

# **Service Level Agreement 010422-310323**

## **Occupational Health and Wellbeing service**

### **Objective of the Agreement**

The purpose of this Service Level Agreement is to describe the key services we provide and the quality standards we aim to achieve in terms of service delivery.

This Agreement sets out

- the services we provide to the Schools
- the overall standards which are expected
- a mechanism for resolving any problems relating to the delivery of the service

### **Future reviews and amendments to this Service Level Agreement**

This agreement will be reviewed annually.

### **Objectives of the Service**

We aim to provide an Occupational Health and Wellbeing service that supports schools within the following area/s:

- Keeping employees healthy and well, reducing absenteeism and assisting to achieve good levels of performance
- Achieve good practice and legal standards for workplace health management
- Protection against the disruption and potential losses associated with ill health and injuries at work

We recognise our service users to be:

- Head teachers
- Governors
- Business Managers
- School employees

### **Responsibilities: Who we are and what we do**

The team comprises of qualified and experienced occupational health professionals including Occupational Health Advisers (Nurses) and Occupational Health Physicians. There is a People Strategy and Development Manager that manages the unit and that can coordinate access to additional services including Counselling, CBT, Physiotherapy and Health Promotion.

#### **Key contacts are:**

Barbara Higgins, Occupational Health Manager

Email: [b.higgins@bury.gov.uk](mailto:b.higgins@bury.gov.uk)

Tel: 0161 253 6038

Catherine King, People Strategy and Development Manager

Email: [c.king@bury.gov.uk](mailto:c.king@bury.gov.uk)

Tel: 0161 253 6371

Karen Hunt, Administrative Support,

## **Service Availability**

The team are located within a Town Hall annex and service cover is usually provided between 9.00 am and 5.00 pm Monday to Friday. All team members will respond promptly to emails and enquiries and provide cover within the team for colleagues.

## **Main Services**

### **1. Occupational Health and Wellbeing service**

#### **Objective:**

To provide schools and educational establishments with:

- A comprehensive occupational health advice and support service to assist in the management of health and ill health at work and to ensure compliance with workplace health and disability legislation, and with good health management practice.
- Links to specialised support services in the fields of occupational health and workplace rehabilitation.
- An approach to occupational health management which involves coordination between relevant areas of professional support (including Health and Safety and Human Resources) and treatment services, with a view to ensuring that interventions are relevant and timed appropriately.

The team will deliver the following services to schools:

- Pre-employment health assessments/medical examinations where identified as appropriate through:
  - A health declaration following an initial conditional offer of employment or placement,
  - A specific request for occupational health assessment made by a candidate for employment or placement.
- Medical assessment of employees referred by schools where there are concerns with regard to health and fitness to work e.g. due to:
  - Repetitive short term sickness absence.
  - Long term sickness absence,
  - Concerns that an individual's health is affected work performance
  - Concerns that work has affected or may be affecting an individual's health
- Provision of medical opinion following the Occupational Health Adviser's assessment of an employee with regard to:
  - Fitness for return to work
  - Rehabilitation
  - Redeployment
  - Potential eligibility for ill health retirement
- Professional advice on actions that schools should take with regard to making temporary or permanent adjustments to work, and provision of reasonable support, in light of Equality Act requirements.
- Professional advice on actions that are recommended to schools to assist in rehabilitation from ill health conditions and back into work based on recognised good practice and/or a business case.
- Professional advice on actions that are recommended to schools on the basis of good practice and/or a sound business case to assist in the management and control of health conditions. This may include recommendations of additional services which are outside the scope of this agreement such as counselling,

specialist psychotherapies, physiotherapy, or private medical diagnosis and/or treatment. This is with a view to:

- Avoiding deterioration,
- Mitigating any potential liabilities,
- Assisting with rehabilitation,
- Improvement and/or maintenance of the individual's work performance
- Case conference and case management meetings involving an Occupational Health Nurse Adviser and/or an Occupational Health Physician with a limit of 1 hour duration and where they may be held within the service's own accommodation subject to Covid restrictions but if not possible then alternative arrangement of MS Teams may be required. Note that additional charges will apply if the attendance of an Occupational Health Physician is required. Only if the school doesn't buy into the OH SLA
- Provision of advice and guidance to individuals who are referred to the service with regard to:
  - General advice on health and wellbeing
  - Specific advice on the management of personal health conditions and health risk factors
  - Advice on potential support and rehabilitation services that may be available to them including the exercise referral programme, grant support such as "Access to Work" (a government grant aimed at supporting people with disabilities to remain in or take up work)
  - Advice on future treatment and support options
- Health surveillance arising from risk assessments made under relevant health and safety legislation for those employees who are at risk of developing recognised health conditions as a result of their work.
- Professional advice on any inoculations which may be recommended for staff based on a risk assessments of the potential for exposure to infection through work and/or particular vulnerabilities of service users/pupils.
- Advice and guidance on the most appropriate approach and coordination between relevant areas of professional support (including Health and Safety and Human Resources) and treatment services with a view to ensuring that workplace health management interventions are appropriately timed and relevant.
- Advice and guidance on a spectrum of Occupational Health and wellbeing related matters.
- Health education and health promotional information and materials.

