



UK doctors issued 741,210 'fit notes' for stress-related disorders in 2018

Sophie Vanhegan

10th February 2020

[LinkedIn](#)
[Twitter](#)
[Email](#)
[Print](#)

HR Magazine - 10 February 2020

There has been a 4% rise in fit notes issued by doctors between 2017 and 2018 increasing from 9.3 million to 9.7 million.

This jump is particularly noticeable in financial and professional services where stress-related disorders appear to be steadily increasing.

Sophie Vanhegan said: "Employers need to have adequate policies and practices in place for supporting employees returning to work after a period of leave due to stress."



“If someone returning from a stress-related absence has been stripped of their previous responsibilities, or is otherwise treated less favourably than before, then they may have grounds for a disability discrimination claim.”

GQ|Littler's research revealed that nearly 90,000 notes advised that workspaces should be adapted, 200,100 notes recommended altered working hours and 203,440 notes advised phased workplace reintroduction.

Sophie implied that if companies do not make reasonable adjustments for those returning from stress-related absences, employers could be left exposed to claims.

She said: “It may be reasonable for an employer to allow a phased return to work or offer them greater support with their workload.

“Supporting mental health in the workplace has become a hot topic for many employers in the past couple of years, and many are trying to encourage open discussion with their workforces to destigmatise this issue and tackle stress-related absences.”

Read the full article [here](#).