

## **Britons Continue Going To Work When Ill**

*A commitment to their colleagues has driven many workers around the UK to head to work despite having an illness that would justify them staying at home.*

September 19, 2008 (FPRC) -- Such is the claim of Axa, which has found that during the course of the past six months, two-thirds of working people have battled through an illness, while more than half (53 per cent) have not taken a single day off during the last half-year. And it is through a sense of occupational camaraderie that many people are getting up when they are feeling down, with 29 per cent of respondents to the study claiming they have fought through an illness because they did not want to let their colleagues down.

However, it seemed that some were also worried out that they would disadvantage themselves if they took a day off too. Nearly a quarter (24 per cent) said they just have too much work to think about calling in sick, while 15 per cent of workers said they were concerned their employers would use their sickness absence against them if it came to making people redundant.

Indeed, one in five people are taking chunks of their own holiday entitlement to cover periods when they are simply too ill to get to work, while nearly a third (32 per cent) of workers who admitted to doing so said they had felt it necessary because they are not entitled to paid sick leave.

For those who find themselves struck by a period of ill-health, taking out a personal loan may prove effective in providing the stability to convalesce without the worry that being away from work will put their finances under strain.

Advising employers on the correct procedure for handling workers illness, Dudley Lusted, a spokesperson for Axa PPP, commented: 'Smart employers will make sure their managers are properly trained and supported to manage attendance positively and when people are off work sick concentrate on managing those employees whose attendance should give genuine cause for concern, whether its frequent absence takers ... or people with medical conditions that put them at risk of being off long-term sick. Back pain and other musculoskeletal problems and psychological problems such as stress, anxiety and depression are the problems that should be setting off alarm bells. For these, early access to diagnosis and treatment is key to an early return to health - and back to work.'

In a breakdown of the statistics based on occupation, it seemed that those who work in marketing, advertising and PR feel a particular duty to soldier on through illness, with 87 per cent of people working in these professions admitting to doing so. Meanwhile, those in the charity sector were least likely to forgo their sick leave in the event of illness, with 48 per cent of people in this area claiming to have done so.

Elsewhere, a recent survey from Prudential has found that many people place worries about their finances above concerns about their own wellbeing. For those who do so, taking out one of the many cheap loans available may prove an effective way to allay fears about their monetary health.

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