#### **Further services available at additional cost:**

There are a range of services which schools may wish to purchase from time to time that can be provided by, or arranged through, the Occupational Health service. These include:

- Counselling and specialist psychotherapies
- Physiotherapy
- Vision screening, eye and eyesight testing- basic screening routinely done by Occupational Health at no extra cost as part of the SLA - we do not arrange external tests
- Fast track appointments or appointments that are outside the triage arrangements – only through Healthwork
- Case conferences and case management meetings where they involve the attendance of an Occupational Health Physician (in place of or in addition to an Occupational Health Nurse Adviser) when not buying into the SLA

Prices will be provided on request and will be dependent on the specific services that are required.

#### **What we need from Schools:**

If schools opt to buy into the Occupational Health Support Service package, they should endeavour to:

- Provide relevant information as necessary for the Occupational Health service to provide its service
- Ensure that appointments with Occupational Health are kept
- Ensure that nobody starts work without prior assessment of their fitness to do so. However, legal requirements changed during 2010 with the introduction of the Equalities Act. No health related questions must now be asked of candidates prior to final selection and conditional offer of employment unless:
  - It is to seek information on any arrangements and/or support that are needed to assist candidates to participate in the recruitment process – in which case reasonable arrangements and support should be provided and the health related information should in no way be used to influence final selection.
  - It is to enable positive action(s) to assist disabled people to take up employment

Otherwise, health assessments should only be made following an initial conditional offer of employment. Schools will need a system for identifying inherent job demands against which fitness to work assessments can be made (these are the only factors that can be considered, any health assessment will primarily be intended to identify appropriate support and/or adjustments to assist in the take up of work. Any decision that a candidate is not fit to take up work can only be made in relation to the inherent job demands).

### **Monitoring service delivery**

#### **Key performance indicators**

The following performance indicators will be monitored:

- Ensure that a Nurse Adviser is available to:
    - Provide telephone advice within 24 working hours of a request
    - Provide pre-employment assessments within 4 working weeks of a request (see "Schools Responsibilities" sections for information on when assessments should be requested).
    - Provide referral appointments within 4 working weeks of a request
- Note: This will depend on the nature of any further investigations that are needed, the availability of individuals to attend for assessments, etc.*
- Ensure that services are provided by the most appropriate Occupational Health practitioner giving consideration of the nature of each case as it progresses. The timescales for Physician services will be available on request, fast track Physician appointments will be available at additional cost
  - Ensure that advice seeks to protect health, is professionally independent and:
    - Informs managers of any actions that are required on the basis of legislation and/or case law
    - Is aimed at providing managers with the information they need in order to make informed decisions when dealing with cases of employee ill health
    - Provides guidance and support to individuals to assist them to safeguard and or manage any relevant health conditions and risk factors
  - Ensure that appropriate professional standards are adhered to during medical assessments and the handling of all personal and medical information
  - Seek to liaise with whichever medical professionals are appropriate to ensure that advice is fully informed. Note that prior consent will be obtained from individuals before contact is made with any medical professionals who are providing care on their behalf.
  - Where additional information is required (e.g. reports from Consultants or

General Practitioners, etc which will be at an additional cost.), the department will be advised of the process and likely timescales. An opinion on suitability for the post will normally be given within 2 weeks of the examination/ assessment/ test.

*Note: This will depend on the nature of any further investigations that are needed, the availability of individuals to attend for assessments, etc.*

- Provide professional advice and feedback within two weeks of appointments following medical examinations, assessments or reviews.
- Be available to hold telephone discussions with school managers within 48 hours of a request

*Note: The timescales indicated above are not intended as working norms - the service will strive to minimise timescales and to be responsive to the needs of individual cases within the restrictions of operational practicalities.*

### **Complaints/feedback**

If you have feedback or a complaint please contact:

Barbara Higgins, Occupational Health Nurse Manager  
Email: [b.higgins@bury.gov.uk](mailto:b.higgins@bury.gov.uk)  
Tel: 0161 253 6038

Or

Catherine King, People Strategy and Development Manager  
Email: [c.king@bury.gov.uk](mailto:c.king@bury.gov.uk)  
Tel: 0161-253-6371

Barbara/Catherine will discuss your query and will investigate the situation.

If you still remain dissatisfied with the response there is a formal complaints procedure to be followed.

Please send your complaint to:

Simon Bagley, Head of HR,  
Email: [s.bagley@bury.gov.uk](mailto:s.bagley@bury.gov.uk)  
Address: 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Town Hall, Knowsley Street, Bury BL9 0SW

A full response will be received within 20 working days.