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Date: 24/04/2023
Our ref: 1528/23

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FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST REFERENCE NO: GSA 1528/23

I write in connection with your request for information dated 20/03/2023, received by Greater Manchester Police (GMP) for the following information:

Can you please provide me with the break down of the following for the last 2 financial years please.

- 1. Male and female officers in terms of sick absence -reasons for sick absence broke down into male/female*
- 2. Number of long term absences (29 days plus) broke down into male/female*
- 3. number currently absence for 183 days or more-broke down into male/female*
- 4. average cost of average daily sickness broke down into male/female*

This info is not related to a specific time or place.

- 5. Are you also able to provided me with a copy of your sick absence management policy please?*

Result of Searches

Following receipt of your request searches were conducted within Greater Manchester Police (GMP) to locate the requested information and I can confirm the information requested is held by GMP.

Question 1:

April 2021-March 2022	
Male Officers Sickness Absence Reasons	Female Officers Sickness Absence Reasons
Cancer	Cancer
Cardiac/Circulatory or Metabolic	Cardiac/Circulatory or Metabolic
COVID-19	Covid-19
Digestive	Digestive
Ear Nose and Throat	Ear Nose and Throat
Genito-Urinary	Genito-Urinary
GMP Specific	GMP Specific
Gynaecological	Gynaecological
Infectious Diseases	Infectious Diseases
Miscellaneous	Maternity Related
Musculo-Skeletal	Miscellaneous
Nervous System Disorders	Musculo-Skeletal
Other Upper Respiratory Tract Infection	Nervous System Disorders
Skin	Other Upper Respiratory Tract Infection
Undetermined	Skin
	Undetermined

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Undetermined	Skin
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Question 2:

This data has been extracted from March 2021 and March 2022 respectively and includes both police staff and police officers. These are the total number of absences over 29 days at the end of 31st March of the relevant year.

At end of 31st March 2021		At end of 31st March 2022	
Male	Female	Male	Female
805	738	927	918

Question 3:

This data includes staff and officers who had 6 months and over absence days at the end of 28th February 2023.

Band	Male	Female
6 months and over	94	96

Question 4:

This data extracted from 31st March of the relevant year.

The data includes both staff and officers and the calculation that has taken place is the total cost of all sickness for given gender divided by the number of days of absence incurred by the said gender; for the relevant year.

At end of 31st March 2021		At end of 31st March 2022	
Male	Female	Male	Female
£177.80	£142.31	£176.08	£148.40

Question 5:

An extract from the relevant policy that concerns the management of sickness absences is below:

6.1 Feeling unwell at work

If you think that your ability to do your job is affected because of any type of ill-health you should discuss this with your manager. It may be that temporary adjustments to your duties will be beneficial to your health and will help you stay in work. You should:

- recognise that we want to help and support you
- talk to your manager straight away
- be prepared to discuss what support we can give you
- share any relevant medical information that you might have

Your manager may –

- • talk to you about your work, or worries, and help you identify appropriate support.
- • signpost you to appropriate support.
- • encourage you to seek medical advice where appropriate
- • discuss with you what support might enable you to stay in work. Wherever possible we'll help you to stay at work.

They'll discuss with you what you feel may help. This may include a brief rest period, or a change to your duties. This might be needed for a few days or for a longer period. If you need to go home however, we'll record this as a part days sickness but it won't be treated as a sick day or duty for the purposes of sick pay.

If you continue to be sick on subsequent working days then you need to report sick and follow the process below.

6.2 How to Report Sick

If you're unwell and unable to come to work you should report sick as soon as possible on your first day of absence and before your normal start time.

You should contact your manager or designated contact point telling them:

- • the reason for your absence,
- • how long you expect to be off,
- • any urgent work, meetings or court dates,
- • agree when you'll speak next.

In most cases we'll expect you to make contact, rather than a relative or friend. If you haven't contacted your manager before your normal start time they'll contact you. If there's an increased concern for your welfare they may visit you at home.

6.3 While you're off Sick

Keeping in touch

You should keep in regular contact with your manager. Ideally you should agree the next call or meeting each time you speak .

Visiting your GP or other Authorised Healthcare Professional

If you're off for 8 days or more you'll need to visit your GP or other authorised healthcare professional to get a Fit Note. The Fit Note will explain if:

- • you're not fit for any work and for how long or;
- • you may be fit for some work

In some cases coming back to work can help your recovery and help maintain your general wellbeing. If you think there are aspects of your work, even if it's not your full role, that you could be doing, you should talk to your GP or other authorised healthcare professional, and your manager, about it.

