

# Managing sickness absence and return to work

An employers' and managers' guide

**On April 6 2010, the revised Medical Statement (the 'Fit Note') was introduced in England, Scotland and Wales.**

The guidance contained here was first published in 2004 and therefore makes no reference to the Fit Note. We would ask readers of this guidance document to consider how the introduction of the Fit Note has impacted on the good practice contained in it.

To help readers in making this consideration, HSE suggests that they refer to the relevant guidance on the introduction of the Fit Note:

**Employers** <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/fitnote-employer-guide.pdf>

**Employees** <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/fit-note-employee-guide.pdf>

**GPs** <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/fitnote-gp-guide.pdf>

**OH providers** <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/fitnote-occupational-health-guide.pdf>







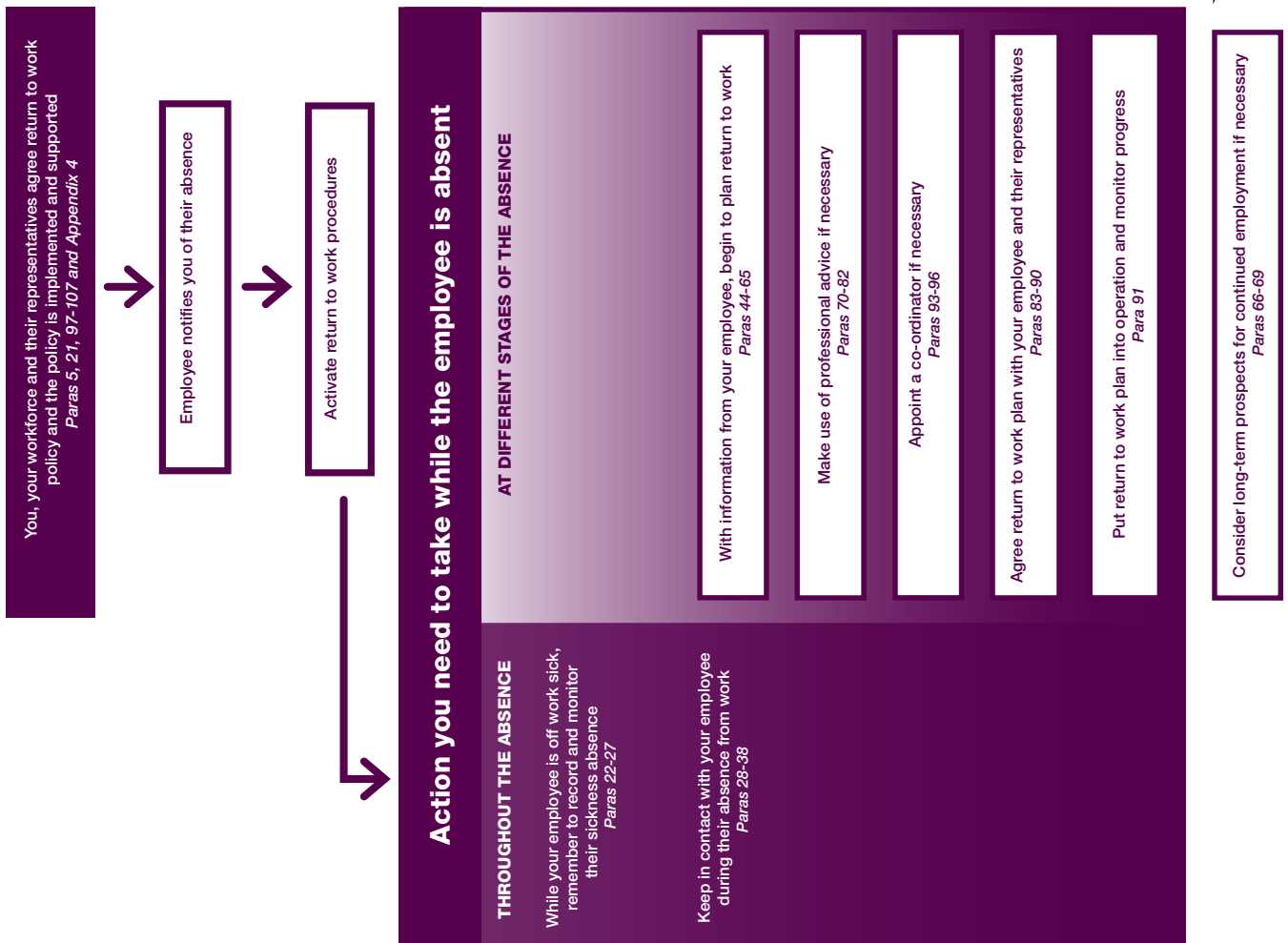












**Employee returns to work**

Welcome your employee back. Conduct a return to work interview. Monitor patterns of absence. If short-term absences are frequent, discuss underlying issues  
*Paras 39-41*

Conduct a return to work interview  
*Paras 39-41*  
Review your employee's progress against the plan  
*Para 92*

NUMBER OF DAYS ABSENCE AT WHICH TO CONSIDER ACTION

0

14

21

28

Flow of time

You, your workforce and their representatives agree return to work policy and the policy is implemented and supported  
*Paras 5, 21, 97-107 and Appendix 4*

Employee notifies you of their absence

Activate return to work procedures

**Action you need to take while the employee is absent**

**THROUGHOUT THE ABSENCE**

While your employee is off work sick, remember to record and monitor their sickness absence  
*Paras 22-27*

Keep in contact with your employee during their absence from work  
*Paras 28-38*

**AT DIFFERENT STAGES OF THE ABSENCE**

With information from your employee, begin to plan return to work  
*Paras 44-65*

Make use of professional advice if necessary  
*Paras 70-82*

Appoint a co-ordinator if necessary  
*Paras 93-96*

Agree return to work plan with your employee and their representatives  
*Paras 83-90*

Put return to work plan into operation and monitor progress  
*Para 91*

Consider long-term prospects for continued employment if necessary  
*Paras 66-69*

















































































































