

Sickness & Wellbeing Policy

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Introduction

At BrisDoc, we value the health, wellbeing, and contribution of every co-owner. This policy has been designed as a reflection of our commitment to supporting each other through periods of ill health. Whether you are a manager supporting a team member or a co-owner managing your own health, the principles outlined here aim to ensure that absence is managed fairly, compassionately, and consistently. Our goal is to help all co-owners stay well, return to work safely, and continue contributing to the outstanding care we provide.

Scope

This policy applies to all BrisDoc co-owners. It provides direction for co-owners in managing their sickness absence and outlines the responsibilities of managers in supporting co-owners during absence.

Principles of Attendance and Wellbeing

Good attendance benefits individuals, teams, and the organisation. However, when health issues arise, it is important that both co-owners and managers work together openly and proactively to address concerns early and provide appropriate support.

- All co-owners are expected to take personal responsibility for maintaining their own health and attendance.
- BrisDoc will provide timely, appropriate support and early intervention to help co-owners remain in or return to work.
- Managers are responsible for maintaining regular contact with absent co-owners and offering proactive support.
- Absence management will be handled sensitively, recognising individual circumstances and legal rights.

Support Available

This section outlines the key tools, services, and contacts that are available to both co-owners and managers to promote wellbeing and provide timely support.

People Team – Provides advice and guidance to managers and co-owners on sickness absence, adjustments, occupational health referrals, and attendance processes.

Occupational Health – Available via referral through the People Team. Contact: workforcesupport@brisdod.org

Access to Work – A government-funded scheme providing practical and financial support for co-owners with a disability, long-term health condition, or mental health difficulty that affects their work. The People Team will coordinate any Access to Work applications to ensure the right support is provided and any associated costs are managed appropriately.

Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) – 24/7 support for all co-owners. Details can be found on the Wellbeing Hub on Radar.

Wellbeing Hub – Available via Radar.

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Line Manager Wellbeing Toolkit – Practical tools for managers to help support co-owner wellbeing. [Line Manager Wellbeing Toolkit – Radar](#)

Wellbeing Request for Support Form – Available via the Wellbeing Hub on Radar and used to request additional support.

Key Definitions

Short-Term Absence: Any absence lasting less than 4 weeks.

Long-Term Absence: Any continuous absence lasting 4 weeks or more.

Attendance Triggers: Patterns of absence levels that prompt wellbeing discussions. Exceeding Triggers will always prompt an Attendance Support Plan.

Reasonable Adjustments: Changes made in order to remove or reduce a disadvantage related to someone's disability. See the Reasonable Adjustments Guidance document for further advice.

Health Check-In: A supportive contact conversation held between a line manager and a co-owner during a period of ill health whilst the co-owner is absent from work.

Return to Work Conversation: This is a structured conversation held within 48 hours of a co-owner returning to work following any period of sickness absence. It focuses on recovery, ongoing needs, and next steps.

Sickness Review: A meeting to review periods or patterns of sickness where absence patterns meet concern triggers. The meeting aims to establish a time-bound plan between a co-owner and their manager to help improve and sustain attendance.

Attendance Support Plan: The Sickness Review will aim to generate an Attendance Support Plan. This plan outlines the reasons for absences, identifies any barriers to attendance, sets clear expectations and support measures, and includes scheduled review points.

Workplace Capability Review: A formal review process used when all appropriate support and adjustments have been exhausted, and a co-owner's health-related absence continues to impact their ability to carry out their role. It involves a structured assessment of fitness to work, adjustments made, and potential next steps.

Roles and Responsibilities

Clear responsibilities ensure that sickness absence is managed effectively, balancing the needs of the individual and the organisation. Below outlines what is expected of each group involved.

Co-Owners

- Make every effort to maintain attendance and follow sickness reporting procedures when unwell.
- Engage positively with the support available (e.g., OH referrals, wellbeing resources).
- Submit required certification promptly when absent.

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Line Managers

- Maintain regular, supportive contact with absent co-owners with Health Check-ins.
- Conduct Return to Work Conversations promptly after absences.
- Initiate Sickness Reviews when absence triggers are met.
- Utilise the Wellbeing Toolkit and other resources to support staff.
- Follow all procedural steps outlined in Section 6 when managing absence.

Senior Leaders

- Monitor sickness trends and wellbeing data.
- Hold managers accountable for proactive absence management.
- Promote a wellbeing-centred organisational culture.

Attendance Triggers

BrisDoc uses clearly defined attendance triggers to prompt early, supportive conversations and ensure a consistent, fair approach to managing absence. These triggers are indicators that a wellbeing discussion and supportive intervention may be appropriate.