When you receive a Fit Note you need to discuss the contents with your manager and send it to them soon as possible.

Visiting Occupational Health and Welfare

Whilst you're off your manager may refer you to Occupational Health. The purpose of this is to:

- Understand the impact your health has on your ability to do your job.
- Understand what further support can be provided.
- Understand what adjustments could be made to your role.
- Seek specific work-related advice that your GP or other authorised healthcare professional may not be able to give.
- Allow you to discuss your health with someone who understands the likely impact of your ability to do your job.

6.4 Keeping in contact with your Manager

It's really important that you keep in contact with your manager while you're off sick, no matter how long you're off. Your manager will contact you regularly but you should also share responsibility for keeping in touch. This contact might be through telephone calls, emails or face to face visits.

You'll have regular reviews and discussions throughout your absence. This is so you can:

- update your manager on the nature of your illness or injury,
- talk about the medical prognosis and likely length of your absence, and
- discuss what support or adjustments might be needed for your return to work, with advice from your GP or other authorised healthcare professional or OHWU.

You and your manager will agree when it would be best to meet. For example, this might be after you've seen your GP or other authorised healthcare professional, a specialist or OHWU and you've got an update to share.

Agreed Return to Work Plans and/or Plans to support improved attendance

At an appropriate time your manager will discuss and agree a Plan with you.

This might be –

- Where you now have guidance on the timescales for recovery.
- Where you are ready to plan a return to work or to full duties.
- When you can see some clear goals or milestones.

There are 2 types of Plans.

- A Plan to support improved attendance will be appropriate where you have a pattern of short term absence.
- A Return to Work Plan will be appropriate where you have been away from work for 29 days or longer.

This form should be used when discussing and agreeing the above plans.

It's difficult to be prescriptive as to when this will be completed but your manager won't be encouraging you to agree a Return to Work Plan before you are ready, for example -

- • where you're not medically fit to return in any capacity,
- • where medical advice is still unclear or
- • where you don't have any guidance on recovery times.

Reviewing your Plan

You and your manager will review your plan regularly and discuss this when you meet.

There may be set backs or you may make quicker progress than expected. Your plan may need to be amended and you'll do this in conjunction with your manager.

You might wish to discuss your plans to return to work, or to consider if working in a different way might help, before your manager raises it. You may for example have ideas that your manager has not yet considered. These might include:

- • completing some work from a different location or on a temporary basis from home,
- • undertaking a different role in a temporary capacity,
- • working different hours for a short time.

Ultimately the aim is to help you return to work, or to help you improve and sustain your attendance. You'll be given all practicable support to help you do this.

6.5 When you Return to Work

On your return to work your manager, as part of your return to work discussion, will record the details of your sickness absence, this will include self certification for you.

If you've been off for 8 days or more you'll also need to provide a Fit Note for this period if you haven't already done so.

Return to Work Discussion

When you come back to work after any period of sickness your manager will hold an informal Return to Work Discussion with you. This discussion is an important part of supporting your return to work. This'll be an opportunity for:

- • your manager to welcome you back,
- • for you to talk to your manager about your absence and anything else you want them to know and
- • for you both to discuss and agree what support GMP may provide.

Recuperative Duties

Whether it's recommended by your GP or other authorised healthcare professional on your Fit Note or not, before you come back to work your manager will discuss whether you need any temporary adjustments to help your recovery. They may seek advice from Occupational Health.

Recuperative Duties might include:

- a phased return to work,
- a change to the hours or shifts that you work,
- a change to the duties you do or your role,
- adaptations to your working environment, and/or
- working from a different location.

You and your manager should explore all of the reasonable and possible options. Any changes will be agreed on a temporary basis. This will normally be for no more than 3 months but can be offered for up to 6 months if it's needed

Considerations before taking Formal Action

Where your agreed Plan can't be met, despite further discussions and revisions, and all reasonable support has been offered, then we may need to consider taking formal action in line with Standards, Performance and Attendance.

Before taking this step your manager will write to you to summarise the support offered to date and the options that have been considered to try and help you return to work or to improve your attendance.

Although, you'll be meeting regularly with your manager, and updating your Plan when appropriate, it's important that we write to you at this stage. It's vital that you and your manager reflect on the support already offered and consider if anything else might help. You should both also review if options considered earlier might now be relevant.

Where nothing further can be done to help you return or improve your attendance then your manager will consider taking more formal action.

We'll only take action when we feel we've explored all options available to us.

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