

This document sets out a pro-active approach to Occupational Health throughout Fife Council.

Occupational Health is defined as the promotion and maintenance of physical, mental and social wellbeing of workers. Occupational Health is concerned with the effects of the working environment on health and the impact of an employee's health on his/her ability to perform. The objective is to prevent ill health rather than to cure it.

Guiding Principles

The key principle of this Policy is to provide Occupational Health support to all employees to ensure as far as is reasonable that they do not suffer physical or mental ill health arising from work. Pre-existing medical conditions will also be taken into account.

Occupational Health support will be provided via a range of services that are outlined below:

1. Pre-employment screening
2. Health Surveillance
3. Attendance Management
4. Health Promotion
5. Employee counselling service

Pre-employment screening

As an equal opportunities employer, the Council is committed to ensuring that employees are not discriminated against on the basis of disability when applying for jobs. It is however accepted that certain jobs do require a prescribed standard of fitness and/or absence of specified medical conditions to enable the job to be undertaken without unacceptable risk to the employee, colleagues, customers or the public in general.

It is therefore the policy of the Council and in the interest of potential employees to have their medical circumstances considered prior to taking up employment. To avoid possible discrimination, and in line with the Equality Act 2010, the medical aspects will be considered for the preferred candidate only.

Managing People

The final decision on whether or not to employ a person rests with the employing Service. Advice given by the Council's Occupational Health provider will include, where appropriate, reference to how reasonable adjustments may enable the employing Service to better accommodate the needs of the potential employee.

Health Surveillance

The Council is required to undertake risk assessments relating to all jobs carried out by employees. Risk assessments will consider both short and long term effects on the health of employees.

The Council will develop measures to control any short and long term ill effects on the health of employees. These measures will provide early detection of work related ill health and appropriate health surveillance will verify the continued effectiveness of the control measures.

Health surveillance will be applied by the Council in accordance with criteria set by the Health and Safety Executive.

Feedback to management on health surveillance will be in relation to the effectiveness or otherwise of the controls applied to the work activity. Where controls are inadequate, advice and guidance can be sought from the Corporate Health and Safety Team on what action is required to bring the activity under better control.

Attendance Management

The Council will involve Occupational Health in attendance management where the non-attendance arises out of illness or injury whether resulting from work or otherwise.

In the case of work related illness or injury, arrangements will be made to review risk assessments related to the work activity and to revise controls as necessary to reduce the chances of re-occurrence.

The Council will ensure that, where non-attendance is extended, contact is maintained to support the absent employee and facilitate a return to work.

If an employee is unable to return to work in the same post, the Council will make all reasonable effort to find suitable alternative employment. Thereafter, cases will be dealt with under the Attendance Management Procedure with the continued involvement of Occupational Health.

Health Promotion

The Council will promote initiatives on general health and wellbeing to raise awareness amongst employees, including participation in relevant national campaigns.

Specific health education will be provided where risk assessment identifies an employee or group of employees as vulnerable to a particular health hazard. For example, where health surveillance involves assessment for hearing loss

then advice will be given to each employee at the time of the assessment on protection against noise induced hearing loss.

Counselling

Employees will have access to a counselling service for both work-related and personal problems. Access to this service is through either a management referral or directly by the employee.

The Council's Occupational Health provider may refer employees to specialist counselling in relation to diagnosed medical conditions.

Confidentiality

The need to preserve confidentiality is paramount in providing an Occupational Health Service. Medical records and case histories will only be accessible to Occupational Health professionals. Information provided to management will be only on a need to know basis.

Employees have the right to know what information regarding them is held on record.

As a Fife Council employee you can expect:

- a safe and healthy working environment
- consistency of application
- confidentiality

Fife Council will:

- comply with legislation relating to the Health and Safety
- operate a robust mechanism for abuse of Health and Safety procedures, breach of confidentiality or discrimination
- promote health and wellbeing, encouraging employees to make healthy lifestyle choices.

Scope

This Policy applies to all employees.

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