

For all UMCG staff

# **Illness**

## **Talking about absence from work**

### **Important telephone numbers**

**University Medical Center Groningen** +31 (0)50 361 61 61

**Your line manager** +31 (0)50 36 \_\_\_\_\_  
(fill in the telephone number yourself)

**Occupational Health Service** +31 (0)50 361 22 97

**Staff Shop (UMCG)** +31 (0)50 361 33 50

**Staff Shop (Beatrixoord)** +31 (0)50 533 85 88

# **Illness**

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## **Healthy ageing and working longer**

The UMCG's Healthy Ageing programme focuses on staying healthy as we grow older. Today, people are living longer and retiring later. Healthy working benefits the health and vitality of the individual as well as the organization. As a priority, the UMCG focuses on promoting the health and employability of its staff. In the leave protocol, the emphasis is on finding suitable work that staff members can perform even if they are ill. The UMCG therefore believes it is important for staff and their managers to discuss how illness, complaints and absence are dealt with. This is set out in the UMCG Leave Protocol (Verzuimprotocol UMCG) and is included in this brochure.

## **Extent of sick leave**

Anyone may fall ill for a short or long period. This need not necessarily result in absence from work. A staff member with a broken wrist, for example, may be able to carry out modified work. Staff members with a chronic health problem may be unable to perform their duties to the full. In these cases too, the emphasis is on possibilities rather than constraints. However, sometimes work is not possible or sensible.

## **In consultation with your manager**

If you are unable to carry out all or part of your work as a result of illness, discuss this with your manager. Together you discuss:

- what is preventing you from working
- the relevant aspects that affect the constraints/resumption of duties
- whether alternative work/solutions are possible.

The discussion focuses on what is possible, and this determines whether the staff member will be absent on full or partial sick leave. This may relate to work content, working conditions or work relations. Discussion of subjects such as these requires openness, and care must be taken when making decisions and choices. In an equal working relationship (which the UMCG

promotes), respect, reliability, involvement and safety/security are the values that form the basis for discussing absence from work.

### **Reporting sick / Sick leave**

If you are unable to work due to illness, you must contact your manager as soon as possible, in accordance with the requirements of your department. The extent of sick leave required is discussed. Together with your manager, you make agreements about resuming your duties (e.g. part-time work and partial sick leave).

### **What to expect of your manager**

Your manager is responsible for ensuring that you can continue working in a safe and healthy workplace. This may involve offering you suitable alternative work.

### **What the UMCG may expect of its staff**

In the discussion with your manager you made agreements about sick leave and reporting absence. Staff are responsible for taking steps to aid their own recovery. This means that you are expected to monitor your health and your work-life balance. If there are aspects that hinder you in your work or prevent your return to work, it is important to discuss these with your manager.

### **Advice and support during absence from work**

Your manager is responsible for supervision and guidance during your absence and when you return to work. The Occupational Health Service does not call in absent staff for an appointment automatically. Obviously, you and your manager are free to contact the Occupational Health Service for advice.

If it is not possible to reach agreement on alternative work, or if your return to work is not going smoothly, your manager will ask the Occupational Health Service for advice regarding your capacity for work.

Staff are free to make an appointment with the Occupational Health Service. Depending on the nature of the question, the appointment may be with

- the occupational physician
- the staff welfare officer
- the occupational expert
- the ergonomics officer

## **Your legal position**

### **Salary payment during illness**

Sick leave begins on the first day that you are unable to carry out all or part of your work. During the first 52 weeks of sick leave you are entitled to full salary payment, including allowances (e.g. the unsocial hours allowance). After this period, you will receive 70% of your salary for the hours that you are on sick leave. If you are on partial sick leave, and therefore working part-time in your own position or another position, you will receive 100% of your salary for the hours you work. In the second year, if you work for at least half of your normal working hours, you will receive 85% of your salary for the hours that you are on sick leave.

### **Travel expenses during illness**

If you have been on sick leave for a full month, reimbursement of your travel expenses will stop.

### **Accrual of holiday entitlement during sick leave**

Accrual of holiday entitlement continues throughout the period of sick leave. There is a maximum number of hours that can be accrued. The maximum number of holiday hours per calendar year for a full-time worker is 144. This is equal to 7.7% of the total working hours in a year (= 1,872 hours).

This means that a full-time staff member who is absent on sick leave will accrue two holiday hours less in a month. The figure is adjusted accordingly for part-time staff.

### **Using your holiday leave**

Even during prolonged sick leave, staff are in principle expected to use their holiday leave (in consultation with the manager).

### **Compensation days and scheduled days off**

If a staff member is ill on a compensation day or scheduled day off, he/she loses entitlement to this leave.

**Notes**

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