**Long COVID (also known as Post Covid Syndrome)**

We understand that concerns remain surrounding the challenges that Long Covid is presenting in terms of management of sickness absence and the expectation remains that the principles of managerial discretion continue to be applied, as we would for any long term illness and that line managers ensure that they have;

* Referred the member of staff via Occupational Health on to a Post COVID Management, Functional Rehabilitation Programme FRP, or ensured that if undertaking a Post COVID programme in the Community, that they are aware of what stage that member of staff has reached in their treatment, to ensure that requests for update reflect the appropriate timing surrounding when an informed assessment of progress can be made.
* Asked specific questions of Occupational Health / GP/ Medical Expert during post Covid treatment surrounding, the progress being made towards return, any workplace adjustments that may be required to support return, the expected timings of possible return, and gathered sufficient details about the management of the healthcare issue to inform decisions surrounding how the staff members attendance case will be managed going forward.
* Understanding that symptoms surrounding this condition will vary from person to person e.g. Respiratory, Cardiovascular, Generalised, Musculoskeletal, Neurological, Psychological/psychiatric (this list is not exhaustive) and that assumptions cannot be made about how a member of staff is being affected by this syndrome.

**What is the Functional Restoration Programme (FRP) for Long Covid syndrome?**

The FRP is an 8-week/8 session process delivered by our OH provider which starts with a group session (introduction) followed by one to one session. It may take additional weeks in terms of planning return if the programme has been successful in assisting to remove barriers to return

• An assessment is made of the obstacles preventing the individual’s recovery, including the impact of their current work.

• The programme is delivered remotely via telephone or MS Teams.

• An initial report to manager is followed by a discharge report with phased return to work plan. Occasionally there is an interim report depending on the circumstances.

• There is currently a high success rate of returning employee back to work.

• The programme also provides feedback if the employee has not progressed as expected.

Please note that the following resources are also available to assist you supporting staff and managing attendance;

Supporting Attendance [Absences - HMPPS Intranet (gsi.gov.uk)](https://intranet.noms.gsi.gov.uk/covid-19-coronavirus/staff-and-managers2/absences)

COVID 19 Guidance [Staff and managers - HMPPS Intranet (gsi.gov.uk)](https://intranet.noms.gsi.gov.uk/covid-19-coronavirus/staff-and-managers2)

Risk Assessment [Risk assessments - HMPPS Intranet (gsi.gov.uk)](https://intranet.noms.gsi.gov.uk/covid-19-coronavirus/staff-and-managers2/risk-assessments)

Staff Wellbeing [Staff Wellbeing - HMPPS Intranet (gsi.gov.uk)](https://intranet.noms.gsi.gov.uk/covid-19-coronavirus/staff-wellbeing)

Workplace Adjustment Service [New workplace service for people with disabilities - HMPPS Intranet (gsi.gov.uk)](https://intranet.noms.gsi.gov.uk/news-and-updates/news/new-workplace-service-for-people-with-disabilities) Contact WPAHMPPS@justice.gov.uk