



**QUARTERLY SICKNESS ABSENCE IN THE NORTHERN  
IRELAND CIVIL SERVICE  
October 2021- December 2021**



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To download any of the tables found in this report in ODS format, visit the [Sickness absence page](#) on the NISRA website.

If you require this publication in a machine-readable format, the tables supplied in Open Document Spreadsheet format can be saved as .csv files by Microsoft Excel or by the free [Apache OpenOffice suite](#).

Please note all figures contained within this report are obtained from the HRCS Sickness Absence database.

## Executive Summary

This report provides an analysis of all sickness absence in the Northern Ireland Civil Service between 1st October 2021 and 31st December 2021, as well as trend information for the previous four quarters. The main findings are found below.

### 1) **Headline Figures**

The headline figure for the October 2021- December 2021 quarter was 3.3 days (average days lost per staff year equivalent), an increase from 3.1 days in the previous quarter. This absence level is higher than the level experienced during the same quarter in 2020 (2.7 days).

The 3.3 days lost per staff year represented 6.1% of the available working days in the October 2021- December 2021 quarter, a slight increase on the 6.0% days lost in the previous quarter. In salary terms, this equated to an estimated £10.7 million of lost production. This is an increase on the cost of lost production in the previous quarter (£9.7 million) and the corresponding quarter in 2020 (£7.8 million).

During the October 2021- December 2021 quarter 81.6% of staff had no absence, a decrease from the previous quarter. The average number of spells per staff year equivalent was 0.2 spells which is equal to the previous quarter.

### 2) **Key Variable Trends**

The level of absence within departments varied from 2.2 days for the Department of Finance (DoF) to 5.0 days for the Department of Justice (DoJ). All departments, aside from the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) and DoF experienced a rise in absence levels compared to the previous quarter, while all departments saw a rise compared to the corresponding quarter in the previous year. The increase in absence in the Department for Communities (DfC), over the quarter, had the greatest impact on the 0.2 day increase in the overall absence level for the NICS.

The absence level for females (3.5 days) remained higher than that for males (3.1 days) with over a quarter of this difference being due to pregnancy related disorders.

### 3) **Reasons for Absence**

Anxiety/Stress/Depression/Other Psychiatric Illnesses was the absence reason that accounted for the greatest proportion of working days lost (38.7%) during the quarter. Within this category, non work-related stress accounted for 34.4% of the days lost while work-related stress accounted for 33.3%. COVID-19 accounted for 0.41 working days lost per staff year equivalent in the October 2021- December 2021 quarter which was the equivalent of 12.4% of all NICS sickness absence days. This is a decrease from the previous quarter in which COVID-19 accounted for 0.44 working days lost; the equivalent of 14.0% of all sickness absence days in that period<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> As of the 4 November 2021, revised guidance was issued on how absence attributed to COVID-19 is recorded on HRConnect. The first 10 calendar days of an absence attributed to COVID-19 must be recorded as paid special leave on HRConnect, and not as a sickness absence. Subsequently caution should be taken when reading trend information. This will be further explored in the upcoming annual publication.

## 1

## Executive Summary: Key Facts

The Table below displays trend information for some key measures of sickness absence in the NICS over the last five quarters <sup>1</sup>.

Key Facts	Oct20- Dec20	Jan21- Mar21	Apr21- Jun21	Jul21- Sep21	Oct21- Dec21
<b>Proportion of Staff with No Recorded Spells of Absence (%)</b>	87.2	86.7	86.3	84.5	81.6
<b>Working Days Lost per Staff Year Equivalent<sup>2</sup></b>	2.7	2.9	2.8	3.1	3.3
<b>Percentage of Available Working Days<sup>3</sup> Lost (%)</b>	4.9	5.1	5.0	6.0	6.1
<b>Total Number of Working Days Lost</b>	56,472	61,392	60,167	68,168	75,041
<b>Estimated Lost Production<sup>4</sup> (£ Million)</b>	7.8	8.4	8.6	9.7	10.7
<b>Average Number of Spells per Staff Year Equivalent</b>	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2

<sup>1</sup> As of the 4 November 2021, revised guidance was issued on how absence attributed to COVID-19 is recorded on HRConnect. The first 10 calendar days of an absence attributed to COVID-19 must be recorded as paid special leave on HRConnect, and not as a sickness absence. Subsequently caution should be taken when reading trend information. This will be further explored in the upcoming annual publication.

<sup>2</sup> One Staff Year Equivalent refers to one full-time employee having been in post for the entire analysis period. See Appendix 2 for more information on this calculation.

<sup>3</sup> Available Working Days refers to any day on which an employee was expected to be at work. See Appendix 1 for more information.

<sup>4</sup> Any information provided in this report that relates to lost production is calculated, where possible, on the basis of each individual's actual salary and the associated employer's National Insurance and Superannuation contributions.

