



# Occupational Health Service (Staff)

(Service provided under contract by St George's University Hospitals, NHS Foundation Trust)

## Contents

Introduction.....	1
Appointments.....	2
Management referral.....	2
When to refer.....	2
The appointment.....	2
Occupational Health reports.....	3
Return to work plan.....	3
Occupational Health Services.....	4
Location.....	4
Confidentiality and data protection.....	4
Privacy notices.....	5

## Introduction

Occupational Health services (OH) for University staff and students are provided by a third-party provider, [St George's University Hospitals, NHS Foundation Trust](#) (the Trust).

The Trust are a separate organisation to the University and these services are provided under contract.

Occupational Health provides a wide range of services, consisting of a multidisciplinary team of highly qualified and experienced clinicians, including; doctors, nurses, an ergonomist and administration staff.

Occupational Health supports Managers and staff with the prevention of work-related ill-health and the support of those at work with health problems or disabilities.

This document provides information to staff on the Occupational Health service and how your personal information may be used when using the service.

## Appointments

Appointments are made via Human Resources (HR) following receipt of an [OH referral form](#) or where new staff need to register with Occupational Health due to their work exposures.

For work exposure appointments and vaccinations please contact Occupational Health directly: Occupational Health - Admin ([ohadmin@stgeorges.nhs.uk](mailto:ohadmin@stgeorges.nhs.uk)).

Once a referral form has been received by Occupational Health the HR representative will be contacted and will notify the referring manager and the individual of the appointment details.

## Management referral

Managers may refer a member of staff for an assessment and advice where there is concern about the person's health in relation, for example, to their performance or following long term or frequent sickness absence. An assessment can identify any health-related issues and provide objective information to assist in managing and supporting the individual. A management report is written with the individual's consent, following the appointment in Occupational Health and provided to HR, the referring manager and the employee.

The report will be held on the employee's staff record and may need to be referred to later as part of any informal or formal action required in the support or management of the situation. This may include seeking advice from the Safety, Health and Environment Office.

## When to refer

A member of staff should be referred for an assessment where there is concern that they may have work related health problems or that their health is being aggravated by work tasks, including where there are difficulties coping on return after being absent, eg following a serious illness or injury or due to a disability. There may be underlying ill health issues or a disability contributing to performance issues. Referral should also occur where there is long term or frequent sickness absence. If you are unsure whether a referral is appropriate please contact [HR](#) for further advice.

Following discussion with the member of staff, the manager must complete an: -

- [OH, referral form](#) containing full details for the individual, an outline of the problem and the matters on which advice is being sought
- Job description
- Sickness record
- any relevant risk assessments (eg DSE, individual stress, pregnancy etc.)

## The appointment

An initial assessment aims to collect sufficient information to provide an accurate, objective and useful opinion regarding fitness to perform the job.

The individual will be asked about: -

- The health problem or disability and any concerns that they have as well as any treatment that they may be receiving.
- The work that they undertake and any difficulties arising from health or other reasons.
- Any activities out of work that they are involved with.

In some instances, it may be necessary to request further information from the individual's general practitioner (GP) and/or hospital specialist. If this is the case the reason will be explained to the individual and they will be asked to sign a consent form allowing Occupational Health to approach their GP and/or hospital specialist for this information. Under the Access to Medical Reports Act 1988 the individual has a right to see this report before it is sent to Occupational Health. Sometimes and with consent, the Occupational Health professional may write to the individual's GP giving information about the outcome of the Occupational Health assessment. This can be particularly helpful where there are clinical findings or work arrangements that the Occupational Health professional believes the GP should be informed of.

The member of staff may be referred elsewhere that would facilitate a return to work and it may be necessary to review the individual to assess their progress as well as any medical reports received, before a firm opinion can be made about any return to work or to full duties.

## Occupational Health reports

Occupational Health reports are advisory only. The content of a report will depend on the reason for the referral, the specific questions that have been asked and any necessary specific recommendations. Medical details are not usually disclosed unless this is deemed necessary when managing the individual in their work and when the individual has given their informed consent for disclosure.

Information provided may cover: -

- Whether the individual has an underlying health condition or disability that may affect attendance or performance at work.
- If so, the likely effects on future attendance/performance.
- Measures to support the individual during their absence.
- Whether time off work will be required for appointments/treatments.
- When the individual may be likely to return to work.
- Recommendations on how to assist a return to work eg a phased return.
- Advice regarding any workplace restrictions/adaptations.
- Whether the disability provision of the Equality Act is likely to apply.

## Return to work plan

A rehabilitation and/or phased return to work plan may be recommended by Occupational Health to allow the member of staff to gradually build up to their contracted duties. This can be beneficial to the individual returning to work after certain illnesses or injury and can also facilitate an earlier return to work.

Recommendations for a phased return may include: -

- Amended duties and/or temporary redeployment.
- Reduced working hours.
- Assistance with some tasks, especially if physically demanding.
- Temporary restrictions on tasks undertaken.
- A combination of the above.

Where indicated a workplace visit may be advised to ensure that recommendations are appropriate and can be accommodated. The individual will be reviewed regularly during this period.

## Occupational Health Services

The following lists the main services provided by Occupational Health.

- Pre-employment health checks
- Assessment for fitness to work after an illness or injury
- Advice on sickness absence management
- Advice on stress management and mediation
- Counselling services
- Assessment for long-term disability benefits or ill-health retirement
- Vaccination services
- Management of needlestick injuries
- Health Surveillance
- Policy development
- Health promotion
- Tailored ergonomics advice
- Workplace assessments
- Training and education.

## Location

Occupational Health can be found in the following locations:-

- Occupational Health, Unit 1 – Perimeter Road
- Occupational Health, Unit 2 – Perimeter Road, Willow Annex
- [St George's in-depth map / location finder \(PDF\)](#)

## Confidentiality and data protection

Occupational Health is committed to maintaining the privacy, dignity and confidentiality of service users at all times.

The service is medically confidential. The medical records are securely stored in line with data protection legislation and only accessible to Occupational Health staff. All Occupational Health staff adhere to a strict code of ethics in relation to the confidentiality of all consultations, telephone and email contact and the maintenance of medical records.

Generally, there is no requirement for the manager to know the diagnosis or receive clinical details. Reports to management concerning an individual's fitness for work will always be

discussed and agreed with the individual concerned prior to sending the report. This advice should be treated by the recipient as sensitive personal data in respect of data protection legislation and can be shared by the recipient only and with the individual's consent with others who have a legitimate need to know (eg because they will be responsible for implementing adjustments in the workplace).

### Privacy notices

Links to further information: -

- [Privacy notice - St George's, University of London](#)
- [Privacy notice – St George's University Hospitals, NHS Foundation Trust](#)
- [Staff privacy notice](#)
- [Job applicant privacy notice](#)