

## Cause of Sickness Absence – Briefing for Personnel Committee Sept 08

**CIPD Absence Survey 08** – 819 UK based organisations surveyed (262 manufacturing and production, 337 private sector services, 170 public services, 71 voluntary, community and not for profit)

### Top 5 Reasons for short term absence (less than 4 weeks)

Respondents (%) citing this as a leading cause.

#### ‘Manual Workers’

1. Minor illness 98%
2. Back pain 57%
3. Stress 42%
4. Home/Family Responsibilities 40%
5. Recurring medical conditions 31%

#### ‘Non-manual Workers’

- Minor Illness 99%
- Stress 53%
- Musculoskeletal injuries 49%
- Back Pain 45%
- Home/Family Responsibilities 38%

### Top 5 Reasons for long term absence

1. Acute medical conditions 61%
2. Back pain 55%
3. Musculoskeletal 54%
4. Stress 40%
5. Mental Health 43%

- Stress 65% (PS 82%)
- Acute medical conditions 60%
- Mental Health 51%
- Musculoskeletal 42%
- Back pain 42%

### Work Related Stress

Respondents (%) identifying as top three cause of stress

#### All (average)

- Workload 56%
- Management style 40%
- Relationships at work 36 %
- Organisational change/restructuring 34%
- Pressure to meet targets 27%

#### Public Sector

- 60%
- 35%
- 42%
- 45%
- 30%

**NB:** HSE research indicated variations in demographics and employer size account for higher levels of public sector absence. Public sector employers (including Kent) are large and employ higher proportions of older and female staff, factors associated with higher levels of sickness absence.