# 2

## Introduction

### Context

The Northern Ireland Civil Service's sickness absence statistics have been collated and reported by the Human Resource Consultancy Services (HRCS) branch within the Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency (NISRA) since 1999/2000. Alongside these quarterly publications, HRCS also publish statistics on a financial year basis with the report issued in June each year.

### About this Report

This quarterly report provides a comprehensive analysis of sickness absence in the Northern Ireland Civil Service in the October 2021 - December 2021 quarter as well as analyses over the previous four quarters.

### National Statistics

National Statistics status means that our statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value, and it is our responsibility to maintain compliance with these standards.

These quarterly statistics were first published in December 2020 as Experimental Statistics. User feedback was gathered in relation to this publication, alongside the March and September 2021 publications. Using this feedback in combination with an Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR) assessment, it was agreed to publish as National Statistics.

This quarterly report is additional and complementary to the annual (financial year) absence statistics published in June each year which were designated as National Statistics by [OSR](#) in 2019. The same methods and processes are used to produce this report, applied to a quarterly rather than an annual dataset.

Feedback is welcome and will be utilised to improve the value of the statistics in line with user requirements; any comments should be sent to [hrcsabsence@finance-ni.gov.uk](mailto:hrcsabsence@finance-ni.gov.uk).

# 3

## Working Days Lost Through Sickness Absence

### About this Chapter

Absence levels vary by department, grade level, gender and age group. This chapter contains a look at trends across these variables over the last five quarters.

Absence levels are presented in "Working days lost per staff year equivalent" format as recommended by the Cabinet Office in the review "Managing Attendance in the Public Sector (1998)". For an explanation and a worked example of how this method is applied please see Appendix 2.

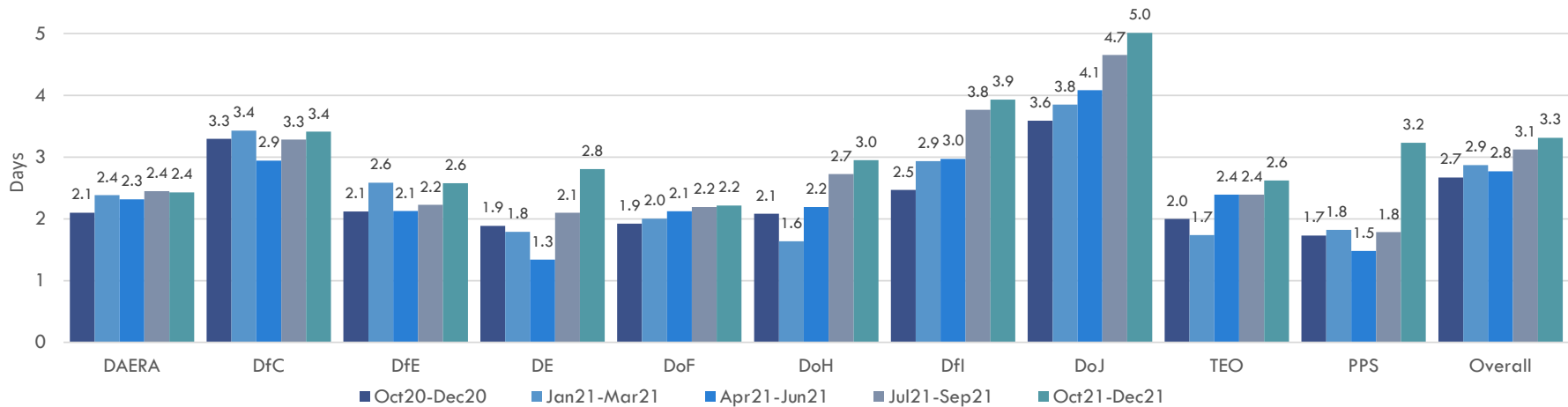
Staff in the NICS lost an average of 3.3 days to sickness absence in the October 2021 - December 2021 quarter - an increase from the previous quarter when staff lost 3.1 days and an increase from the corresponding quarter in the previous year (2.7 days).

All three main measures of sickness absence - working days lost per staff year, the percentage of available working days lost and estimated lost production - saw an increase when compared to the previous quarter.



### 3 Working Days Lost Through Sickness Absence: Department

Figure 1: Working Days Lost per Staff Year Equivalent by Department<sup>1</sup>: October 2020 to December 2021<sup>2</sup>



When assessing the variation in working days lost per staff year in Figure 1, it should be noted that staff numbers and characteristics vary per department which can influence absence levels. To view the most recent published departmental staff numbers, please visit the [2021 Personnel Report](#).

The average number of working days lost in the October 2021 - December 2021 quarter ranged from 2.2 days for the Department of Finance (DoF) to 5.0 days for the Department of Justice (DoJ). All departments, aside from the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) and DoF experienced a rise in absence levels compared to the previous quarter, while all departments saw a rise compared to the corresponding quarter in the previous year.

