

NHS Board Meeting  
30<sup>th</sup> June 2021

Lanarkshire NHS Board  
Kirklands  
Fallside Road  
Bothwell  
G71 8BB  
Telephone: 01698 855500  
[www.nhslanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk](http://www.nhslanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk)



**SUBJECT: Occupational Health – Staff Mental Health presentations and Long COVID 2020-21**

## 1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this paper is to provide information to the Board relating to Long COVID and staff mental health issues during the pandemic period 2020-21.

For approval	<input type="checkbox"/>	For Assurance	<input type="checkbox"/>	For Information	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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## 2. ROUTE TO THE BOARD

This paper has been prepared by the Director of Human Resources and the SALUS General Manager. Long COVID elements were previously discussed at Human Resource Forum in May 2021.

## 3. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES

The incidence of mental health related absence and the associated days lost has not increased during the pandemic year 2020-21. Days lost to mental health absence fell by 0.04% during the pandemic year (2019-20 = 51,952 days lost, 2020-21 = 51,742 days lost), however there was an increase of 206 staff reporting work related mental health absence over the 2 years (2019-20 = 269, 2020-21 = 475). This related to general anxiety around the COVID 19 virus, including safety at work, returning to work, long term conditions and potential virus impact on both the individual and their families. Support from Occupational Health and Spiritual Care have been engaging with staff from hot spot areas including critical care and emergency departments, providing a wide range of services to influence positive mental health and support resilience where possible.

Special Leave was available to staff affected by the virus and there is a potential that this may have an impact on the figures reported.

485 NHS Lanarkshire staff contracted COVID 19 over the period April 2020-April 2021. 92% of those returning to work did so within a 12 week period. Figures and evidence to date suggest NHS Lanarkshire may have between 24-48 staff where “Long COVID” may be an issue. Occupational Health are actively following up those staff previously infected by the C19 virus to provide support where staff are struggling with multiple symptoms. A small proposal has been submitted to the endowment fund to provide additional specific support for staff affected.

## 4. STRATEGIC CONTEXT

This paper links to the following:

Corporate objectives	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	AOP	<input type="checkbox"/>	Government policy	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Government directive	<input type="checkbox"/>	Statutory requirement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	AHF/local policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Urgent operational issue	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>		

**5. CONTRIBUTION TO QUALITY**

This paper aligns to the following elements of safety and quality improvement:

*Three Quality Ambitions:*

Safe	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Effective	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Person Centred	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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*Six Quality Outcomes:*

Everyone has the best start in life and is able to live longer healthier lives; (Effective)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
People are able to live well at home or in the community; (Person Centred)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Everyone has a positive experience of healthcare; (Person Centred)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff feel supported and engaged; (Effective)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Healthcare is safe for every person, every time; (Safe)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Best use is made of available resources. (Effective)	<input type="checkbox"/>

**6. MEASURES FOR IMPROVEMENT**

Continue to monitor mental health & long COVID related absence.

**7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Nil.

**8. RISK ASSESSMENT/MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

Although the expectation of significant issues relating to long COVID is low, many elements are unknown at time of writing. Levels of mental health absence should be monitored, particularly when special leave status ends for COVID related absence.

**9. FIT WITH BEST VALUE CRITERIA**

This paper aligns to the following best value criteria:

Vision and leadership	<input type="checkbox"/>	Effective partnerships	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Governance and accountability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Use of resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Performance Management	<input type="checkbox"/>	Equality	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sustainability Management	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				

**10. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT / FAIRER SCOTLAND DUTY**

No direct impact.

**11. CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

Not required.

**12. ACTIONS FOR THE BOARD**

Approve	<input type="checkbox"/>	Accept the assurance provided	<input type="checkbox"/>	Note the information provided	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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**THE BOARD** is asked to..

Note the information provided in the report.

Receive bi-annual update on mental health & long COVID absence in 2021.

**13. FURTHER INFORMATION**

For further information about any aspect of this paper, please contact:

Kay Sandilands, Director of Human Resources, [Kay.Sandilands@lanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:Kay.Sandilands@lanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk)

Mark Kennedy, General Manager, SALUS, [Mark.Kennedy@lanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:Mark.Kennedy@lanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk)