



# Absence Concierge



## Because every absence is different

Experience has taught us that the earlier the intervention in an absence, the more effective the medical treatment and the better the outcome – for both employee and employer.

But for even the most experienced HR professional, navigating the OH landscape can prove tricky.

Knowing which occupational health services to use to best support an absent or struggling employee, and when to step in, can be difficult. The myriad of early intervention services now provided by many benefit providers, such as Income Protection or EAPs, can complicate this even further.

The fact is, every absence is different and every road to recovery unique.

So how do you introduce the right kind of early intervention in the right way to enable a faster return to work and health for your employees?

# The Absence Concierge solution



WTW's Absence Concierge service provides a single port of call for all absence concerns, giving employers a consistent absence journey and full co-ordination of services across multiple locations.

It provides a variety of absence support and occupational health services through a single point of contact – your Absence Concierge case manager. A CIPD qualified HR professional themselves, they work as an extension to your HR team, co-ordinating the services with our in-house clinical team and leveraging any other rehab support services that an employee may be eligible for.

The service capitalises on the unique combination of clinical and HR expertise at WTW Health & Benefits by including direct access to our team of in-house OH physicians and nurses.

By providing a consistent framework for your absence processes, Absence Concierge will co-ordinate services, reduce long term employee absence and ensure sustained return to work outcomes.

## Key benefits

- **We speak your language**  
All advice is given by highly experienced, CIPD-qualified HR professionals. They deal with absence every day, so have an in-depth understanding of the business impact.
- **The best pathway for you and your employees**  
We will work with the employee to signpost them to the most appropriate route for treatment, while making best use of the entire benefits programme.
- **Access to in-house clinical experts**  
Your Absence Concierge case manager will have direct access to our team of in-house OH physicians and nurses to discuss the most appropriate options. These may include formal medical assessments which can then be shared with IP providers.
- **Occupational Health medical referrals**  
Ten assessments included over 2 years.
- **Dedicated nurse support calls**  
Our nurses are there to handhold struggling employees at a time they may feel most vulnerable.
- **Support for long-term absence**  
For longer term absence case management, your case manager has direct links to all of the main Income Protection providers and knowledge of all the early intervention resources that the providers have in place.
- **We're on your side**  
We will challenge a physician where necessary to ensure you have all the information you need to manage the absence.
- **Return to work support**  
Pragmatic help with the steps needed to facilitate a smooth return to the workplace.
- **Income Protection premium reductions**  
Have been enjoyed by some Absence Concierge clients in return for the faster return to work times and improved claims history.
- **Regular reporting**  
Your case manager will provide regular case updates and monthly overview reports.

## How it works



Line managers can have vastly different levels of experience and expertise in dealing with the challenges of employee illness and absence. It can also sometimes be very difficult to discuss sensitive health issues with an employee.

With Absence Concierge, your OH case manager will hand hold management through every step of absence handling - from providing the initial questions to ask to avoid any risk of future litigation, to working out the best treatment pathway to help an employee.

This ability is underpinned by the fact that they have access at any point to in-house clinical expertise. We have a team of more than twenty medical professionals including registered nurses, ACA qualified counsellors, a physiotherapist, occupational health nurses and OH consultant physicians in the same location and constantly on hand to advise on the best treatment pathway.

The service can also be used to prevent absence happening in the first place by offering nurse-led support to employees who may be struggling in their role.

Our nurses can build rapport and trust with employees to find out the full situation, while at the same time keeping their employer fully up to speed on medical appointments, treatment and recovery as the case evolves.

The case manager can also make the most of all the benefits of any other medical insurance products in a timely way, anticipating and starting an income protection claim well in advance of the typical 13 or 26 week policy payout term, for example, or tapping into rehabilitation services offered by an income protection policy.

But as a trusted partner, and with the backing of our clinical expertise, we will also tell you if we think it's too early to get an OH referral, so you spend clinical resources at the right time, when it's most meaningful.

## Return to work



One of the key questions will inevitably be around when and how an employee can return to work. Here your case manager can advise on workplace adjustments and read and check all OH referrals, translating medical terms into an actionable, pragmatic return to work plan.

Once your employee is back at work, the nurses will then call them to check they are happy with the return to work plan, heading off any potential issues and reporting back to avoid any further absence.

They can also help you to reach a qualified decision if it transpires that an employee is indeed incapable of returning to work.

## Duty of care parity

For employers with flexible or tiered benefits eligibility, Absence Concierge can be used to introduce consistency around duty of care.

For today's fragmented, virtual workforce, where inclusion is a key focus, it enables an employer to introduce one consistent process across the board.



## How Absence Concierge delivers real value

- **Less absence**

The effectiveness of early intervention has been proven repeatedly with Absence Concierge clients, with one employer in the IT sector witnessing a 50% drop in cases referred for OH assessment after a year.

- **Lower premiums**

Absence Concierge has proved itself to be so effective at reducing time off work that some of the leading income protection providers are now prepared to offer a reduction on their premium if the service is implemented.

- **Clinical expertise included**

A typical employee referral will benefit from 12.5 hours of clinical time, all included in the service fee.



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