

15% of GPs often see patients who have been dismissed from their job during an illness

Britain's family doctors routinely see patients who have been dismissed from their job during an illness. The new findings, in research conducted by Comres on behalf of Legal & General, show how some employers are struggling to manage workplace ill health and absence.

The survey also shows that:

- 50% of GPs saw patients who have been dismissed from their job during an illness 'a few times a year';
- In the North East 5%, of GPs reported seeing patients every week who had been dismissed from their job during an illness;
- In five regions, more than half of GPs had seen patients in these circumstances a few times a year: 52% in the North West; 53% in the West Midlands; 56% in the South Central; 50% in Scotland and 54% in Wales.

Diane Buckley, Managing Director of Legal & General's Group Income Protection, commented:

"Many employers lack the specialist resource to help rehabilitate their staff when they've been ill. They show the importance of early intervention to make sure that tailored, individual support is delivered quickly".

Dr John Delfosse, a practising GP and Legal & General's Consulting Medical Officer, commented:

"As a practising GP over the years I have seen patients who unfortunately have been dismissed during a period of illness, usually occurring during the early part of their absence. Particularly it seems if they have only been with an employer for a short time. There is no doubt that being at work is good for your well-being and unemployment can adversely alter the course of a period of ill health. I strongly believe that with early targeted intervention, given the right expertise, this outcome can be changed returning my patients to the workplace sooner"

Notes to editors

This research was carried out by Comres on behalf of Legal & General. ComRes interviewed 1001 GPs in the UK online between 14th and 24th March 2011. The data is a representative sample of all GPs in the UK. ComRes is a member of the British Polling Council and abides by its rules.

L&G's approach to getting people back to work

- Every year, around 350,000 make a transition from work to incapacity benefits - many of these people could, and want, to go back to work (Working for a Healthier Britain, Dame Carol Black's Review Of The Health Of Britain's Working Age Population, March 2008). Responsible employers can look after their staff by supplementing state sickness pay with enhanced and prolonged sick pay at a reasonable cost. L&G's Group Income Protection cover can provide additional benefits in the form of early intervention and rehabilitation to help employees back into the workforce more quickly and effectively.
- Group Protection (or Group Risk) benefits are provided by employers to their employees. They provide employee benefits that are paid if an employee dies in service or while they are unable to work because of illness or injury. The Group Protection market covers approximately 1.8 million people for income protection insurance and over 7.3 million people for life insurance cover. Legal & General's GIP policy, Workplace Recovery, has a proven track-record of helping employees make the journey back

into work. Our Group Protection portfolio is already large and growing. We have over 180,000 people covered by a Group Income Protection Policy. Of those covered, approximately 2,000 benefit from our rehabilitation services every year.

- We attribute our success to a number of factors. Our rehabilitation experts are amongst the best in the country. Our approach is to intervene early with rehabilitation services, often starting after only four weeks of incapacity. Our provision is generous. For example, employees who are absent from work because of stress are offered, where appropriate, up to 24 sessions of cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) from CBT Services Ltd, our highly-respected provider. On average, 76% of such employees returning to work within 18 months of diagnosis.

The sickness and absence review

These survey figures are released at a time when the government is beginning to review the way the government handles absence in the workplace. The review, announced by the Department of Work and Pensions, is led by Dame Carol Black and David Frost.

- The review, which is jointly sponsored by the Department for Work and Pensions and the Department for Business Innovation and Skills, will include a panel of experts from business, trade unions and health representatives and will be conducted in the context of the Growth Agenda.
- It will also feed into the wider Employment Law Review, which is looking at measures to reduce red tape and remove the burdens on business, encourage growth and maximise flexibility for employers and employees.
- Also announced is an additional **£12 million** of funding for health and work programmes, including the Fit for Work Service and Occupational Health Advice lines. Both have already proved highly successful in providing support for both employers and individuals in the early stages of sickness absence.

Notes to editors:

The information contained in this press release is intended solely for journalists and should not be relied upon to make any financial decisions.

Legal & General provide group protection to 6,800 corporate policyholders and cover more than two million employees.

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Data tables

1. Thinking about your work in the last few years, how often have you come across instances in which patients have been dismissed from their job during an illness?

