

IGLOO: Sickness absence and sustainable return to work pilot study

Participant Information Sheet for Senior Leaders and Managers (Intervention Group)

Your employer is taking part in a return to work pilot study called **IGLOO: sickness absence and sustainable return to work** which is designed to support managers and their employees (with poor mental health) during their long-term sick leave and in their return to work.

As part of this pilot, senior leaders and managers are invited to complete short online learning modules that help build knowledge and understanding on the **latest evidence** for **best practice** for long-term sick leave and return to work management.

Your participation is entirely voluntary. Before you decide whether to take part, we would like you to understand why the research is being done and what it would involve for you. Talk to others about the study before making a decision if you wish.

What is the purpose of the study?

The purpose of the return to work pilot study is to see how practical it is in your organisation for managers and their employees who are on long-term sick leave to use newly developed sick leave and return to work management toolkits that are based on best practice.

Before your organisation tries out the new toolkits, we would like to invite senior leaders and managers to take part in a short online learning course on the evidence for best practice in long-term sick leave and return to work management, especially for mental health. Studies show senior leaders and managers who take part in training can create a positive change in how managers interact with and support their employees before sick leave occurs, during long-term sick leave and when returning to work; and how employees interact with their managers and support their own wellbeing during sick leave and when returning to work. These can lead to positive work outcomes for employees and the organisation.

Who is doing the study and why?

This study is being led by researchers at Rotherham, Doncaster and South Humber (RDaSH) NHS Foundation Trust, in collaboration with researchers from Loughborough, Sheffield, and Leicester Universities and Affinity Health at Work. It aims to support employers across England to improve the future of workplace mental health and wellbeing.

Why have I been invited to participate?

You are invited to take part in this study because you are either a senior leader with decision-making authority, a member of the human resources team, are involved in the health, safety and wellbeing of your workforce or because you are a manager with line managing responsibility. This means that any Directors, Executives, Heads of Departments or Units, Human Resources staff, Occupational Health and Wellbeing staff, Senior Managers and Line Managers within your organisation will be asked to take part in the study.

How long do I have to take part for?

If you agree to take part in the online learning study, you will be asked to participate for 3 months.

Do I have to take part?

No, you don't. You are under no obligation to take part in this study, even if your organisation is taking part. If, after reading this information sheet and asking any additional questions, you do not feel comfortable taking part, you do not have to.

What will happen if I choose not to take part?

Your organisation understands that you have the right to refuse to participate in this study. You are under no pressure from your employer or the research team to participate if you don't want to. If you decide not to take part, it will not affect your role in supporting your employees whilst they are on long-term sick leave.

What will I be asked to do if I decide to take part?

If you would like to take part after reading this information sheet, please return to the survey to complete the consent form, click this [link](#) or scan the QR code at the end of this sheet. Alternatively, if you would like to speak to a member of the research team about the research you can contact: a.sinclair@lboro.ac.uk. A hard copy of the consent form can also be sent if you prefer.

After consenting, you will be taken to an online questionnaire. A hard copy of the questionnaire can be sent to you if you prefer. This questionnaire will take no longer than **10 minutes** to complete and includes brief questions about your work, your experience with managing mental health, sickness absence and return to work, and some basic information such as your age, ethnicity, education, and job role. It is worth noting that some of these questions may be sensitive to some individuals. Nobody outside of the direct research team will be able to identify you and no identifiable information will be shared with your employer.

The questionnaire will be repeated 1 month later with some additional questions on your experience of the online learning. You will be invited to take part in an interview that will ask your opinion on managing sick leave and return to work. The interview will last about 1 hour and will be audio recorded. These recordings will only be heard by the research team. Direct quotes may be used in scientific publications, presentations or posters, but will remain anonymous (i.e., no personal names or organisation names will be given).

What will I get from participating in the return to work intervention?

After completing the initial questionnaire, you will receive an online link to the online e-learning resource that draws on the latest evidence for best practice in supporting people back to work and enabling them to stay at work. The e-learning resource is split into three short modules which will take you no longer than 10 minutes to complete each (30 minutes in total):

- Module 1 - covers the foundation of the current national situation with long-term sick leave and return to work
- Module 2 – introduces the policies and practices that lead to a successful and sustainable return to work
- Module 3 – provides information on how the new evidence-based and best practice return to work toolkits can be integrated with your existing practices

Each module has a short exercise for you to complete and the e-learning resource signposts further information about mental health and return to work. Please refer to the flow diagram at the end of this document for the different stages of involvement in the project.