Managers must take contextual factors into account, including known health conditions, caring responsibilities, or protected characteristics such as disability or pregnancy. In all cases where a trigger is breached, managers should consult with the People Team before deciding against initiating a Sickness Review.

Co-owners are encouraged to familiarise themselves with these triggers and proactively engage in open discussions if they are struggling with their attendance.

A Sickness Review meeting will normally be initiated where a co-owner has:

- 3 episodes of absence in a rolling 6-month period
- 5 episodes of absence in a rolling 12-month period
- 2 episodes totalling more than 2 weeks in a rolling 12-month period
- A recognisable pattern of absence, such as:
 - Absences regularly falling on a particular day (e.g. Fridays)
 - Absences consistently following annual leave
 - Frequent short-notice cancellations with no underlying health condition

Half Day Absences

Occasional instances where a co-owner becomes unwell part-way through a shift and leaves work after completing more than half of their contracted hours will generally not count towards attendance triggers for the purposes of sickness review. This is to ensure co-owners are not discouraged from attending work when able, and that short-term or minor illness is handled proportionately.

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However, where there is a repeating pattern of such half-day absences — particularly where they fall at similar times or under similar circumstances — managers may seek advice from the People Team and consider whether a wellbeing discussion or Sickness Review is appropriate. These patterns may indicate an emerging health concern or stressor that would benefit from early support

Meeting a trigger point does not mean punishment — it signals a need to check in and offer appropriate support

Sickness Management Process

BrisDoc is committed to managing health-related absence with care, structure, and compassion. The process below outlines the steps that co-owners and managers must follow, integrating the use of RotaMaster to ensure accurate recording and timely support.

A co-owner who does not follow the procedures outlined below may be classed as AWOL (Absent Without Official Leave). Being classed as AWOL may result in occupational sick pay being withheld and may lead to formal absence or conduct procedures.

Procedure for Co-Owners

- **Notify your line manager**, or if your service has an alternative formally agreed procedure (such as IUC Operations), follow that process.

For example, IUC co-owners must call the on-duty Shift Manager using the number on the back of their ID badge.

Notification must be made by telephone and must involve a direct verbal conversation with the appropriate contact. This must take place at least 30 minutes before your start time.

Text messages, emails, rota comments, or messages via third parties will not be accepted as valid notification unless you have a formal communication adjustment in place (e.g. agreed in writing for accessibility reasons). If you are unsure which procedure applies in your service, follow the standard verbal notification route and clarify with your manager.

- **Complete Self-certification:**
 - If absent for 1–7 calendar days, complete a Self-Certification via the RotaMaster Web Portal.

Certification confirms your absence is authorised and supports your entitlement to sick pay. Managers rely on timely certification to track attendance and plan any ongoing support.

- Log into the RotaMaster Web Portal.
- Navigate to Self Service > Sickness.
- Select the appropriate month and click “Please complete”.
- Complete all required fields (illness type, dates, additional details).
- Submit the form. You may print a copy for your records if required.

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This ensures your sickness absence is recorded promptly, accurately, and in line with BrisDoc's reporting standards. It also supports correct payment and reporting to relevant stakeholders. If you encounter issues submitting your self-cert in RotaMaster, inform your line manager and contact workforce@brisdod.org

- **Obtain a Fit Note** if your absence is longer than 7 days. This should cover your period of absence. Please inform your line manager if the expected return to work date has changed.
- Maintain regular Health Check-ins with your manager, as agreed.

As a guide, managers will usually check in every 3–5 days for short-term absences, and weekly for longer-term absences (over 4 weeks), unless an alternative pattern has been agreed. These check-ins are informal and supportive, focusing on your wellbeing and any updates to your recovery.

Let your manager know your expected return to work date as soon as possible.

- Participate in a Return-to-Work conversation within 48 hours of returning to work.

This conversation helps you settle back into work safely, identifies any ongoing needs or reasonable adjustments, and ensures your recovery is supported as part of a positive return.

Procedure for Managers

- **Ensure prompt verbal notification** of absence is received from the co-owner.

Co-owners must notify absence by telephone via a direct verbal conversation at least 30 minutes before their start time. Texts, emails, or third-party messages should not be accepted unless the co-owner has a formal communication adjustment in place.

For services with an alternative agreed procedure (e.g. IUC Operations), managers should ensure the correct contact point (e.g. shift line) is used and followed consistently.

If a co-owner fails to report their absence appropriately or does not provide required certification, the absence may be considered absent without leave (AWOL). Managers should attempt to make contact and consult the People Team before taking further action. Occupational sick pay may be withheld if the absence is not authorised.