The Public Prosecution Service (PPS) saw the largest increase in absence levels compared to the previous quarter; an increase of 1.4 days. As PPS contains only 1.9% of all NICS staff, this increase contributed 14.3% to the 0.2 day rise. Despite The Department for Communities (DfC) experiencing a small 0.1 day rise, as it contains 30.0% of NICS staff, this rise had the greatest impact on the overall NICS increase; contributing 29.7%.

The Department for the Economy (DfE), the Department of Education (DE), the Department of Health (DoH) and DoJ also experienced notable increases in comparison to the previous quarter.

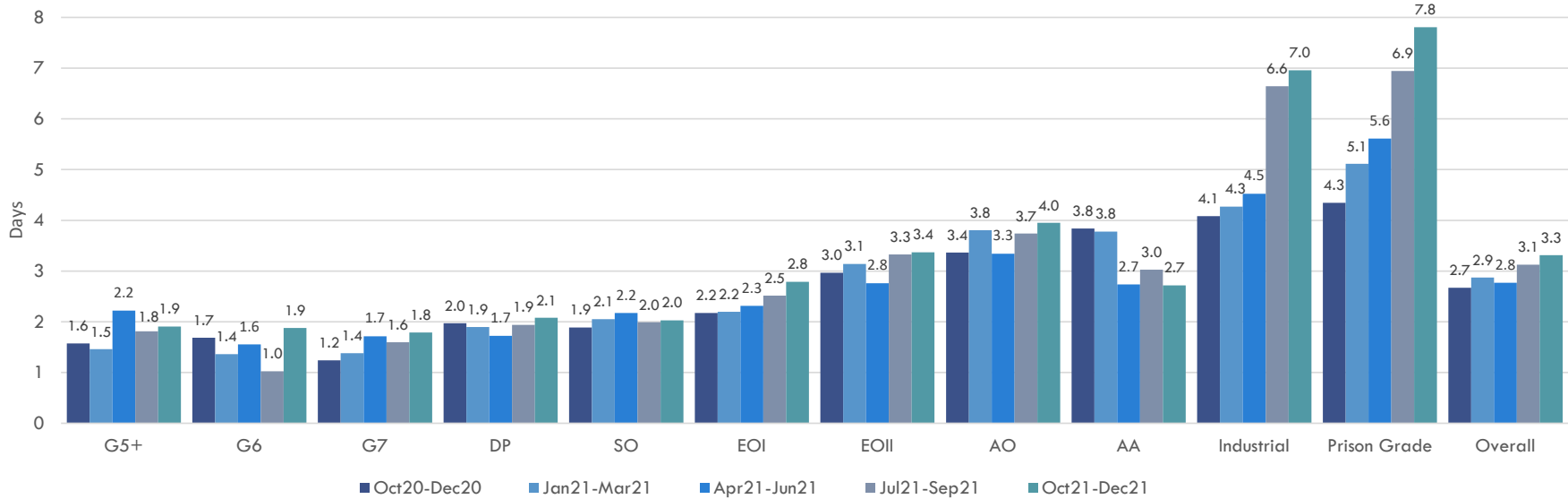
<sup>1</sup> A full list of Departmental abbreviations can be found in Appendix 4.

<sup>2</sup> While display figures were rounded to one decimal place, unrounded figures were used to calculate the bar heights in this chart.

### 3

## Working Days Lost Through Sickness Absence: Grade Level

Figure 2: Working Days Lost per Staff Year Equivalent by Analogous Grade Level<sup>1</sup>: October 2020 to December 2021<sup>2</sup>



In Figure 2, non-industrial staff are separated into analogous grade levels, while Industrial and Prison Grade staff are reported separately.

Departmental staffing profiles can have an influence on relative absence levels. See Appendix 3 for a departmental breakdown of working days lost by grade group.

There is notable variation in absence levels across grade levels, although a general trend of decreasing levels of absence as grade level increases can be observed (with G5+ being the highest grade level).

The average number of working days lost in the October 2021 - December 2021 quarter for analogous grade levels ranged from 1.8 days for staff at Grade 7 level to 4.0 days for AO staff. Prison Grade staff lost the highest number of working days (7.8 days) followed by Industrial staff (7.0 days).

The majority of analogous grade levels reported increased absence levels compared with the previous quarter, with Grade 6 level staff experiencing the largest increase in days lost. As G6 level comprises only 1.4% of NICS staff, this increase had minimal impact on the overall absence level, contributing 6.5% to the 0.2 day rise.

Encompassing 22.3% of NICS staff, AO level staff had the biggest impact on the increase in the overall NICS absence level in the October 2021 - December 2021 quarter, contributing 31.2% of the 0.2 day rise.

<sup>1</sup> A full list of Analogous Grade abbreviations can be found in Appendix 4.

<sup>2</sup> While display figures were rounded to one decimal place, unrounded figures were used to calculate the bar heights in this chart.



