

# ENA Occupational Health Committee



## Musculo-skeletal disorders

*These case studies are designed to outline the overall management of musculo-skeletal disorders within ENA member companies, and so identify different approaches to the management of this issue and examples of good practice.*

**Company Name: CE Electric**

### **What did the Company do:**

- Initiated an early return to work programme for employees.
- Manager reviewed employee history.
- Involved Occupational Health from an early stage if the employee does not attend work after being absent on day 5.
- Occupational Health encouraged returning to work with restricted duties and back care advice. Referral for physiotherapy within two weeks of problem.
- He was seen again by Occupational Health 4 weeks after original appointment and was pain free and able to resume full duties.

### **Health and safety benefits:**

- Employee was case managed by consulting with manager, employee and Occupational Health.
- Employee was able to return to work early, but with a structure of which ensured he was benefiting from increased activity but without any further risk to his health.
- Manager's awareness of case management was improved and had greater understanding of the services provided by Occupational Health.
- Remaining active and working created a positive health message to employee about recovery, and would contribute to facilitating a speedy recovery.

### **Business / Cost Benefits:**

- Cost of absence at time of referral was more cost effective than employee waiting on NHS listing.
- Less absence/time off in the future due to early management of the situation.
- Commitment shown by the company towards the employee has improved working relations.
- Positive message that sickness absence is not necessarily the most effective way to recover.
- Managers have greater understanding and confidence in involving Occupational Health at an earlier stage in the process.

**Worker involvement:**

- Attending and participating in physiotherapy to full extent.
- Willingness to undertake reduced duties/hours.
- Involvement in case management meetings and agreeing targets/plans setting.
- Able to maintain contact with Occupational Health for any required assistance.
- Follow a clear programme of works.
- Employee benefiting from earlier recovery.

**Management View:**

- Raised awareness of Occupational Health facilities.
- Understand the benefits of phased re-introduction and the benefits to both company and employee.
- Improved communication links between both company and general employees.