	Total		Region																									
			North West		North East		Yorkshire & Humber		East Midlands		West Midlands		East of England		London		South East		South Central		South West		Scotland		Wales		Northern Ireland	
Occasionally (a few times a year)	501	50 %	56	52 %	19	49 %	37	43 %	34	50 %	45	53 %	43	48 %	52	48 %	33	48 %	38	56 %	50	53 %	54	50 %	27	54 %	13	45 %
Not very often (no more than once a year)	235	23 %	24	22 %	5	13 %	21	24 %	14	21 %	21	25 %	23	26 %	28	26 %	22	32 %	14	21 %	20	21 %	25	23 %	9	18 %	9	31 %
Quite often (at least once a month)	148	15 %	17	16 %	6	15 %	20	23 %	14	21 %	9	11 %	12	13 %	18	17 %	9	13 %	5	7 %	14	15 %	10	9 %	8	16 %	6	21 %
I cannot recall seeing a patient in these circumstances	102	10 %	10	9 %	7	18 %	8	9 %	5	7 %	9	11 %	10	11 %	9	8 %	3	4 %	9	13 %	8	9 %	18	17 %	5	10 %	1	3 %
Very often (every week)	15	1 %	0	0 %	2	5 %	1	1 %	1	1 %	1	1 %	1	1 %	2	2 %	2	3 %	2	3 %	2	2 %	0	0 %	1	2 %	0	0 %
Total	1001	100 %	107	100 %	39	100 %	87	100 %	68	100 %	85	100 %	89	100 %	109	100 %	69	100 %	68	100 %	94	100 %	107	100 %	50	100 %	29	100 %

1. Thinking about your work in the last few years, how often have you come across instances in which patients have been dismissed from their job during an illness?

	Total		GP type					Gender		Year of qualification														
			GP Principal		Salaried GP		GP Registrar		Locum GP		Male	Female	1960-1969	1970-1979	1980-1989	1990-1999	2000-2010							
Occasionally (a few times a year)	501	50 %	330	52 %	113	45 %	9	38 %	49	57 %	280	50 %	221	50 %	8	80 %	58	50 %	118	48 %	170	50 %	149	52 %
Not very often (no more than once a year)	235	23 %	144	23 %	71	28 %	8	33 %	12	14 %	128	23 %	107	24 %	0	0 %	31	27 %	67	27 %	78	23 %	59	20 %
Quite often (at least once a month)	148	15 %	104	16 %	34	13 %	2	8 %	8	9 %	85	15 %	63	14 %	1	10 %	15	13 %	34	14 %	57	17 %	41	14 %
I cannot recall seeing a patient in these circumstances	102	10 %	52	8 %	31	12 %	5	21 %	14	16 %	51	9 %	51	11 %	3	30 %	9	8 %	25	10 %	31	9 %	34	12 %
Very often (every week)	15	1 %	9	1 %	3	1 %	0	0 %	3	3 %	11	2 %	4	1 %	0	0 %	2	2 %	1	0 %	7	2 %	5	2 %
Total	1001	100 %	639	100 %	252	100 %	24	100 %	86	100 %	555	100 %	446	100 %	10	100 %	115	100 %	245	100 %	343	100 %	288	100 %

1. Thinking about your work in the last few years, how often have you come across instances in which patients have been dismissed from their job during an illness?

	Total		Age									
			Under 30		30 – 39		40 – 49		50 – 59		60 or over	
Occasionally (a few times a year)	501	50 %	12	35 %	212	51 %	149	51 %	100	47 %	28	61 %
Not very often (no more than once a year)	235	23 %	13	38 %	82	20 %	69	24 %	63	30 %	8	17 %
Quite often (at least once a month)	148	15 %	2	6 %	71	17 %	42	14 %	30	14 %	3	7 %
I cannot recall seeing a patient in these circumstances	102	10 %	7	21 %	46	11 %	26	9 %	16	8 %	7	15 %
Very often (every week)	15	1 %	0	0 %	8	2 %	5	2 %	2	1 %	0	0 %
Total	1001	100 %	34	100 %	419	100 %	291	100 %	211	100 %	46	100 %

1. Thinking about your work in the last few years, how often have you come across instances in which patients have been dismissed from their job during an illness?

	Total		Practice Location										Overall practice size						Dispensing Practice					
			Rural area		Urban area		Semi-rural area		Suburban area		Other		Single handed		2-3		4-5		6>		Yes	No		
Occasionally (a few times a year)	501	50 %	40	39 %	219	54 %	99	48 %	140	50 %	3	60 %	11	58 %	90	48 %	154	52 %	248	49 %	78	42 %	425	52 %
Not very often (no more than once a year)	235	23 %	30	29 %	81	20 %	51	25 %	72	26 %	1	20 %	6	32 %	49	26 %	68	23 %	112	22 %	48	26 %	187	23 %
Quite often (at least once a month)	148	15 %	16	16 %	70	17 %	29	14 %	33	12 %	0	0 %	1	5 %	25	13 %	40	14 %	82	16 %	31	17 %	117	14 %
I cannot recall seeing a patient in these circumstances	102	10 %	15	15 %	33	8 %	23	11 %	30	11 %	1	20 %	1	5 %	20	11 %	27	9 %	54	11 %	24	13 %	78	10 %
Very often (every week)	15	1 %	2	2 %	4	1 %	5	2 %	4	1 %	0	0 %	0	0 %	3	2 %	5	2 %	7	1 %	3	2 %	12	1 %
Total	1001	100 %	103	100 %	407	100 %	207	100 %	279	100 %	5	100 %	19	100 %	187	100 %	294	100 %	501	100 %	182	100 %	819	100 %