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**How to hold an informal absence management meeting**

When the absence of a member of staff has reached an unacceptable level, hit a trigger point or a pattern of absence has been identified, the manager may hold an informal meeting to discuss the issue.

It will be good practice to invite the member of staff to a meeting, emphasising that this is an information discussion aimed at supporting them to reach and maintain satisfactory levels of attendance.

In advance of the meeting, ensure that it can be carried out in a private and confidential location. Review the recent absent record including any Return to Work meeting notes or previous discussions held.

During the meeting, outline the absence record to the member of staff and outline any concerns or patterns of absence. Explore whether there are any specific problems or underlying issues preventing them from attaining satisfactory attendance levels. Where necessary, refer to Occupational Health for further guidance. If absence relates to disability, discuss if there are any reasonable adjustments that can be made to support attendance. Identify if there is any support the member of staff needs to improve their attendance at work. Consider any explanations, mitigation or suggestions made by the individual. Finally, set targets for improvement and a timeline for a further meeting to review. Make a record of the discussions and provide the member of staff with a copy.

Ensure that a follow up meeting takes place, even where attendance has improved. Advice the member of staff of the potential outcomes should there not be a sustained improvement in attendance – for example, the possibility that formal procedures may be the next stage.

Take advice at any stage from HR if required.