# 3

## Working Days Lost Through Sickness Absence: Gender

Figure 3: Working Days Lost per Staff Year Equivalent by Gender: October 2020 to December 2021<sup>1</sup>

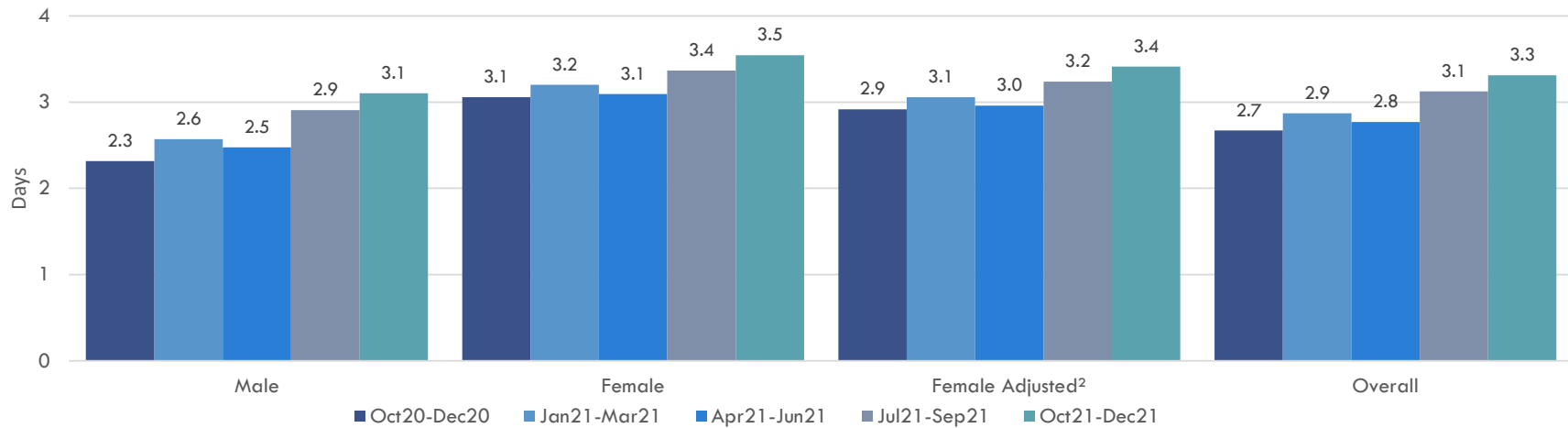


Figure 3 shows both males and females experienced an increase in absence level in the October 2021 - December 2021 quarter compared to the previous quarter and the corresponding quarter in 2020.

Female staff have historically had a higher level of absence than males as shown in the previous quarters. In the October 2021 - December 2021 period this difference was 0.4 days, a slight reduction to the gap in the previous quarter. However there are other factors to take into account when comparing the difference between genders.

If Pregnancy Related Disorders are excluded, the adjusted absence level for females fell from 3.5 days to 3.4 days. If all gender-specific absences<sup>3</sup> were excluded from the absence figures the difference between male and female absence would fall to 0.2 days (3.3 days for females and 3.1 days for males).

The increases in male and female absence had a similar impact on the 0.2 day increase in NICS absence, with males accounting for 49.2% of the rise and females contributing 50.8%.

<sup>1</sup> While display figures were rounded to one decimal place, unrounded figures were used to calculate the bar heights in this chart.

<sup>2</sup> Excludes absences due to *Pregnancy Related Disorders*.

<sup>3</sup> Absences due to *Pregnancy Related Disorders*, gender-specific *Genitourinary and Gynaecological Disorders* and gender-specific *Benign and Malignant Tumours, Cancers*.

### 3 Working Days Lost Through Sickness Absence: Age Group

Figure 4: Working Days Lost per Staff Year Equivalent by Age Group: October 2020 to December 2021<sup>1</sup>

