



Workforce

**Attendance Policy : guide to
Occupational Health Service (OHS)
referrals**

OHS Referral

OHS can be asked to provide expert, impartial advice on health matters related to the workplace. This will be requested through either a self-referral or a management referral. OHS will offer an appointment that will generate a formal report. The appointment will either be face-to-face or by telephone.

Self-referral

An employee can use the self referral option where they feel that they would benefit from advice in relation to their health and work. This is not intended to replace or to be used as a GP service and employees should be aware that the Occupational Health staff cannot prescribe medication nor treat conditions.

Employees may use a template self referral form if this is provided by their employer's OHS.

OHS will not share the self referral report with the employee's manager or any other third party but the employee may choose to do so. Sharing the self-referral report with the manager and / or having a discussion to progress a management referral could provide additional support for the employee.

Management referral

A manager can use a management referral to request advice in relation to an employee's health and work.

Situations where a management referral may be appropriate

- In cases of long-term sickness absence- where the employee has been absent from work for 29 days or more, for advice on likely return to work and rehabilitation
- In some (but not all) cases of frequent, short-term sickness absence or where there are patterns of absence for advice on whether there is an underlying health condition and / or work is adversely affecting health
- In cases where advice on the possible rehabilitation or redeployment of an employee particularly with reference to the Equality Act 2010
- To seek OHS advice to consider how the employee can be supported through a formal process under NHSScotland Workforce Policies
- To seek OHS advice to explore any concerns that may be impacting on the employee's health and work

Progressing the management referral

Managers should use the template management referral form if this is provided by their employer's OHS.

The manager will share and discuss the content and reasons for the referral with the employee prior to this being progressed to OHS. In exceptional circumstances where this is not possible, the manager must advise the employee that a referral is being progressed and the reason for this.

A management referral is intended to be a supportive process. Where an employee does not engage in the referral process this will limit the information made available and the manager's ability to support them.

The management referral form should set out the reasons for the referral along with any specific issues and questions. This may include questions about the following:

- Whether there is an underlying health condition that may impact on work
- Whether the condition should be considered under the Equality Act 2010
- The prognosis and likely effect on fitness for work
- Workplace restrictions or adaptations to support the employee to remain at or return to work, with timescales for review
- Any programme of support including timescales
- Return to work programme e.g. the times / work-patterns and recommended duration of a phased return
- Information regarding ill-health retirement
- Fitness to participate in processes held under NHSScotland Workforce Policies

It may also be helpful to attach the job description, attendance record, and any other relevant information.