

## *The sick Man of the British Isles?*



### *A contradiction in terms?*

We recently submitted a Freedom of Information query in respect of sick days taken by Manx Care staff.

By a FOI response dated 20<sup>th</sup> September 2023 Manx Care confirmed the following:-

- a) For the one year period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 a staggering total of **53,919** sick days were taken by Manx Care staff.
- b) This equates to an absence rate of **8.04%**. In other words approximately 8% of the working year (excluding holiday leave, weekends and Bank holidays) was taken off sick by Manx Care staff!
- c) The estimated financial cost to the Isle of Man taxpayer of such absence for that year was an enormous **£7,127,920.00**.

Questions:

1. Why is there such a high sickness absence by Manx Care staff compared to the private sector absentee rate of only 2.3%?
2. Is this particularly puzzling given that hospital and care workers by profession and definition should be focused on health, well-being and preventative measures against illness?
3. Does the high absentee rate have anything to do with unreliable and unnecessary *Covid-19* testing of asymptomatic staff members?
4. Does the high absentee rate have anything to do with public sector worker entitlement to 3 months' sickness leave on full pay?
5. Why is the Manx Care staff sickness rate (8.04%) over **twice** the rate of UK public sector workers (3.8% in 2022: data from UK Office of National Statistics)?

See link below for Manx Care's FOI response dated 20<sup>th</sup> September 2023.

<https://www.ik.im/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/20.09.23-High-rate-of-Sickness-Absence-of-Manx-Care-Staff.pdf>