that an Employee has taken or are taking sickness absence and they are not ill or are misrepresenting the nature, cause or gravity of their illness then this will be dealt with under the Disciplinary Policy.

7.13.2 This may result in disciplinary action being taken against the Employee, up to and including dismissal.

7.14 Record Keeping and Confidentiality

7.14.1 Records will be kept of all meetings held under this Policy and procedure (including return to work meetings) and of all medical information provided to HCH in connection with Employees.

7.14.2 These records are confidential and will be retained in accordance with the relevant data protection legislation.

8. Managing Short-Term Sickness Absence

If any Employee's sickness absence exceeds certain "trigger points" as outlined in [Appendix 1](#) HCH will take formal action under the short-term intermittent absence management procedure (see [Appendix 1](#)).

- 8.1 This will normally include holding formal absence hearings with the Employee and, where appropriate, issuing formal warnings. In certain cases after a fair procedure, excessive absence may result in the termination of employment. However, HCH's main priority will always be to achieve satisfactory levels of attendance.
- 8.2 Any maternity-related absences before an Employee's maternity leave will not be taken into account for the purposes of this procedure. Maternity related absence is recorded separately from Sickness absence.

9. Managing long-term sickness absence

Absences of more than 4 consecutive weeks will be dealt with in accordance with the long-term absence management procedure (see [Appendix 2](#)).

- 9.1 In certain cases after a fair procedure, extended sickness absence may lead to the Employee's dismissal.

10. Disability

If any Employee believes that they have a disability or any medical condition which affects their ability to do their job or attend work on a regular basis, the Employee should inform their Line Manager as soon as possible.

11. General

All absence is monitored by the Human Resources department and the levels are regularly reported to the Senior Management Team and summaries provided to Heads of Departments/Senior Managers when levels are above the national absence or patterns/trends are identified.

Appendix 1 - Formal Short-Term Intermittent Absence Management Procedure

Triggers

This procedure will be applied if:

1. An Employee has been absent due to sickness on 4 or more separate occasions in any 12-month period; or
2. An Employee has been absent for a total of 10 days in any 12-month period; or
3. HCH is concerned about a pattern of sickness absence for an Employee, for example, regularly taking off certain days of the week or days next to holidays.

These "trigger" levels are for general guidance only. What constitutes an unacceptable absence pattern will be judged on a case-by-case basis, and HCH reserves the right to commence this procedure in other situations where it considers it necessary.

Procedure

If an Employee triggers the formal sickness absence procedure, they will be informed in writing of HCH's concerns about their absence. The Employee will be invited to attend an absence hearing with their Line Manager to discuss:

- The reasons for the Employee's absence;
- The impact of the Employee's absence;
- The likelihood of further absences;
- Whether medical advice is required;
- What, if any, reasonable steps HCH may take to help the Employee improve their attendance; and
- Any action that will be taken and a timescale for review/arranging a further meeting under this procedure.

A hearing may be adjourned if the Line Manager needs to gather any further information or obtain medical advice. The Employee will be given a reasonable opportunity to consider any new information obtained before the hearing is reconvened.

If the Line Manager concludes that medical advice is required, for example to determine whether the Employee's absences are caused by an underlying medical condition, the Employee is encouraged to have a medical examination performed by occupational health or a clinician appointed and paid for by HCH.

The Employee must make every effort to attend the hearing. If the Employee fails to attend without proper reason, HCH may proceed with the hearing in the Employee's absence.

If at the end of the hearing, HCH believes, having weighed up all the evidence, that the Employee's absence is unacceptable the Employee will be issued with a formal warning, which will be confirmed in writing.

The warning will usually set out:

- The reasons for the warning;
- The level of improvement in the Employee's attendance required;
- Any interim review meetings to be held during the period of the warning;
- Any support that HCH will provide to assist the Employee to improve their attendance;
- What may happen if the Employee fails to achieve or maintain the required standard of attendance; and
- How long the warning will remain active. An Improvement Notice will usually remain in force for 6 months from the date on which it is given. A First Written Warning and a Final Written Warning will usually remain in force for 12 months from the date on which it is given unless otherwise stated. Any spent warning may be taken into account by

HCH to the extent it remains relevant to other decisions relating to the Employee's employment, for example pay and promotion. The duration of any warning (and of any period given to the Employee for improvement) will be automatically extended by the amount of time that the Employee may be absent from work for any extended period including without limitation maternity leave, parental leave, sickness and study leave.