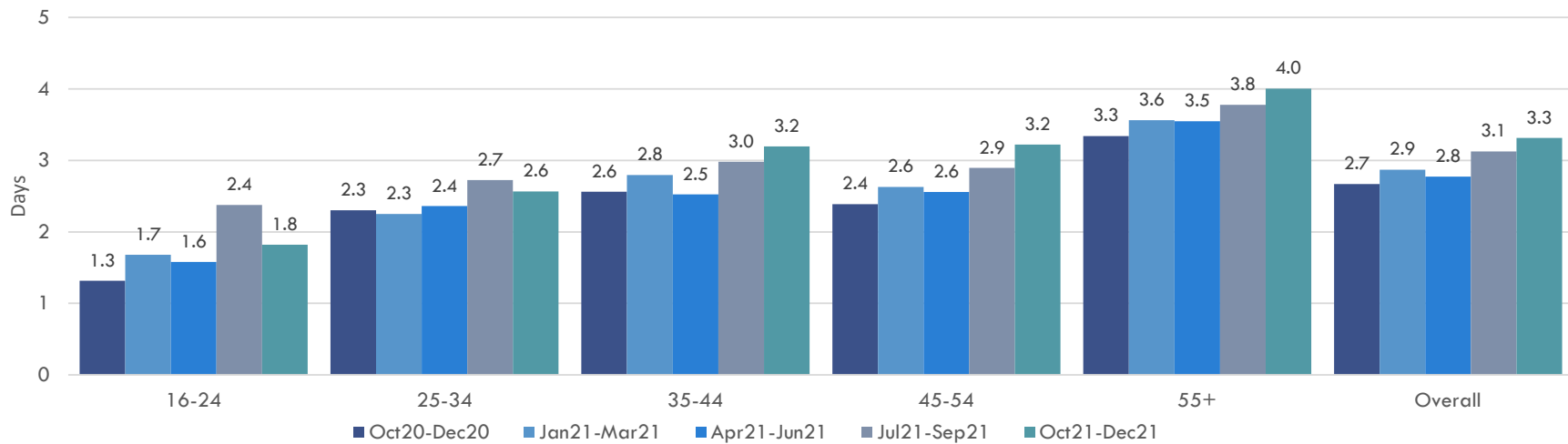


Figure 4 shows the average number of working days lost ranged from 1.8 days for staff aged 16-24 to 4.0 days for staff aged 55+.

The majority of age groups saw increased absence levels compared to the previous quarter while all age groups saw increased absence levels compared to the corresponding quarter in 2020.

Staff in the 45-54 age group experienced the largest increase in days lost per staff year. As this age group contains 30.2% of NICS staff, it was the largest contributor to the 0.2 rise; contributing 46.2%.

The 16-24 age group saw a notable decrease of 0.6 days, however, as this age group contains just 1.8% of all NICS staff, this decrease had a minimal impact on the NICS absence level.

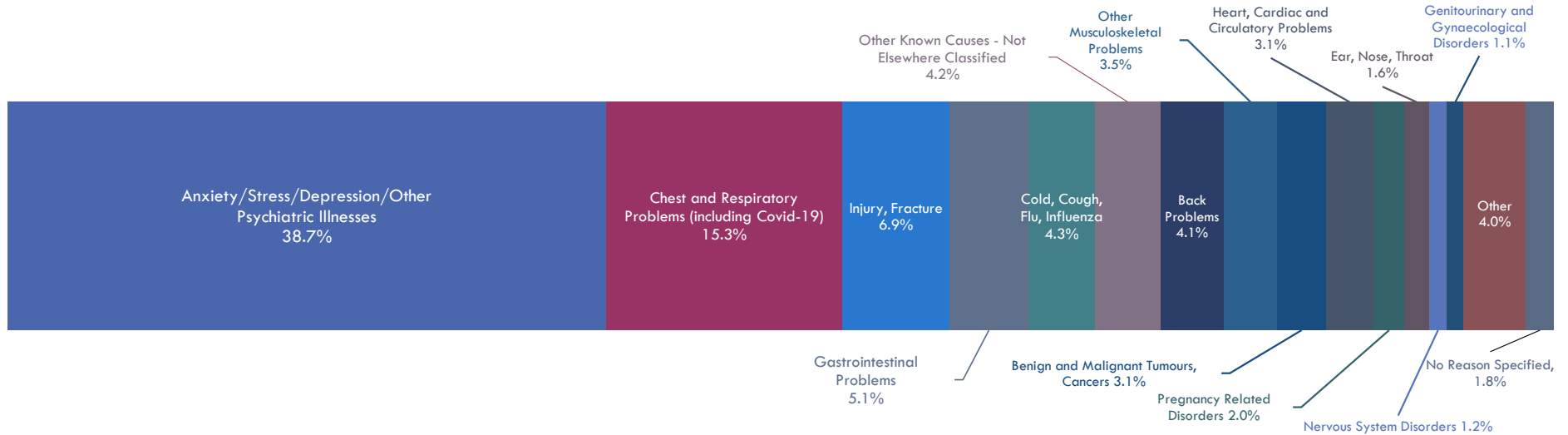
<sup>1</sup> While display figures were rounded to one decimal place, unrounded figures were used to calculate the bar heights in this chart.

# 4

## Reasons for Sickness Absence: Working Days Lost

This chapter looks at the reasons for sickness absence during the October 2021 - December 2021 quarter.

Figure 5: Percentage of Working Days Lost by Reason: October 2021 to December 2021<sup>1,2,3,4</sup>



Anxiety/Stress/Depression/Other Psychiatric Illnesses remains the reason behind the largest proportion of working days lost. Figure 5 shows this reason accounted for 38.7% of the total 3.3 working days lost in the quarter. Work-related stress was responsible for 33.3% of the working days lost in this illness category, while 34.4% were recorded as non work-related stress.

