

**CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL**

**County Council  
19<sup>th</sup> October 2017**

**REPORT AUTHOR: Portfolio Holder for Children's Services**

**SUBJECT: Question from County Councillor Huw Williams**

**Question**

**Work for front line staff in Children Services is emotionally demanding, intense and occasionally high risk. Staff sickness leave is reported to have been, at times, between 25% and 50% during the last year. There seems to be a correlation between sickness levels and the increased demand placed on workers in support of young people. Every young person is allocated a social worker and lack of continuity is damaging. What support is being offered to these members of staff in terms of supervision, resources and better staffing levels, so, they can properly and safely support our vulnerable young people?**

**Answer**

From our records the occasions and percentage of sickness absence within Childrens services for the last year is as below-

<b>Oct-16</b>	35 occasions	17.59%
<b>Nov-16</b>	35 occasions	17.86%
<b>Dec-16</b>	35 occasions	18.42%
<b>Jan-17</b>	40 occasions	21.16%
<b>Feb-17</b>	35 occasions	19.02%
<b>Mar-17</b>	39 occasions	20.21%
<b>Apr-17</b>	27 occasions	13.92%
<b>May-17</b>	29 occasions	14.57%
<b>Jun-17</b>	25 occasions	12.38%
<b>Jul-17</b>	24 occasions	11.65%

<b>Aug-17</b>	23 occasions	11%
<b>Sep-17</b>	19 occasions	8.88%

The support available to staff includes-

- Supervision meetings undertaken by line managers.
- IPR meetings undertaken and recorded on Trent that taking place.
- Flexible Working/ Retirement- (9 day fortnight working pattern to assist with home/ work life balance.)
- TOIL/ Annual Leave/ Flexi schemes
- All Leave Policy- Maternity, Paternity and Supporting Working parents
- Performance Capability process if not performing within role- support to ensure working to acceptable standard.
- Coaching and mentoring.
- Staff training and development
- Locality Teams- Team Managers, Assistant Team Managers and other positions have now been appointed to within the service to provided additional resource and support.
- Adoption and Fostering- Restructures have taken place and as part of this capacity has been looked at within the team and this will continue to be reviewed.
- Golwg y Bannau- Relief staff in place to assist with staff shortages as and when required
- Newly Qualified Social Workers and support people through Social Work Degree.
- Support Non-qualified staff and the option to enter into the Social Work profession.
- Staffing Levels- Reviewed carried out in all service levels in last 12 months and further work is being followed up in this regard. Vacancy gaps look at agency staff- something we need to reduce and look at in the future.

## **Sickness**

- Communication with staff during sickness absence.
- Welfare meetings undertaken with staff in line with sickness absence policy.
- Access to the PCC Counselling service offered to staff.
- Access to the Occupational Health service if required.
- Stress risk assessments undertaken with staff.
- Opportunity to take annual leave to remain on full pay if requested.