

# Report on the 2012 pilot of the AHP Advisory Fitness for Work Report Presented to AHPF 29<sup>th</sup> January 2013

## Introduction

The AHP report has been designed to support people remain in work or return to work following illness or injury and thus reduce cost of sickness to employers, taxpayers and the economy .

The pilot was conducted using SurveyMonkey from October - December 2012.

Members of the professional bodies The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy, the College of Occupational Therapists, the Society of Chiropractors and Podiatrists volunteered with the remit of using it with working age patients at risk of absence from work or already absent from work due to illness or injury. Agreement to test the pilot was received from practitioners in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. 546 responses were received, 518 from practitioners, 16 from employees, and 3 each from GPs and employers.

## Overall results

The feedback was positive with the consensus being that the tool would be beneficial to employees and their employers as a basis for a discussion on the possible adjustments necessary to facilitate a return to work. The intention is for GPs to use the AHP report to help complete a fit note in those unable to continue to work The GPs' responses were very low, but alongside feedback at the RCGP conference in Glasgow 2012, the overall approach from GPs and the RCPG is positive.

The responses indicate that the process was clear and straight forward and met the intended purpose. It allowed the employer to consider the feasibility of the recommendations in relation to his/her business environment and the employee's role. This applied whether or not the employee returned to work.

In response to the suggestion that more depth is required, this document was designed to be relevant to a busy employer and as such did not follow medical or academic models. It was intended only to provide functional solutions to the employers and is an adjunct to the evidence based practitioner records where details of the condition(s) and the clinical reasoning are documented.

A number of responses suggested that practitioners would find education on using the form helpful.

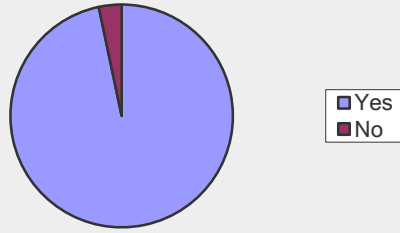
NHS practitioners repeatedly stated that this is another task added to an already pressured workforce.

## Action

Constructive comments from the survey have been incorporated into the final design of the document.

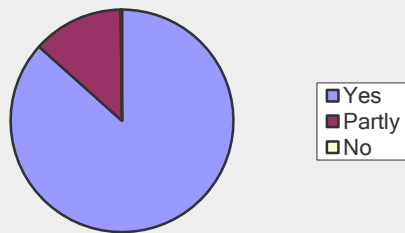
The overall positive responses have supported the continuation of this work to national launches from March 2013.

Was the AHP Advisory Fitness for Work Report easy to read?



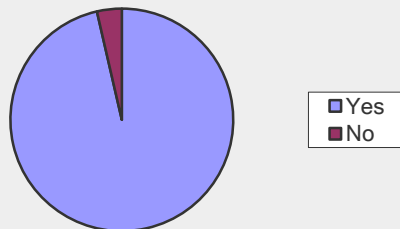
- a clear and very useful form
- simple & straight forward
- clear and relevant

Did it make sense?



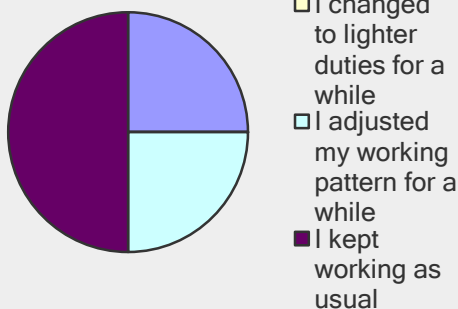
- Practitioners considered it covered all the areas that are included in assessment and advice to patients.
- useful to give to managers as guidance on appropriate work activities
- puts it into a standardised format

Do you believe that this will be a valuable tool?



- a fantastic tool for communicating to employers
- a great way to formalise and create national uniformity
- a valuable tool
- The form itself is excellent; its focus on function and not diagnostic

What happened after you got the report?



- GP: I agreed with the findings as discussed with the patient.
- Employee: This has enabled my work to better support my return to amended duties.