Absences due to COVID-19 were recorded under the Chest and Respiratory Problems category, which accounted for 15.3% of all working days lost in the quarter.

COVID-19 represented 81.3% of all days lost to Chest and Respiratory and accounted for 12.4% (0.41 days) of all sickness absence days for the October 2021 - December 2021 quarter. In comparison, in the previous quarter, COVID-19 accounted for 14.0% (0.44 days) of all NICS sickness absence days.

The increase in absences recorded under Cold, Cough, Flu, Influenza had the biggest impact on the 0.2 day increase in absence from the previous quarter, contributing 48.3% to this rise. The increase in absences recorded under Anxiety/Stress/Depression/Other had the second biggest impact, accounting for 16.5% of the 0.2 day rise.

<sup>1</sup> The category 'Other' contains any absence with a reason that accounted for less than 1% of the working days lost.

<sup>2</sup> The category 'No Reason Specified' contains any absence for which the reason was 'Not Specified', 'Awaiting Reason' or missing.

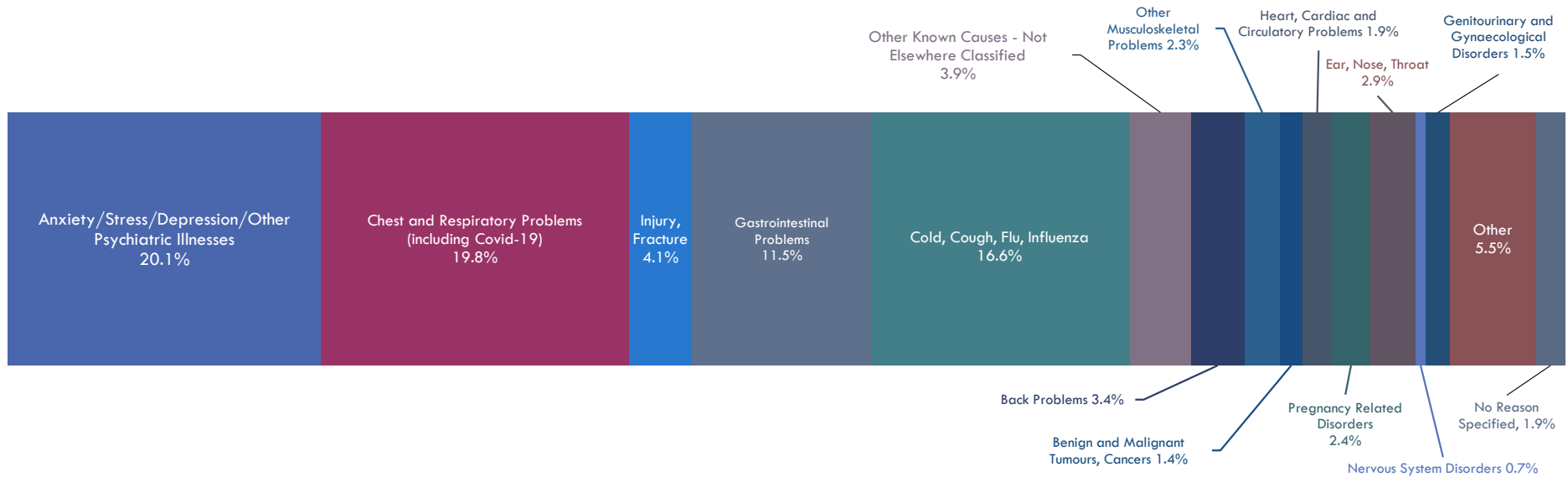
<sup>3</sup> Comparison data for the previous four quarters can be found in the corresponding ODS tables.

<sup>4</sup> As of the 4 November 2021, revised guidance was issued on how absence attributed to COVID-19 is recorded on HRConnect. The first 10 calendar days of an absence attributed to COVID-19 must be recorded as paid special leave on HRConnect, and not as a sickness absence. Subsequently caution should be taken when reading trend information. This will be further explored in the upcoming annual publication.

# 4

## Reasons for Sickness Absence: Spells of Absence

Figure 6: Percentage of Sickness Absence Spells by Reason: October 2021 to December 2021<sup>1,2,3,4</sup>



The average number of sickness absence spells in the October 2021 - December 2021 quarter was 0.2 spells per staff year, which is equivalent to the previous quarter. Figure 6 shows absences due to Anxiety/Stress/Depression/Other Psychiatric Illnesses were responsible for the greatest number of absence spells (20.1%) in the quarter.

Absences due to Chest and Respiratory Problems were responsible for 19.8% of absence spells, a decrease from the previous quarter in which they accounted for 22.0% of all absence spells.

Absences due to Gastrointestinal Problems and Cold, Cough, Flu, Influenza were responsible for a combined 28.1% of absence spells in this quarter but since these illnesses tend to be short-term in nature they were only responsible for 9.4% of days lost in the period (as shown in Figure 5).