- **Log the absence** promptly in RotaMaster.
 - Navigate to Self Service > Sickness Management.
 - Locate or create the co-owner's absence entry.
 - Enter accurate details including absence type, dates, and expected return date.

Recording the absence in RotaMaster as early as possible ensures accurate attendance records, enables payroll processing, and flags when support conversations are due.

- Request and verify appropriate certification.
 - Confirm a self-cert or fit note has been submitted depending on the length of absence.

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- If not yet received, follow up with the co-owner and explain what is required.
- Upload or verify the documentation within the RotaMaster system.

Ensuring certification is complete supports both sick pay entitlement and BrisDoc's reporting obligations.

- **Maintain regular contact** with the co-owner during absence.

Maintain agreed contact throughout the absence to provide reassurance, monitor progress, and plan return-to-work support. As a guide, contact should take place every 3–5 days for short-term absence and weekly for long-term absence (over 4 weeks). Frequency can be adjusted based on individual circumstances and co-owner preference.

Each contact should be noted in the RotaMaster absence record (under Absence Details) for continuity and accountability.

- Plan and conduct a Return-to-Work Conversation within 48 hours of return.

This structured conversation explores the co-owner's recovery, identifies ongoing needs or adjustments, and confirms their readiness to resume duties. It also supports psychological safety and smooth reintegration. Use RotaMaster to document the conversation under the "Return to Work Interview" section.

Return-to-Work Conversations must be held promptly following a colleague's return to work. The date recorded must be the actual date on which the conversation takes place; conversations must not be backdated to the date of the absence itself.

- Initiate a Sickness Review where appropriate.

The purpose of the Sickness Review is to reflect on the colleague's absence history since their last period of sickness and to consider any support, adjustments, or monitoring required.

Review absence patterns and assess against attendance triggers. Consider whether any triggers (e.g. number or pattern of absences) have been met and review the full context — including any disclosed health issues, adjustments already made or known protected characteristics.

Use the Attendance Support Plan template provided (Appendix 2) to capture agreed support measures, attendance goals, and review dates. Share the completed plan with the co-owner and send a copy to the People Team for the employment record.

The date of the Attendance Support Plan must be the date of the Sickness review meeting i.e. the date upon which adjustments and requirements are established. The plan should not be back dated to the last sickness period. This ensures a fair, transparent, and consistent approach, and provides a clear review period going forward.

Managers must consult with the People Team before deciding not to proceed with a Sickness review or an Attendance Support Plan where a trigger has been exceeded.

Disability-Related Sickness

BrisDoc is committed to meeting its duties under the Equality Act 2010, ensuring that co-owners with disabilities are supported fairly and without discrimination. Absences that are wholly or partly related to a disability will not be counted towards attendance triggers automatically. Each

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case will be considered individually, with advice from Occupational Health and the People Team.

Where appropriate, some absence history may be included in attendance reviews if it is reasonable and proportionate to do so — for example, where reasonable adjustments have already been made but attendance remains persistently impacted and further support or review is needed.

See Section on Discretionary Sick Pay Enhancements for details about Disability related absences and sick pay.

Managers must:

- Treat disability-related absence separately from general sickness.
- Seek Occupational Health advice
- Discuss with the co-owner what Reasonable Adjustments could be put in place to support them at work – see the Reasonable Adjustments Guidance document for advice.
- Follow the same procedural steps as in Section 6 but ensure flexible and individualised support is explored.

Co-owners must:

- Share relevant information that will support reasonable adjustments and effective management of their health at work.

See Section on Discretionary Sick Pay Enhancements for details about pregnancy/maternity related absences and sick pay.

Menopause Health-Related Sickness

BrisDoc recognises that menopause and perimenopause health issues can have a significant impact on physical and mental wellbeing and may lead to health-related absence.

Symptoms may include:

- Fatigue, disrupted sleep
- Anxiety, low mood, or mood swings
- Pain, heavy bleeding, or nausea
- Difficulty concentrating or memory issues
- Hot flushes, joint pain, or other physical symptoms

While menopause itself is not a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010, related symptoms may be considered a disability if they have a substantial and long-term impact on day-to-day functioning.

Managers must:

- Treat all menopause health-related absence with sensitivity and discretion.
- Accurately record the reason for absence when co-owners disclose it, and discuss support needs privately.
- Signpost to BrisDoc's Menopause Guidance, Wellbeing Hub, or OH if appropriate.
- Seek Occupational Health advice for long-term or complex presentations.
- Where symptoms may constitute a disability, apply the guidance in *Disability-Related Sickness*.

