

## 1. WHAT IS SALUS OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH (OH)?

Salus OH is an independent advisory service whose main role is to provide impartial advice on health related matters to employers (HR Advisers and Managers). Occupational health advice may be required whenever health and work affect each other. This may be in relation to, for example, absence from work, advice on a return to work, or situations where work might be adversely affecting your health. This advice is given by occupational health doctors and nurses. OH services do not routinely provide treatments.

## 2. WHY HAVE I BEEN REFERRED?

Most commonly this is so that an employer has objective advice on the relationship between your health and work.

Examples of types of assessments:

- Absence / Ill health referrals
- New job application health assessment
- Health surveillance

(If you require any assistance to access your appointment within the building, please advise us beforehand.)

## 3. WHAT WILL HAPPEN WHEN I ARRIVE FOR MY APPOINTMENT OR HAVE A CONSULTATION BY TELEPHONE?

The OH doctor or nurse will introduce him / herself to you and explain the purpose of the assessment. Your formal consent will be sought to allow that doctor or nurse to proceed with the consultation requested by your employer and produce a report based on the information you have provided. The doctor or nurse will keep a clinical record of the appointment. This clinical record will remain confidential and only accessible to authorised Salus staff.

When attending for an appointment with a doctor they may consider that a physical examination would be helpful and they will explain this at the time and then ask for your consent to proceed. A chaperone is available upon request.

The clinician will use a structured approach to take a comprehensive history of your employment, health and wellbeing history. This will inform any recommendations or advice the clinician provides to you or your employer.

## 4. WHAT WILL BE SAID IN THE LETTER (REPORT) TO MY EMPLOYER?

The report will address the questions that have been asked by your employer. The report will usually provide advice regarding your fitness and if any workplace adjustments are required. The report does not usually contain any confidential medical information. These details will only be included in a report with your consent. You will be informed at the appointment as to the content of the report.

## 5. WHO WILL SEE MY OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH RECORDS?

Your occupational health records are confidential and can only be viewed by occupational health staff. Your employer does not have access to the record. In accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018, you have the right to see information we hold about you. To do so, you can request copies of the information held, by writing to us. Details of your records will only be released at your request or, in exceptional circumstances, if the disclosure were to be ordered by a court of law, or to protect the public from serious harm.

## 6. CAN I HAVE A COPY OF THE LETTER (REPORT) FROM OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH TO MY EMPLOYER?

Yes, you will be offered a copy of the report. You will be asked if or when you would like your copy (at the same time or prior to its release to your manager). You can withhold, change your mind or withdraw your consent at any time. If you withdraw your consent to release the report to your manager this will be recorded and a copy will be retained in your confidential OH medical record.

## 7. WILL OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH WRITE TO MY GENERAL PRACTITIONER / HOSPITAL SPECIALIST FOR INFORMATION?

Possibly. If the OH doctor or nurse thinks a report would be useful, the reasons for this will be discussed with you and a request made only with your informed written consent. Your right to read any such report will be explained to you at this time. We do not have automatic access to hospital / GP records.

**8. IF MY REFERRAL IS RELATED TO AN ABSENCE FROM WORK AND I HAVE ALREADY RETURNED TO WORK OR MY GENERAL PRACTITIONER HAS GIVEN ME A DATE TO RETURN WITHIN THE NEXT FEW DAYS, WHAT SHOULD I DO?**

Contact your employer / HR Adviser / Manager as appropriate to discuss whether you still need an OH appointment.

**9. WHAT IF I CANNOT MAKE THIS PARTICULAR APPOINTMENT DATE?**

If you are unable to attend for your appointment, please inform your employer / HR Adviser / Manager as early as possible so that the appointment may be offered to another individual. At your HR Adviser's or Manager's request, an appointment will be rescheduled for you.

**10. WHAT IF I DO NOT WISH TO ATTEND AN APPOINTMENT AT SALUS OH?**

If you do not wish to attend the appointment, you should inform your HR Adviser / Manager.

Without the benefit of guidance from occupational health your HR Advisers and Managers may not be able to make appropriate decisions regarding your employment since they may not have adequate information available to them. Alternatively, the doctor or nurse will discuss any concerns you may have about the appointment on the day but will not send a report to your manager/employer without your consent.

**11. IF I HAVE ANY FURTHER QUERIES, WHO SHOULD I CONTACT?**

In the first instance, you should contact your employer / HR Adviser / Manager.

**12. WHAT TYPE OF SERVICES DOES SALUS OFFER?**

The exact services offered to you and your employer will depend of the type of arrangements agreed between your employer and Salus.

Examples of types of assessments:

**Absence / Ill health referrals**

- If you are absent from work or have a health problem that prevents you from carrying out all or parts of your job:

Your employer may seek guidance on how long you might be away so that they can ensure your work is covered and make alternative arrangements in your absence. Guidance on adjustments, if any, that need to be put in place on your return (eg working hours, activities etc) may also be sought and the future prospects of you being able to return to work successfully.

**New job applicant health assessment**

- When you apply for a job:

It is the role of OH to advise the employer on your medical fitness to perform a particular role and whether you require specific work modifications to support you in carrying out that role. The OH clinician will also consider the potential impact of your job on any existing medical condition. The aim is to protect your health and to aid your employer in fulfilling their legal obligations. Recommendations on workplace adjustments can be made as well as suggestions of possible alternatives to the job that your employer may wish to consider.

**Health surveillance**

- For example, you may work in a noisy or dusty environment, or with hand held vibrating tools:  
If so, it is your employer's duty to ensure that your health is not damaged by your job or working environment. You may therefore be seen periodically and tests performed to ensure you remain well and that no aspects of your work are causing you any ill health.

The aim of Health Surveillance is to identify early signs of ill health so that they can be dealt with promptly before they become a long-term problem. Recommendations may be made following this, which may include the use of personal protective equipment, for example hearing protection.