<sup>1</sup> The category 'Other' contains any absence with a reason that accounted for less than 1% of the working days lost.

<sup>2</sup> The category 'No Reason Specified' contains any absence for which the reason was 'Not Specified', 'Awaiting Reason' or missing.

<sup>3</sup> Comparison data for the previous four quarters can be found in the corresponding ODS tables.

<sup>4</sup> As of the 4 November 2021, revised guidance was issued on how absence attributed to COVID-19 is recorded on HRConnect. The first 10 calendar days of an absence attributed to COVID-19 must be recorded as paid special leave on HRConnect, and not as a sickness absence. Subsequently caution should be taken when reading trend information. This will be further explored in the upcoming annual publication.

## Appendix 1 - Definitions

Term	Definition
<b>Staff Year Equivalent</b>	One Staff Year Equivalent equates to one member of staff having been available for the entire period being analysed. This differs from their full time equivalent (fte) as the sye takes account of staff that have left/joined and therefore have not been available for the entire analysis period.
<b>Available Working Days</b>	Any day on which a member of staff would have been expected to attend work. Annual, Maternity and Term Time leave is excluded from the total. Leaving, joining and full-time equivalent value are taken into account.
<b>Working Days Lost</b>	Any day on which a member of staff would have been expected to attend work but were absent due to sickness. Maternity leave is excluded from the total. Leaving, joining and full-time equivalent are taken into account.
<b>Working Days Lost per Staff Year Equivalent</b>	The number of working days lost divided by the number of staff year equivalents.
<b>Percentage of Available Working Days Lost (%)</b>	The percentage of available working days that are lost due to sickness absence. The Female Adjusted Absence Rate excludes absences that were recorded as Pregnancy Related Disorders. $(\text{Number of Working Days Lost} / \text{Number of Available Working Days}) \times 100$
<b>Spells</b>	A spell is any occasion of sickness absence with a defined onset and termination. An individual may have multiple spells of sickness absence within an analysed time period. It is important to note the distinction between working days lost and spells. For instance, if one employee has one spell of absence lasting six days and another employee has three spells of absence each lasting two days, both employees have lost six days to sickness absence with differing spells.
<b>Estimated Lost Production (£)</b>	This is calculated by multiplying the number of working days lost by each individual's daily cost. Each individual's annual salary (or if not available the grade level average annual salary) is converted to a daily rate by dividing by the 261 week days in a year. Provision is then made for periods of sickness at half pay, pension rate of pay and no pay. The appropriate Employer's National Insurance and Superannuation costs are also included in each individual's daily cost figure.

## Appendix 2 - Calculations

Absence levels are presented in a number of ways throughout the report and are defined as follows:

$$\text{\% of Available Working Days Lost} = \frac{\text{Number of Working Days Lost}}{\text{Number of Available Working Days}} \times 100$$

$$\text{Working Days Lost per Staff Year Equivalent} = \frac{\text{Number of Working Days Lost}}{\text{Number of Staff Year Equivalents}}$$

$$\text{Spells per Staff Year Equivalent} = \frac{\text{Number of Spells}}{\text{Number of Staff Year Equivalents}}$$

The "Working days lost per staff year equivalent" approach was recommended by the Cabinet Office in the review "Managing Attendance in the Public Sector (1998)". This approach replaced 'working days lost per person' which does not always permit valid comparisons to be made between or within organisations that differ in their proportions of part-time staff and/or their levels of staff turnover. In particular, it can misrepresent the absence rate in organisations that have a high proportion of part-time staff and/or high levels of staff turnover. For this quarter, a staff year equivalent (SYE) is approximately 61 working days for the majority of staff, but clearly this depends on date of entry and/or date of leaving, and annual leave entitlement which varies by grade, length of service, and work pattern. For each individual a 'staff year equivalent' was therefore calculated taking all of these factors into account. The following simple example highlights the rationale for the methodology used by the Cabinet Office.

### Example

- A. Worked full-time for the whole quarter (hence 1 SYE)
- B. Worked full-time for 1 month in the quarter (hence  $\frac{1}{3}$  SYE)

If **A** was absent for 20 working days and **B** was absent for 10 working days, then the number of working days lost per staff year equivalent are calculated as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Total Number of working days lost} &= 30 \\ \text{Total Number of Staff Year Equivalents} &= 1 + 0.3 = 1.3 \end{aligned}$$

$$\text{Working Days Lost per Staff Year Equivalent} = \frac{30}{1.3} = 23.1$$

According to the other approach, the number of days lost per person would be

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Total Number of working days lost} &= 30 \\ \text{Total Number of People} &= 2 \end{aligned}$$

$$\text{Working Days Lost per Person} = \frac{30}{2} = 15$$

which overlooks the fact that one of the staff was only employed for a single month.