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Mental Health & Stress

BrisDoc recognises that mental health is just as important as physical health, and that stress can have a significant impact on wellbeing, attendance, and performance. We are committed to fostering an open, compassionate environment where co-owners feel supported in managing their mental health and where early action is taken to prevent escalation.

Everyone experiences stress at times. It is not a weakness. Talking early and seeking support helps recovery and avoids prolonged absence.

Stress is defined by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) as:

"The adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed on them."

Stress becomes problematic when it is prolonged, unmanaged, or causes significant distress or impairment in day-to-day life.

Responsibilities

Co-Owners	Managers
Speak up early if feeling overwhelmed or unwell	Maintain a culture of openness and trust
Access support (Wellbeing Hub, EAP, OH)	Take concerns seriously and without judgement
Use the Wellbeing Request for Support form	Carry out a Stress Risk Assessment when needed
Attend Occupational Health appointments	Offer adjustments or phased returns where appropriate
Maintain contact during any absence	Refer to the People Team for support

Recognising the Signs

Stress and mental ill health can manifest in many ways. Managers should look out for:

- Changes in behaviour or mood
- Declining performance or concentration
- Increased absenteeism or lateness
- Withdrawal from colleagues or social interaction
- Physical symptoms (e.g. fatigue, sleep issues)

If a manager is concerned about a co-owner's wellbeing, they should check in, listen without judgement, and offer appropriate support or referral.

Support Available

- EAP: Free, confidential, 24/7 counselling and advice

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- Stress Risk Assessment: Template available via the Manager Toolkit
- Occupational Health: For assessment and return-to-work planning
- Wellbeing Hub & Support Form: Resources and referral routes

Sickness and Mental Health

If a co-owner is absent due to stress, anxiety, or other mental health concerns:

- A Return-to-Work conversation must be held before or shortly after their return
- Managers should review adjustments, workload, or team dynamics as contributing factors
- The co-owner may benefit from a phased return, temporary modifications, or a referral to OH
- Ongoing support should be documented as part of a Sickness review and captured in an Attendance Support Plan if appropriate

Stress-related absence should never be dismissed as "not real sickness". Treat with the same care and process as any health condition.

Working While Unwell

BrisDoc recognises that some co-owners in flexible or remote-capable roles may feel able to undertake work from home while feeling too unwell to attend a workplace. While this may sometimes be appropriate for minor ailments, it is important that this practice does not undermine co-owner wellbeing or the accurate reporting of health-related absence.

Co-owners who feel unwell but believe they can still carry out some or all their duties from home must:

- Inform their line manager of their symptoms and proposed working arrangement.
- Agree this on a case-by-case basis, taking account of health, role, workload, and potential impact on recovery.

Managers are encouraged to exercise caution in such situations. A short-term remote working arrangement may be appropriate but should not be automatic or assumed. The manager should consider:

- Whether the individual may benefit more from full rest and recovery.
- Whether working from home might delay recovery or mask underlying issues.
- Whether a medical certificate is required.

Where a co-owner works from home while unwell, a Health Check-In must be held within one week to explore whether the arrangement supported recovery or masked ongoing health issues. This ensures that wellbeing needs are explored and documented, and that any underlying issues (e.g. stress, anxiety, or chronic health concerns) are properly addressed.

It is important to reinforce that BrisDoc's wellbeing approach applies equally to those who are working through illness, as well as those who are absent due to sickness. Co-owners should never feel compelled to work if they are unwell.

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Sickness during annual leave

Where a co-owner becomes unfit for work due to sickness or injury during a period of pre-booked annual leave, the period during which they are unfit for work will be treated as sickness absence rather than annual leave. The affected days of annual leave will be re-credited and may be taken at a later date.

This applies to all annual leave, including statutory holiday and any additional contractual or bank holiday entitlement.

To have annual leave re-credited, the co-owner must:

- notify their manager of the sickness in line with the Sickness & Wellbeing Policy
- provide sickness evidence in line with normal requirements, including self-certification for up to 7 calendar days and a fit note from day 8 onwards

The same sickness reporting and evidence standards apply whether the sickness occurs at home or while on annual leave, including where the co-owner is outside the UK.

Phased Return to Work

A phased return to work may be agreed where a co-owner is returning following a period of long-term sickness absence, or where Occupational Health advice recommends a gradual increase in working hours or duties to support recovery.

A phased return will normally involve a planned, time-limited increase in hours and/or duties over an agreed period, with the aim of returning the co-owner to their substantive contracted role.

For a four-week phased return, BrisDoc will support the co-owner by maintaining pay at their contracted hours, even where reduced hours are worked. This is intended to support recovery and reduce financial pressure during the initial return period.

Where a phased return is required beyond four weeks, pay will normally be adjusted to reflect the actual hours worked. Any resulting reduction in pay may, where available and agreed, be offset by the use of remaining Occupational Sick Pay entitlement or annual leave accrued during sickness absence.

All phased return arrangements must be agreed in advance between the co-owner and their line manager, with advice from the People Team where appropriate, and should be documented as part of a Return-to-Work Conversation, Attendance Support Plan, or Occupational Health recommendation. Arrangements will be kept under review and adjusted as needed to support a safe and sustainable return to work.

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Attendance Support Plans

When a co-owner's absence meets the agreed triggers (see earlier section), or where patterns of absence raise concern, a Sickness review is held. The outcome of a Sickness Review may be an Attendance Support Plan. This is a structured, supportive framework intended to:

- Identify barriers to consistent attendance
- Offer appropriate adjustments or interventions
- Agree clear expectations and goals
- Monitor progress through regular reviews

Attendance Support Plans are not disciplinary. They are a collaborative tool to support sustained attendance and wellbeing.

When to use:

- Triggers are met (e.g. 3 absences in 6 months)
- There is a recognisable pattern of absence (e.g. post-holiday)
- An existing health condition is impacting regular attendance
- As the outcome from a Sickness Review

Managers Responsibilities:

- Discuss concerns openly and constructively
- Offer and record reasonable adjustments
- Complete the Attendance Support Plan template (Appendix 2)
- Set clear review periods (e.g. 6–8 weeks)
- Refer to Occupational Health if medical advice is needed
- Involve the People Team for advice if needed

Co-Owners Responsibilities:

- Engage fully with the support plan process
- Attend scheduled meetings and follow agreed actions
- Communicate openly about health and workplace needs

See Appendix 2 for the Attendance Support Plan template and examples.

Workplace Capability Review

If a co-owner continues to experience persistent absence or ongoing difficulty fulfilling their role—despite support and reasonable adjustments—it may be necessary to consider a Workplace Capability Review.

This is a structured and formal process that considers whether continued employment in the current role is feasible. It balances the needs of the co-owner, the team, and the service, while complying with BrisDoc's duties under the Equality Act 2010 and good employment practice.

When to Consider a Review:

- An Attendance Support Plan has not led to sustained improvement

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- Occupational Health advice indicates limited fitness for duties
- No further reasonable adjustments are viable
- Service delivery is significantly impacted

Key Features of the Review:

- Led by a senior manager, with input from the People Team
- Co-owner is invited to attend and contribute to the process
- All adjustments and interventions are reviewed
- OH advice is considered
- Redeployment options may be explored
- May result in formal capability proceedings

Before Initiating a Review:

- Discuss the situation with the People Team
- Ensure that all relevant support has been offered
- Obtain updated Occupational Health advice

See Appendix 3 for an overview of the Workplace Capability Review process.

Sick Pay

BrisDoc provides Occupational Sick Pay (OSP) in addition to Statutory Sick Pay (SSP).

OSP is based on a co-owner's length of continuous service with BrisDoc and is calculated on a rolling 12-month basis. Entitlement is as follows:

Length of service	Pay entitlement
During the first six months	1 week's full pay
During the second six months up to one year	2 weeks full pay and 2 weeks half pay
During the second year	4 weeks full pay and 4 weeks half pay
During the third year	8 weeks full pay and 8 weeks half pay
During the fourth year	13 weeks full pay and 13 weeks half pay
During the fifth year and beyond:	17 weeks full pay and 17 weeks half pay

- Full pay is defined as contracted hours multiplied by the hourly rate.
- OSP includes SSP entitlements where applicable and excludes shift bonuses and non-contracted overtime.
- Co-owners must follow BrisDoc's sickness reporting requirements to remain eligible for sick pay. Failure to comply may result in OSP being withheld.
- During a formal attendance review period, if repeated absences occur which are not attributable to an underlying health condition, OSP may be suspended for the first three qualifying days of absence (in line with SSP provisions).

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- BrisDoc reserves the right to recover costs in cases where absence is a result of third-party liability claims.

Phased Returns

Discretionary Sick Pay Extension

BrisDoc recognises that certain periods of absence may arise wholly or substantially due to disability, pregnancy or critical illness. In these cases, where a co-owner has reached or is approaching the end of their Occupational Sick Pay (OSP) entitlement, we may, in exceptional circumstances, consider a temporary discretionary extension of sick pay as a compassionate and equitable adjustment.

This process exists to prevent hardship and inequity — not to reward or penalise

A critical illness refers to a serious medical condition that has a significant and often long-term impact on a person's health, ability to function, or capacity to work. These typically include, but are not limited to:

- Cancer
- Heart attack
- Stroke
- Major organ failure or transplant
- Multiple sclerosis or motor neurone disease
- Severe mental health conditions requiring extended inpatient care

BrisDoc does not use a strict insurance-based list but applies this definition in line with clinical advice (e.g. Occupational Health, GP letters), focusing on the severity, impact, and recovery time. The inclusion of critical illness in decisions about discretionary sick pay aims to recognise the exceptional nature of such health events and support co-owners compassionately.

This is not an entitlement, but a reflection of BrisDoc's commitment to supporting co-owners' wellbeing and recovery wherever possible.

Requests may be made by either the co-owner or their manager and should be submitted by email to the relevant HR Business Partner (HRBP). The decision will be made by the Head of Service or Director, supported by advice from the HRBP.

Requests will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis in line with Appendix 4: *Factors Considered When Deciding on a Discretionary Sick Pay Extension*.

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The guiding question is not “does the co-owner deserve more pay?” but:

Would a short extension to sick pay be a reasonable and proportionate adjustment that helps prevent disadvantage linked to a protected characteristic, and/or supports wellbeing, recovery, or retention for a critical illness?

All decisions are documented and communicated to the co-owner by the People Team, including the agreed duration of any extension and any review dates.

Appendix 1: Managers Guide

This guide supports line managers in identifying appropriate next steps based on the co-owner's sickness absence pattern, engagement, and support needs:

Situation	Manager Action
1–2 short-term absences in a 6-month period	Monitor informally; no formal action unless part of a pattern. Ensure Return-to-Work Conversations are being held.
Absence trigger met (e.g. 3 in 6 months, 5 in 12, or clear pattern)	Initiate a Sickness Review Discuss attendance concerns and agree a support package, including a discussion on Reasonable Adjustments recorded in an Attendance Support Plan (Appendix 2).
Signs of stress or mental health difficulty	Refer to Wellbeing Toolkit, offer EAP or OH referral. Consider conducting a Stress Risk Assessment and discuss Reasonable Adjustments.

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Long-term absence (over 4 weeks)	Maintain regular Health Check-ins. Arrange OH referral. Begin planning for return including adjustments or phased return.
Co-owner is working from home while unwell	When the working from home request is received, hold a wellbeing conversation to determine whether full rest is more appropriate. Then, conduct a Health Check-In within one week to assess recovery and any ongoing needs. Discuss impact on recovery, review support needs and Reasonable Adjustments, and if felt necessary, document the conversation.
No improvement despite support measures	Seek HR advice from the People Team. Escalate to formal attendance management process and consider Workplace Capability Review (Appendix 3).

Key Responsibilities

- Record all absences and ensure proper certification is submitted.
- Conduct timely and considerate Return-to-Work Conversations.
- Use Sickness reviews and Attendance Support Plans when absence triggers are reached.
- Refer to Occupational Health when medical advice is needed.
- Promote use of the Wellbeing Hub, EAP, and other resources.
- Discuss Reasonable Adjustments to support co-owners at work.

Attendance Triggers (Triggers for Support Plan)

- 3 episodes in a 6-month rolling period
- 5 episodes in a 12-month rolling period
- 2 episodes totalling 2 weeks+ in a 12-month period
- Recognisable patterns of concern (e.g. frequent Fridays, school holidays, connected to Bank Holidays)

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Appendix 2: Attendance Support Plan

This template is available as a separate document via Radar Policies. It can be completed either during a Health Check-in or Supportive Return Conversation, or immediately afterwards as a record of the meeting. It can then be shared with the co-owner.

Purpose of the Attendance Support Plan

The Attendance Support Plan is designed to provide a structured, supportive approach to improving attendance when a co-owner's absence pattern exceeds expected triggers or patterns of absences are causing concerns. It is not a disciplinary tool but a collaborative process, aimed at identifying barriers to attendance, offering relevant support, and agreeing on realistic improvements.

By setting clear goals, recording agreed adjustments, and scheduling regular reviews, the plan helps ensure that both the co-owner and their line manager are working constructively towards a sustainable return to regular attendance. In some cases, it may also help identify underlying health, wellbeing or workplace issues requiring further intervention or referral.