Formal sanctions

In deciding what level of sanction to impose HCH will consider, amongst other matters, the nature of the Employee's absences, the Employee's past attendance record, the extent to which HCH's concerns have already been brought to the Employee's attention outside the formal sickness absence procedure, the likelihood of the Employee's attendance record improving, any mitigating circumstances, the seriousness of the impact of the absence on HCH and any other facts that HCH considers appropriate. HCH reserves the right to omit one or more stages of the procedure where circumstances dictate.

1. Improvement Notice

If HCH believes that the Employee needs to improve their attendance the Employee will receive an Improvement Notice. A note of this will be placed on the Employee's file.

2. First Written Warning

If there is no improvement in the Employee's attendance or insufficient improvement, or the improvement in attendance is not maintained during the period of the Improvement Notice, the Employee will be invited to a further absence hearing. In the absence of a satisfactory explanation, HCH may issue a First Written Warning.

3. Final Written Warning

If there is no improvement in the Employee's attendance, or insufficient improvement, or the improvement in attendance is not maintained during the period of the First Written Warning, the Employee will be invited to a further absence hearing. In the absence of a satisfactory explanation, HCH may issue a Final Written Warning.

4. Dismissal

HCH may dismiss the Employee if there is no improvement, or insufficient improvement, or the improvement in attendance is not maintained during the period of the Final Written Warning. In these circumstances the Employee will be invited to a further absence hearing. In the absence of a satisfactory explanation HCH may dismiss the Employee with notice.

Appeal

If the Employee is unhappy with the outcome of any decision taken under this procedure, they can appeal in writing to the CEO within 5 calendar days of the decision complained about setting out the full grounds of their appeal.

The Employee will be invited to attend an appeal hearing to discuss their appeal. The conduct of the appeal will be a matter for the CEO who may also adjourn the hearing to conduct any further enquiries that they believe are necessary.

The Employee must make every effort to attend the appeal hearing. If the Employee fails to attend without proper reason, HCH may proceed with the hearing in the Employee's absence. The Employee will be informed in writing of HCH's final decision after the appeal hearing. This decision will be final and there is no further right of appeal.

The right to be accompanied

If an Employee attends a hearing under this procedure, they have the right to be accompanied by a willing work colleague (for the avoidance of doubt this excludes volunteers) or trade union representative of their choice if they reasonably request this. The Employee must make a written or verbal request to be accompanied to the Line Manager/CEO as soon as possible and should state the name of their proposed companion and whether they are a willing work colleague or trade union representative. HCH will arrange a date for the hearing to take place. If the Employee's chosen companion cannot attend on the date proposed, HCH will propose an alternative time and date.

The Employee's chosen companion will be able to address the hearing, put forward the Employee's case, sum it up, respond to any views expressed at the hearing and confer with the Employee, but cannot answer questions on their behalf.

If the Employee does not comply with this procedure, they may lose the right to be accompanied by their chosen companion.

Appendix 2: Formal Long-Term Absence Management Procedure

Trigger

If an Employee has been or is expected to be absent from work for four weeks or more then they will be invited to attend an absence hearing with their Line Manager.

Procedure

This hearing may be arranged at HCH, at the Employee's home or at another agreed location or via TEAMS

The hearing will be to discuss:

- The Employee's health and the reasons for their absence;
- How long the Employee's absence is likely to last;
- Any medical advice received and whether further medical advice is required;
- What, if any, reasonable steps HCH may take to facilitate the Employee's return to work; and
- Any action that will be taken and a timescale for review/arranging a further meeting under this procedure.

If the Line Manager concludes that medical advice is required, the Employee agrees to have a medical examination performed by occupational health or a clinician appointed and paid for by HCH.

If the Employee's absence continues, monthly review meetings or discussions will then be held with the Employee. The purpose of these meetings is to:

- Discuss the reasons for and impact of the Employee's ongoing absence;
- Discuss how long the Employee's absence is likely to last;
- Consider any medical advice received and whether any further advice is required;
- Review any actions which have been discussed;
- Consider the Employee's ability to return to their job in light of the Employee's capabilities and HCH's business needs and any further support or adjustments HCH may take to facilitate the Employee's return to work;
- Explore whether alternative work is available that would be suitable;
- Agree a return-to-work programme (where the Employee is able to return to work); and
- Depending on what steps have already been taken, warn the Employee that they are at risk of dismissal.

Further hearing

Where the Employee has been warned that they are at risk of dismissal (for example if it becomes clear at any stage that a return to work is unlikely within a reasonable timescale; the Employee will be unable to carry out their role effectively; or medical evidence indicates that a recurrence is highly likely or that the Employee will be permanently unfit for work), the Employee will be invited to attend a hearing to discuss their sickness absence and one potential outcome of this hearing is that the Employee's employment will be terminated with notice.

The purpose of the hearing is to:

- Review the meetings that have taken place and matters discussed with the Employee;
- Consider any medical advice received;
- Consider whether there have been any changes since the last meeting

regarding the Employee's possible return to work or opportunities for alternative work;

- Give the Employee an opportunity to state their case and raise any matters the Employee thinks HCH should be aware of; and
- Consider the possible termination of the Employee's employment.

Such a hearing may be arranged at HCH, at the Employee's home or at another agreed location. The Employee must make every effort to attend this hearing. If the Employee fails to attend without proper reason, HCH may proceed with the hearing in the Employee's absence.

Appeal

If the Employee is unhappy with the outcome of any decision taken under this procedure, they can appeal in writing to the CEO within 5 calendar days of the decision complained about setting out the full grounds of their appeal.

The Employee will be invited to attend an appeal hearing to discuss their appeal. The conduct of the appeal will be a matter for the CEO who may also adjourn the hearing to conduct any further enquiries that they believe are necessary.

The Employee must make every effort to attend this hearing. If the Employee fails to attend without proper reason, HCH may proceed with the hearing in the Employee's absence.

The Employee will be informed in writing of HCH's final decision after the appeal hearing. This decision will be final and there is no further right of appeal.

The right to be accompanied

If an Employee attends a hearing under this procedure, they have the right to be accompanied by a willing work colleague (for the avoidance of doubt this excludes volunteers) or trade union representative of their choice if they reasonably request this. The Employee must make a written or verbal request to be accompanied to the Line Manager/CEO as soon as possible and should state the name of their proposed companion and whether they are a willing work colleague or trade union representative.

HCH will arrange a date for the hearing to take place. If the Employee's chosen companion cannot attend on the date proposed, HCH will propose an alternative time and date.

The Employee's chosen companion will be able to address the hearing, put forward the Employee's case, sum it up, respond to any views expressed at the hearing and confer with the Employee, but cannot answer questions on their behalf.

If the Employee does not comply with this procedure, they may lose the right to be accompanied by their chosen companion.

Equality impact Assessment (EIA) Tool

This policy has been reviewed for adverse impact on people with protected characteristics within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010 and no such impact was found.

To be considered and where judged appropriate, completed and attached to any policy document when submitted to the appropriate committee for consideration and approval.

Policy Title	Sickness Absence Policy	Name	Sue O'Rourke
		Yes/No	Comments
1.	Does the policy/guidance affect one group less or more favourably than another on the basis of:	No	
	Race	No	
	Gender reassignment	No	
	Marriage & civil partnership	No	
	Pregnancy & maternity	No	
	Ethnic origins (including gypsies and travellers)	No	
	Nationality	No	
	Sex	No	
	Culture	No	
	Religion or belief	No	
	Sexual orientation	No	
	Age	No	
	Disability- both mental and physical impairments	No	
2.	Is there any evidence that some groups are affected differently?	No	
3.	Is the impact of the policy/guidance likely to be negative?	No	
4.	If so can the impact be avoided?	NIA	
5.	What alternatives are there to achieving the policy/guidance without the impact?	NIA	
6.	Can we reduce the impact by taking different action?	NIA	
7.	If you have identified potential discrimination, are any exceptions valid, legal and/or justifiable?	NIA	

Review

This policy has been reviewed for overt or implied discrimination within the scope of the Hospital's policies on equality and diversity and none was found.

The policy will be reviewed on a three yearly basis to ensure that the system described continues to provide an effective framework for Sickness Absence.