The effect of using management satisfaction surveys on the quality of occupational health services

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ABSTRACT

The study aim is to research the effect of using managers’ satisfaction survey, with resulting feedback intervention and how it affects the quality of sickness absence procedures including reports in an occupational health service (OHS).

Methods: This was an intervention study using anonymous cross-sectional postal questionnaire to managers in a large public sector employer relating to sickness absence procedures before and after feedback intervention. All managers who referred to the OHS were offered the survey until a predetermined number of responses were obtained. The survey required managers to indicate the extent of agreement on a six point Likert scale. Qualitative data was also collected.

Results: First data collection: 77 questionnaires were sent out leading to 40 respondents (response rate 52%). An intervention package was developed using the results of the first questionnaires. Feedback and intervention within the department was over three months before starting second data collection. Then a further 96 questionnaires were sent with 40 respondents (response rate 42%). The mean score from the satisfaction survey before intervention was 4.8134 (SO 0.72512). The mean score after intervention was 4.7872 (SO 0.70998) out of a maximum score of 6.0. The quantitative results showed that there was not a statistically significant change. However, overall satisfaction before intervention was very high. The mean percentage in satisfaction agreement did show an increase after feedback from 90% to 91%. After intervention there were also more positive qualitative comments.

Conclusions: The study concludes that the effect of using managers’ satisfaction survey, with resulting feedback intervention, did not statistically affect the quality of sickness absence procedures including reports, in an OHS even though there was an increase in overall satisfaction both qualitatively and quantitatively. The value of acknowledgement of the managers’ views of an OHS in sickness absence procedures is important, which was apparent from the high level of satisfaction before feedback and also the qualitative replies. There is scope for further research in this area.