	Details
Co-owner Name	
Manager's Name	
Date of Sickness Review	
Date Plan Started	
Summary of Attendance Concerns	<i>(e.g. frequent short-term absences across several months, repeated absences following weekends or annual leave, patterns indicating possible stress or burnout, disruption to team service delivery, failure to improve following informal support)</i>
Agreed Support Measures	<i>(e.g. Reasonable Adjustments, regular wellbeing check-ins, phased return schedule, support from EAP, stress risk assessment, OH)</i>
Attendance Goals	<i>(e.g. maintain full attendance for next 8 weeks, attend scheduled OH appointments, achieve reduced absence frequency over 3 months)</i>
Review Dates	<i>(e.g. fortnightly check-ins with manager, formal review at 6 weeks, joint OH session at 3 weeks)</i>
Next Steps if No Improvement	<i>(e.g. second OH referral, escalation to formal attendance management process, workplace capability meeting consideration)</i>

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Appendix 3: Workplace Capability Review

The Workplace Capability Review is a formal process used when a co-owner's health-related absence or health condition is having a sustained impact on their ability to carry out their role, and earlier support interventions have not led to improvement.

The review is not disciplinary in nature but is a structured exploration of all available options to support continued employment, including reasonable adjustments and redeployment.

A Workplace Capability Review may be considered when:

- A co-owner has not met the goals of an Attendance Support Plan.
- Occupational Health has indicated that the co-owner is unlikely to return to their role in the foreseeable future.
- Reasonable adjustments have been made but are no longer sustainable or effective.
- There is a pattern of persistent absence or reduced capability impacting the service.

A Workplace Capability Review must not be initiated without prior consultation with the People Team.

Step	Action
1. Review Decision	Manager discusses case with the People Team to determine appropriateness of WCR. Relevant documentation (Attendance Support Plans, OH reports) is reviewed.
2. Invite to Review Meeting	Co-owner is invited in writing to a Workplace Capability Review meeting. They are informed of the purpose, attendees, and right to be accompanied.
3. Conduct Review Meeting	A formal meeting is held with the co-owner, their manager, a representative from the People Team, and any relevant clinical or OH input.
4. Explore Options	The group discusses: current capabilities, adjustments tried, redeployment possibilities, and future prognosis.
5. Agree Outcomes	Possible outcomes include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Further temporary adjustments or support measures• Redeployment to a suitable alternative role• Move to formal capability process if no viable alternatives exist
6. Document and Communicate	Outcomes are confirmed in writing and recorded in the co-owner's Employment record. A follow-up plan is agreed if appropriate.

Note:

- Occupational Health input is critical and should be up to date.
- If redeployment is explored, this must be handled in line with BrisDoc's policies on fair recruitment and role suitability.

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Appendix 4: Deciding on Sick Pay Extension

Factor	What's Considered	How It May Impact the Decision
Nature and cause of absence	Is the absence wholly or substantially related to a disability, pregnancy, or critical illness?	Clear medical/OH evidence linking absence to a protected characteristic or critical illness strengthens the case for extension.
Duration and pattern of absence	How long is the current absence? Is it a single episode or part of a pattern?	Short-term absences with a foreseeable return are more likely to result in a temporary extension. Complex or long-term absence may require different interventions.
Total sickness record (past 12 months)	Number of days and episodes, and their reasons.	A low overall absence history may support an extension. A higher or more complex pattern may require a more balanced view.
Length of service	Is the co-owner relatively new and on lower entitlement?	Short service may strengthen the case (as they've had no time to build entitlement) but may reduce certainty around long-term attendance. Requires judgement.
Occupational Health or medical advice	What does OH say about recovery, fitness to work, or impact of pay loss?	A recommendation to allow additional recovery time or a note on financial stress hindering recovery supports approval.
Previous adjustments or support provided	Have earlier steps been taken to support attendance (e.g. phased return, workload adaptations)?	Where other support has already been exhausted or is in place, a short pay extension may complement the overall plan.
Impact of pay reduction	Would transition to half or no pay cause hardship or delay recovery?	If the co-owner is likely to experience significant stress, hardship or disengagement, extension is more likely to be reasonable.
Likelihood of return to work	Is the co-owner expected to return within a defined timeframe?	A realistic, supported plan to return increases the case for temporary extension.
Comparability and precedent	Have similar requests been supported in past cases?	Helps ensure fairness. Previous comparable cases may inform the outcome, while recognising that all requests are individual.
Cost and proportionality	What is the financial/organisational impact of extending pay?	Small extensions (e.g. 1–2 weeks) are generally low-cost and high-value in terms of retention and wellbeing.