Once I take part, can I change my mind?

You can change your mind at any time and are free to withdraw your answers without giving a reason. If you have provided any data and would like to withdraw it from the study, you

may do so at any point up to one week after the last time we collected data from you (i.e. online survey or interview). After then, it will not be possible to withdraw your individual data from the research.

How will I be made aware of the results of the study?

On completion of the full research study (31st March 2025), your organisation will receive a report summarising what we found from our study. Any data you provide will be anonymous and summarised together with data from other employees taking part in this study so that you cannot be identified. A copy of the report will also be sent to you. The results will also be presented in appropriate scientific journals and conferences. You can obtain copies of these publications from the research team.

Information on Data Protection Privacy

RDaSH NHS Foundation Trust will be using information/data from you in order to undertake this study and will act as the data controller for this study. This means that the Trust is responsible for looking after your information and using it properly.

How will we use information about you?

We will need to use information from you for this research project. This information will include:

- Personal information - your age, gender, ethnicity, and education. This information will be used to gauge demographic differences among staff who take part in the study.
- Contact details will be collected and used to keep in contact with you throughout the duration of the study. Your email address will be used to provide you access to the e-learning resource and to match your responses between the two questionnaires.

People will use this information to do the research or to check your records to make sure that the research is being done properly. People who do not need to know who you are will not be able to see your name or contact details. Your data will have a code number instead. We will keep all information about you safe and secure. Once we have finished the study, we will keep some of the data so we can check the results. We will write our reports in a way that no-one can work out that you took part in the study.

What are your choices about how your information is used?

- You can stop being part of the study at any time, without giving a reason, but we will keep information about you that we already have.

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- We need to manage your records in specific ways for the research to be reliable. This means that we won't be able to let you see or change the data we hold about you.
- If you agree to take part in this study, you will have the option to take part in future research using your data saved from this study in RDaSH NHS Trust's secure network drive.

Where can you find out more about how your information is used?

You can find out more about how we use your information

- at www.hra.nhs.uk/information-about-patients/
- in the HRA's Patient Data and Research leaflet: www.hra.nhs.uk/patientdataandresearch
- by visiting: <https://www.rdash.nhs.uk/about-us/grounded-research/research-governance-gdpr/>
- by asking one of the research team
- by sending an email to: rdash.groundedresearch@nhs.net
- by ringing us on 03000 212456
- by contacting our Data Protection Officer: <https://www.rdash.nhs.uk/support-and-advice/information-governance/>

How long will my personal data be retained?

We will keep identifiable personal information about you until the study has finished. This will be 31st March 2025. We will keep anonymised information about you for 10 years after the study has finished. This will be encrypted (password protected) and we will store sensitive research data in RDaSH NHS Trust's secure network drive that has restricted access only available to designated members of the research team

What about interview data?

All devices used for recording the interviews will be encrypted. The interviews will be transcribed by Way with Words, an approved supplier for Loughborough University with a confidentiality agreement in place. The file names for the recordings will be anonymised by using the code for each participant (in place of their name) before they are shared with the transcription company. Written notes or recordings on devices will be destroyed/deleted after they have been uploaded onto the researcher's work computer and will be deleted altogether after the study ends on 31st March 2025.

Copyright

The copyright for any materials generated as part of this project will be held by RDaSH NHS Foundation Trust and Loughborough University.

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I have some more questions; who should I contact?

You may contact the lead researcher:

Dr Fehmidah Munir, School of Sport, Exercise and Health Sciences, Loughborough University, Loughborough, Leicestershire, LE11 3TU. Email: f.munir@lboro.ac.uk

Who else is part of the research team?

Professor Karina Nielsen (University of Sheffield)

Professor Jeremy Dawson (University of Sheffield)

Dr Jaime Delgadillo (Rotherham Doncaster and South Humber NHS Foundation Trust)

Professor Umesh Kadam (University of Leicester)

Mrs Lizzie Degerdon (Rotherham Doncaster and South Humber NHS Foundation Trust)

Dr Victoria Laker (Rotherham Doncaster and South Humber NHS Foundation Trust)

Sarah Keeble (Rotherham Doncaster and South Humber NHS Foundation Trust)

Alice Sinclair (Loughborough University)

Scan the QR code below to be taken to the online consent form and questionnaire.



Flow diagram of participation

