

Date: 12/05/2014

**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 - Ref: FOI/011789**

**1. How many people are employed by the Trust at present and how many staff were employed by the Trust 12 months ago**

At the 31st March 2014 the Trust employed 4752 staff (headcount).  
At the 31st March 2013 the Trust employed 4548 staff (headcount).

**2. How many current staff are entitled to sick pay under the Trust's current policies**

This information is not held centrally. Firstly, absence management is undertaken locally by department managers in line with Trust policy. Secondly, there are different types of sick pay entitlement and they depend upon each individual case. For example, has an employee been absent long enough to have started claiming SSP as opposed to company sick pay? Has an employee been absent long enough to not be eligible for SSP? In order to collate this information, each employee file would have to be reviewed to ascertain what sick pay arrangements are in place. Even though absence is managed locally, all absence management is undertaken in line with Trust policies that have been reviewed and agreed by staff representation.

**3. A breakdown of how many staff (as a whole number and a percentage of workforce) fall into each sick pay entitlement**

This information is not held centrally. Firstly, absence management is undertaken locally by department managers in line with Trust policy. Secondly, there are different types of sick pay entitlement and they depend upon each individual case. For example, has an employee been absent long enough to have started claiming SSP as opposed to company sick pay? Has an employee been absent long enough to not be eligible for SSP? In order to collate this information, each employee file would have to be reviewed to ascertain what sick pay arrangements are in place. Even though absence is managed locally, all absence management is undertaken in line with Trust policies that have been reviewed and agreed by staff representation.

**4. How much working time was lost to sick leave, expressed as a percentage of total Trust working time, working days, and individual incidents**

The most up to date sickness absence figures available are to the end of February 2014.  
For the 12 month period ending February 2014, 54714 FTE was lost to sick leave. This equates to 3.7% of total Trust available FTE. There were 6103 incidents of sickness absence.

**5. How much of this sick leave (expressed in the same manner) allowed the staff member to receive sick pay under their contractual entitlement**

This information is not held centrally. Firstly, absence management is undertaken locally by department managers in line with Trust policy. Secondly, there are different types of sick pay entitlement and they depend upon each individual case. For example, has an employee been absent long enough to have to start claiming SSP as opposed to company sick pay? Has an employee been absent long enough to not be eligible for SSP? In order to collate this information, each employee file would have to be reviewed in order to ascertain what sick pay arrangements are in place. Even though absence is managed locally, all absence management is undertaken in line with Trust policies that have been reviewed and agreed by staff representation.

**6. How much of this sick leave (expressed in the same manner) allowed the staff member to receive sick pay under additional discretionary arrangements**

This information is not held centrally. Firstly, absence management is undertaken locally by department managers in line with Trust policy. Secondly, there are different types of sick pay entitlement and they depend upon each individual case. For example, has an employee been absent long enough to have to start claiming SSP as opposed to company sick pay? Has an employee been absent long enough to not be eligible for SSP? In order to collate this information, each employee file would have to be reviewed in order to ascertain what sick pay

arrangements are in place. Even though absence is managed locally, all absence management is undertaken in line with Trust policies that have been reviewed and agreed by staff representation.

**7. How much has sick leave cost the Trust. Please break this down into sick pay and replacement/cover staff costs**

The cost of sick pay is £210k but this is purely based on sickness allowances that are paid via payroll (and will thus not include any costs for odd days sickness). An estimate for replacement/cover costs equates to £1.886m. This is an estimate only based on average bank/agency hourly rates and would not necessarily be accurate as not all days lost to sickness will be covered by agency/bank staff.

**8. What are the Trust's total staffing costs, and what do sick leave costs represent as a percentage of this total**

Based on the above assumptions, the total estimate for sick leave of £2.096m equates to 1.12% of the total payroll of £186.312m.

**9. Expressed as a percentage of total sick leave taken in the last 12 months, how many sick days were taken on a Monday or a Friday**

The Trust is unable to produce this information.

**10. How many individuals have taken more than 10% of their expected working time as sick leave, and what proportion of total sick leave and sick pay costs do these individuals account for.**

For the 12 month period ending February 2014, 440 of our employed individuals have taken more than 10% of their expected working time as sick leave, which accounts for 56.5% of the total FTE lost to sickness during the period.

**11. How many individuals have taken more than 15% of their expected working time as sick leave, and what proportion of total sick leave and sick pay costs do these individuals account for**

For the 12 month period ending February 2014, 299 of our employed individuals have taken more than 15% of their expected working time as sick leave, which accounts for 47.5% of the total FTE lost to sickness during the period. Please note this figure includes the individuals who have taken more than 10% of their expected working time as sick leave calculated in the previous question.

**12. What proportion of total sick leave has been attributed to 'stress' or similar reporting terms**

The most up to date sickness absence figures available are to the end of February 2014.

For the 12 month period ending February 2014 14.7% of the total FTE lost to sick leave has been attributed to 'Anxiety/stress/depression/other psychiatric illnesses'

**13. On how many occasions, regarding how many members of staff, have concerns about sick leave been escalated, and what action has been taken.**

**o Concerns may include, but your response should not be limited to: fitness to work questions, repeated absence, bullying or mismanagement, over-worked staff.**

**o Action may include, but your response should not be limited to: phased return, redeployment, termination of contract on health grounds, disciplinary procedures.**

This information is not held centrally. All absence management is undertaken locally in line with Trust policies which have been reviewed and agreed by staff representation.

Please explain any plans to update the Trust's sickness policies, including routine updates.

The Human Resources Department will be responsible for the review and updating of the Policy through the JNC, on a 3 yearly basis or as the law necessitates. An audit of absence management cases will be undertaken annually to monitor compliance with this policy.

**Please also explain your policy regarding the replacement of staff during sickness absences.**

It is line managers' responsibility to:

Provide appropriate support for employees to minimise absences from work.

Consider and implement reasonable adjustments to the workplace where it is appropriate, to facilitate continued employment.

Where an employee has a recognised on-going medical condition their circumstances will need to be considered on the individual merit and line manager can arrange a cover to run services.

The Trust has a duty to actively consider re-deployment to alternative employment e.g. employment which is suitable and conducive to an individual's health condition and capability, in line with the Trust's Redeployment Policy and process. This does not mean that the Trust must create a post for the employee where none exists.

**Please also include any internal communication or documentation that discusses concerns, raises issues or identifies a need to change any sickness related reporting or management.**

The Human Resources Directorate is responsible to provide monthly statistical information to Directorates on absence rates, annual statistical absence rates to the Board and for publication in the Trust Annual Report. And conduct 6 monthly absence audits.

**Additionally, please include a copy of your sickness related absence policy, and details of training on sickness and that sickness policy delivered to staff (such as managers) across the Trust.**

Please find attached the Trust's Sickness Absence Policy. For a copy of this policy please contact [FOI@dgh.nhs.uk](mailto:FOI@dgh.nhs.uk) quoting the FOI reference number and a copy will be forwarded to you

Human Resources will provide support to Line Managers in the operation of this policy