

Committee	Dated:
Establishment Committee	28/05/2020
Subject;	Public
Covid -19 Dashboard – May 2020	
Report of:	For
Chrissie Morgan, Director of Human Resources	
Report author:	Discussion
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Summary

This report provides information to the Establishment Committee with a dashboard of Covid-19 related workforce data. Human resources have been monitoring sickness weekly since the government introduced lockdown in March 2020. We are analysing sickness by type and currently Covid-19 symptoms is the top reason for sickness absence. We are also monitoring Covid-19 related sickness by sex, disability ethnicity and age.

The report includes other related data that is being monitored and used at the local and corporate level. The report finally outlines the guidance support and resources that has been put in place to support both employees and managers at this time.

Recommendations

The Establishment Committee is asked to note the report.

Main Report

Background

1. The information source for the dashboard report in relation to sickness absence is drawn from the Corporate HR / Payroll system (CityPeople). Sickness absence is entered on the system by line managers. Automated reports are also sent to HR where any Covid-19 symptoms sickness cases are recorded to ensure that we can follow up with managers.
2. We have had 3 confirmed Covid-19 cases to date. As and when these are recorded, they are notified to the Health Safety and Wellbeing manager so that an assessment can be made with the relevant department to determine whether it is RIDDOR reportable as required by the Health and Safety Executive. To date none of our three cases have necessitated reporting in this regard.

Current Position

3. Testing arrangements for symptomatic staff is in place. Information for staff is available on the intranet and we can make employer referrals which are prioritised. However, employees are not obliged to be referred by us and can make their own arrangements for testing. Clearly it is preferable for testing to be referred by us as we are then better sighted on who has been tested and can follow up on results. To date 17 employees and/or their household members have been referred for testing. One has been returned as positive. Currently we are only able to refer to a testing centre and cannot arrange for home testing kits at present. Contact tracing is not yet in place.
4. Appendix 1 sets out sickness absence information for the week ending 17 May 2020. These reports are run weekly and departments are provided with their own data for management purposes. Also included in Appendix 1 is other base data relating to number of tested positive for Covid-19, shielded employees, number of staff working from home, staff with some capacity who are able to undertake other work, numbers who have been deployed internally and externally. The Appendix also includes the cumulative sickness since January 2020.
5. Sickness for week ending 17 May was 76 cases of sickness accounting for 449 days sickness. Compared to the same period last year it was 173 cases accounting for 645 days sickness. So whilst Covid-19 sickness is both new since last year and the highest reason for sickness absence, this has not impacted to great extent on total sickness absence which is probably reflective of the number of staff who are able to work from home. It can be seen from the table that the higher levels of sickness are in those areas providing frontline services which is to be expected in the circumstances.
6. Appendix 2 sets out the sickness data analysed by sex, disability, ethnicity and age. Whilst our numbers are small making it difficult to accurately compare, they do broadly reflect the sort of data analysis that is being produced nationally by the Office for National Statistics.

Guidance resources and support

7. Along with producing this data weekly for corporate and departmental use, we are using the data as a prompt to alert the Health Safety and Wellbeing Manager of any confirmed Covid-19 cases to assess whether the case is RIDDOR reportable. To date none have necessitated this. Critically, the HSE themselves note that, '*infections that could have been acquired as easily in the community as in work are not reportable, unless the infection was definitely acquired at work*'
8. On notification of a confirm Covid-19 case we also refer managers to the special support and resources package we have put in place for managers of those staff who have confirmed Covid-19. This includes ensuring we have family member contact details; prompts for the information that we need to

know to avoid having to contact them later for missing information; alerting pensions where appropriate. The support package includes a bereavement framework and resources too. A member of staff has recently died in service (non- Covid-19) outside work and the bereavement framework of support was used including supporting colleagues of the deceased.

9. We have written to all staff asking those who are working from home to undertake a home working assessment which includes a self-assessment of their Display Screen Equipment (DSE) The self-assessment is discussed with their manager to review any concerns. The City Corporation has around 100 DSE Assessor and coordinators who can provide initial advice and support to managers. A catalogue of equipment has been sourced so that we can ensure best value for money in making any purchases necessary when they are justified by the assessments.
10. We are very mindful of the impact the pandemic can have on staff and to this end there is a huge range of information guidance and support for members of staff and manager. We have a team of trained volunteer Mental Health First Aiders who are able to provide online support and guidance to staff. We have put together a checklist for manager to support them in picking up potential stress and anxiety at the early stages with practical guidance on starting a conversation with a member of staff. We have also increased our counselling resources and simplified the process for referrals as occupational health who have seen an increase in referrals since the pandemic started. The Employee Assistance Programme (Health Assured) resource has been increased and Health Assured have reported an increase in its usage both for counselling and their online resources. These initiatives have dovetailed with Mental Health Awareness Week (week commencing 18 May), and we have a range of resources and information available on the intranet including a new video recorded by one of our members of staff about her own experience of anxiety and seeking the support she needed.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

11. The Covid-19 Dashboard provides a key information to support and inform our planning and appropriateness of intervention and initiatives that we have put in place. This enables us to have a consistent service provision to support managers and staff across all departments.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Covid-19 Dashboard May 2020

Appendix 2 – Covid-19 Dashboard - Breakdown by gender, disability, ethnicity and age.

Background Papers

<https://corpoflondon.sharepoint.com/sites/Intranet/SitePages/Kindness---Mental-Health-Awareness-Week-2020.aspx>

<https://corpoflondon.sharepoint.com/sites/Intranet/SitePages/Staying-Mentally-Healthy---It's-good-to-talk.aspx>

<https://corpoflondon.sharepoint.com/sites/Intranet/SitePages/Coronavirus.aspx>

RIDDOR and Covid 19

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