## Appendix 3: Departmental Analysis: Industrial, Non-Industrial and Prison Grade<sup>1,2</sup>

Department	Working Days Lost per SYE Oct20-Dec20	Working Days Lost per SYE Jan21-Mar21	Working Days Lost per SYE Apr21-Jun21	Working Days Lost per SYE Jul21-Sep21	Working Days Lost per SYE Oct21-Dec21
DAERA	2.1	2.4	2.3	2.4	2.4
DAERA Industrial	3.6	3.7	4.1	4.1	3.7
DAERA Non-Industrial	2.0	2.3	2.2	2.3	2.3
DfC	3.3	3.4	2.9	3.3	3.4
DfC Industrial	1.6	0.6	4.4	7.0	3.7
DfC Non-Industrial	3.3	3.4	2.9	3.3	3.4
DfE	2.1	2.6	2.1	2.2	2.6
DE	1.9	1.8	1.3	2.1	2.8
DoF	1.9	2.0	2.1	2.2	2.2
DoF Industrial	0.5	7.0	0.0	10.3	15.3
DoF Non-Industrial	1.9	2.0	2.1	2.2	2.2
DoH	2.1	1.6	2.2	2.7	3.0
DfI	2.5	2.9	3.0	3.8	3.9
DfI Industrial	4.3	4.5	4.7	7.5	8.2
DfI Non-Industrial	2.0	2.6	2.6	2.9	3.0
DoJ	3.6	3.8	4.1	4.7	5.0
DoJ Industrial	6.5	7.1	6.3	6.2	4.7
DoJ Non-Industrial	3.0	2.9	2.9	3.0	3.1
DoJ Prison Grade	4.3	5.1	5.6	6.9	7.8
TEO	2.0	1.7	2.4	2.4	2.6
PPS	1.7	1.8	1.5	1.8	3.2
<b>NICS</b>	<b>2.7</b>	<b>2.9</b>	<b>2.8</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>3.3</b>
<b>NICS Industrial</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>6.6</b>	<b>7.0</b>
<b>NICS Non-Industrial</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>2.7</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>2.7</b>	<b>2.9</b>
<b>NICS Prison Grade</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>5.1</b>	<b>5.6</b>	<b>6.9</b>	<b>7.8</b>

<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that staff numbers vary per department and grade which can influence absence levels. To view the most recent published departmental breakdown of staff numbers by grade level, please visit [2021 Personnel Report](#).

<sup>2</sup> As of the 4 November 2021, revised guidance was issued on how absence attributed to COVID-19 is recorded on HRConnect. The first 10 calendar days of an absence attributed to COVID-19 must be recorded as paid special leave on HRConnect, and not as a sickness absence. Subsequently caution should be taken when reading trend information. This will be further explored in the upcoming annual publication.

## Appendix 4 - Abbreviations

Department Abbreviation	Full Department Name
<b>DAERA</b>	Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs
<b>DE</b>	Department of Education
<b>DfC</b>	Department for Communities
<b>DfE</b>	Department for the Economy
<b>DfI</b>	Department for Infrastructure
<b>DoF</b>	Department of Finance
<b>DoH</b>	Department of Health
<b>DoJ</b>	Department of Justice
<b>PPS</b>	Public Prosecution Service
<b>TEO</b>	The Executive Office

Grade Abbreviation	Analogous Grade
<b>G5+</b>	Grade 5 and above
<b>G6</b>	Grade 6
<b>G7</b>	Grade 7
<b>DP</b>	Deputy Principal
<b>SO</b>	Staff Officer
<b>EOI</b>	Executive Officer I
<b>EOII</b>	Executive Officer II
<b>AO</b>	Administrative Officer
<b>AA</b>	Administrative Assistant



## Appendix 5 - National Statistics

This report provides analysis of sickness absence in the Northern Ireland Civil Service in the October 2021 - December 2021 quarter as well as analyses over the previous four quarters.

Human Resource Consultancy Services (HRCS) received user feedback indicating the need for these absence statistics to be published on a quarterly basis. Based on this feedback, HRCS liaised with users to develop a new quarterly publication. This quarterly report was first published as Experimental Statistics in December 2020, followed by two more experimental publications in March 2021 and September 2021. Publishing as Experimental Statistics encouraged user feedback and provided an opportunity for HRCS to assess whether the value of these quarterly statistics could be improved and whether they met user needs.

This assessment has now been completed and the feedback indicates that these quarterly statistics meet user needs. As these statistics use the same methods and sources as the annual statistics, the Office for Statistics Regulation has confirmed that they should be published as National Statistics under [Assessment Report 342](#).

Further information on the quality of the statistics published in this report can be found in the [Background Quality Report](#) and in the [Quality Assurance of Administrative Data \(QAAD\) Report](#).

HRCS welcomes ongoing feedback from users on whether they find this quarterly report to be helpful. Please email [hrcsabsence@finance-ni.gov.uk](mailto:hrcsabsence@finance-ni.gov.uk) regarding whether there is a particular area of interest not covered.