

Press release
27 September 2016

**Absence rates improving but not enough companies measure,
shows research from GRiD**

Research from Group Risk Development*, (GRiD) shows that for the majority of employers staff absence has remained static or is improving, yet 23% of companies still don't record, monitor or manage absence.

GRiD advises that the starting point for absence management is for companies to have an absence policy. Their staff need to know what action to take if absent - such as who to call, and any absence needs to be recorded and monitored.

Katharine Moxham, spokesperson for GRiD said: ~~It~~ is important that any absence is recorded so that it can be managed. There is a lot of noise about absence management, and some employers may be at a loss as to what to do, but a lot of help is available within Group Risk policies which can offer practical support in helping staff back to work as well as financial support. However, the starting point has to be monitoring absence in the first place.

Group income protection policies can provide great help for companies in managing absence, both long-term and short-term. They can provide sick or injured staff with a regular income so that employers don't have to foot the bill directly. They often also include a vocational rehabilitation service to help facilitate returns to work.

Of those that did record staff absence:

- 25% of companies say their absence has improved over the last 12 months, for 10% it has worsened.
- In terms of length of absence, over half (55%) of employers say that, on average, their employees take five or fewer days off sick each year, 4% said on average their employees took more than 15 days off.

It is important to have an understanding of the reasons for absence as well as patterns. Knowledge is power, and when companies know why their staff take time off work they can

put appropriate measures in place. Musculoskeletal absence may benefit from fast access to physiotherapy; stress and anxiety may call for greater utilisation of an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) - these are two of the most common reasons for absence, and support for both can be available via a Group Risk policy.

Last year, Group Risk providers helped 1,878 people back to work with some sort of active intervention before they reached the point of making a claim for group income protection payments. This represents 25% of the claims submitted in 2015 - up 5 percentage points since 2014 . and demonstrates the value that providers add beyond paying claims.

Katharine Moxham continues: ~~Group Risk isn't~~ just there to be called on in the worst situations, the employers that get the most from these benefits are those that use them every day even if they never need to make a claim. They can offer great support in keeping people in work and getting them back, and we would urge companies to look again at what they can offer and make use of them.

- Ends -

On average, how many sick days do your employees take each year?

	Number	Percentage
1 or less	53	11
3 or less	105	21
5 or less	117	23
6 to 10	72	14
11 to 15	19	4
More than 15	21	4
We don't record/monitor/manage absence	114	23
Total	501	100%

How has your absence rate changed over the last 12 months?

	Number	Percentage
It has improved significantly	22	4
It has improved slightly	103	21
It has worsened slightly	43	9
It has worsened significantly	5	1
It has stayed the same	272	54
Don't know	56	11
Total	501	100%

For further information please contact:

Sharon Mason
 SMUK Marketing and PR
smason@smuk.org.uk
 Mob: 07747 611773



Land: 01252 843350

Katharine Moxham

Spokesperson for GRiD

Katharine.moxham@grouprisk.org.uk

Mob: 07887 512508

Notes for editors

* Group Risk Annual Employer Research, conducted in September 2015 among 501 UK businesses with between 5 and 1,000 employees. Research was conducted by Lightspeed Research for Group Risk Development (GRiD).

About GRiD

Founded in 1998, Group Risk Development (GRiD) encourages awareness and uptake of corporate group protection benefits . income protection, group life insurance and critical illness cover . on behalf of its members which include insurers, reinsurers and intermediary businesses. Under the chairmanship of Lee Lovett, CEO of Ellipse, GRiD aims to enhance the industry's profile among media and stakeholder groups. The Group provides a collective voice to Government and participates in industry wide initiatives such as the qualification in Group Risk launched jointly with the Chartered Insurance Institute. In May 2009, the Group appointed its first dedicated spokesperson, Katharine Moxham, to provide expert media comment on a full range of group risk issues.

www.grouprisk.org.uk

Follow Katharine Moxham on Twitter @KMoxham