

Family issues are the chief cause of long term sickness absence

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Family issues are one of the main causes for long term absence from work, having the same impact as acute medical conditions such as cancer and heart attacks, according to research from industry body Group Risk Development (GRiD).

Overall, 18% of businesses questioned claimed family issues were the top reason for workplace absence, which was the same percentage as acute medical conditions. Stress came in second at 15%. Furthermore, 12% of businesses said musculoskeletal disorders were the most common reason for staff absence.

Katharine Moxham, spokesperson for GRiD, said employers were treating extended sickness absence as an “isolatable” issue affecting a specific individual rather than looking at the broader picture.

“The reality is that team mates can become sick due to a colleague’s absence or, as our research proves, family issues can spill over to affect an employee’s ability to perform in the work context.”