

Guidance Leaflet for Students

REFERRAL TO OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH

WHY HAVE YOU BEEN REFERRED TO OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH?

Your University may reasonably require advice about the health of their students in relation to their work in a variety of circumstances e.g.: Long term sickness absence; frequent short term absence, where health may be affecting academic performance or patient safety; where a work process may be affecting health; for information about general fitness for transfer to clinical training; any combination of these factors.

WHO ARE OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH?

Occupational Health Services employ doctors and nurses who are specialists in the assessment of the impact of health on work/ studies and work/ studies on health and apply nationally agreed standards and guidance and are subject to quality and audit frameworks.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Before the referral appointment, you should be informed of and understand the reason why you are being referred. **You should have had the opportunity to discuss your referral with the Medicine student support team before attending the Occupational Health Service. If you wish, you can make an appointment with the Medicine student support team via medsupport@st-andrews.ac.uk to see the referral to Occupational Health.**

REFERRAL

The Medicine Support team will send a letter of referral to Occupational Health outlining the reasons for the referral and highlighting questions they wish to have answered. The referral should also include a history of your sickness absence record while studying.

APPOINTMENTS

An appointment date and time will be sent to you. Every effort should be made to attend on the specified date and time. If you are unable to attend the appointment you must tell medsupport@st-andrews.ac.uk as soon as possible. Please note that under the BSc Professionalism Agreement you have signed, you have agreed to attend meetings and work in partnership when requested. If you have any disability access issues, please let medsupport@st-andrews.ac.uk know and adjustments can be made to accommodate you.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN AND HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE?

An Occupational Health doctor will see students who have been referred and your first appointment with the doctor could last up to an hour. The doctor will take a medical and occupational history from you and on some occasions may require to carry out an appropriate examination. The doctor may require a report from your GP, or specialist and at all times the Occupational Health doctor will explain to you who they are communicating with, why and only with your written consent, according to the Access to Medical Reports Act 1988, which gives you the right to see any report written about your health before it is sent to Occupational Health. You also have the right to withhold that consent at any stage.

SUPPORT

Some students wish to bring along a supporter to their consultation. The doctor will initially check with you in private that you are comfortable that personal and confidential medical information will be discussed in front of the other person and that full informed consent is given. Only one supportive person per student is acceptable (the room cannot take more comfortably). Your supporter can take notes, be there to remind you of the conversation / actions or to ask supportive clarifying questions; they cannot speak on your behalf unless they are providing advocacy services. Sometimes with consent, if they are a parent or partner it can be very helpful to the consultation for the supporter to provide their own views on the student's health, with consent.

REPORT

A report from the Occupational Health doctor will be sent to the referring member of the Medical Support team with your consent. This is usually verbal consent, but if you wish to provide written consent this is also available or may be requested. The confidentiality of clinical details given to the doctor during your appointment is

respected i.e. the referrer will not be told of any personal details concerning your medical history, domestic life, etc, unless it is relevant to your health in relation to work/ studies and only with explicit consent. The Occupational Health doctor will report on your ability to work and any safety implications of your ill health, provide advice on adjustments and modifications that may help you in your work or studies if you have ongoing health issues and answer the questions posed by the Medical Support team. The doctor will discuss and agree the report with you in advance of it being sent. You may ask to see a draft of the report before it is sent. A copy of the report that is finally sent is always made available to you. The referrer will be informed that you have been provided with a copy. You may withhold your consent at any stage prior to the report being sent to the Medical Support team. Your rights under the Equality Act 2010 will be respected.

REVIEW APPOINTMENTS

Following your initial referral appointment, the Occupational Health doctor may wish to review your progress. The same procedure outlined above applies to all review appointments.

WHAT IS NOT PERMITTED

Audio recording of the consultation is not permitted. Legal representation should not be required and would not be permitted. Bringing children or pets to the consultation is not permitted (unless the latter are disability assistance or support animals)

IF YOU HAVE ANY FURTHER QUESTIONS OR WORRIES ABOUT YOUR REFERRAL, PLEASE CONTACT medsupport@st-andrews.ac.uk