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Appendix 5: EQIA

This Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) ensures that BrisDoc's Sickness Management and Wellbeing Support Policy & SOP upholds our duties under the Equality Act 2010, fosters inclusive and equitable practice, and proactively considers how co-owners from different backgrounds and with different protected characteristics may be impacted. It also reflects on intersectionality and the compounding effects that may arise from overlapping characteristics.

Protected Characteristic	Potential Impact Identified?	Actions Taken / Considerations
Age	Yes – potential variation in symptoms or support needs	Policy includes menopause, perimenopause, and long-term condition guidance that may disproportionately affect co-owners over 40. Attendance procedures are sensitive to life stage.
Disability	Yes – potential barriers	Disability-related absence is treated separately from general triggers. Reasonable adjustments and Occupational Health referrals are embedded throughout. Managers are instructed to apply case-by-case discretion.
Sex / Gender	Yes – positive impact	Menstrual health, menopause and perimenopause-related absences are specifically recognised and supported, reflecting a gender-aware approach.
Gender Reassignment	No differential impact	All health-related absence is managed confidentially and supportively. Any adjustments required are handled with sensitivity.
Pregnancy and Maternity	Yes – potential barriers	Pregnancy-related sickness is explicitly excluded from attendance triggers. Managers are guided to complete risk assessments and provide flexibility around return to work.
Race / Ethnicity	No differential impact	Policy language is accessible, and support is available through line managers and People Team. Adjustments or OH referrals apply regardless of background.
Religion or Belief	No differential impact	Policy is compatible with religious observance. Flexibility in adjustments would allow for any required accommodations.
Sexual Orientation	No differential impact	The policy applies equitably. Co-owners have equal access to all support mechanisms.
Marriage and Civil Partnership	No differential impact	The policy does not treat co-owners differently based on marital or partnership status.

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Intersectionality

BrisDoc recognises that some co-owners may experience overlapping barriers due to intersecting identities (e.g. a disabled parent, a younger co-owner from an ethnic minority background, etc.). The Attendance Support Plan and Wellbeing processes are designed to be flexible, person-centred, and considerate of complex needs.

We are committed to an inclusive approach to sickness absence that understands and respects overlapping factors. This means we will:

- Avoid one-size-fits-all assumptions about absence or attendance
- Consider how protected characteristics may affect access to healthcare, communication preferences, or experience of symptoms
- Ensure that no co-owner is disadvantaged in sickness absence processes due to intersecting inequalities

BrisDoc commits to handling all sickness absence matters with sensitivity, considering each individual's circumstances, and offer support in a way that is equitable, fair, and respectful.

Monitoring and Review

- Equality considerations will be reviewed as part of future policy reviews and updates.
- Any feedback or concerns raised by co-owners, either directly or through Occupational Health or Access to Work, will be reviewed by the People Team and inform improvements to practice.
- Co-owners are encouraged to raise concerns with their line manager or confidentially with the People Team at workforcesupport@brisdock.org

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Version Control

Change Details in this Version	Reason for Change / Comments
Sickness & Wellbeing Policy V1.0 replacing: Sickness Absence Policy v4.2 and Managing Stress in the Workplace Policy v2.0	Full consolidation of policies for improved clarity, consistency, and accessibility. Supports BrisDoc's strategic approach to integrated wellbeing and absence management.
New structure introduced with clear definitions, co-owner and manager procedures, and integration of RotaMaster processes.	Ensures a unified and operationally practical approach for managing sickness and health-related absence.
Added clear processes for Health Check-Ins, Return-to-Work Conversations, and Sickness Reviews.	Ensures consistent expectations and timely support during and after absence.
Introduced new section on Working While Unwell, including required follow-up Health Check-Ins.	Reflects hybrid and flexible work practices; ensures wellbeing isn't compromised when working through illness.
Introduced new section on Menopause, and Perimenopause	Reflects BrisDoc aspiration to become Menopause Friendly Employer
Incorporated section on Mental Health, including use of the Wellbeing Toolkit and stress risk assessments.	Replaces standalone stress policy and ensures mental health is addressed on equal footing with physical health.
Introduced new Workplace Capability Review process (Appendix 3) for complex, unresolved absence cases.	Supports fair and structured decision-making when sustained absence impacts service delivery.
Expanded and clearly presented the Support Available section including EAP, OH, and internal wellbeing resources.	Promotes accessibility and early engagement with support pathways.
Added full Equality Impact Assessment (Appendix 4).	To ensure the policy upholds BrisDoc's legal obligations and inclusive culture.
29/09/2025	Published version 1.0. This document replaces: Sickness Absence Policy v4.2 and Managing Stress v2.