

Recent Long COVID study: the impact on the workplace

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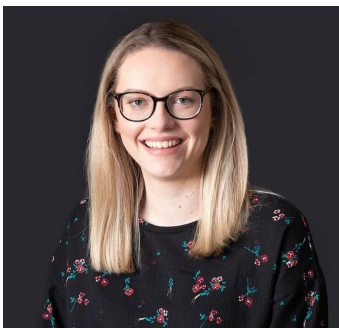
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A recent study by CIPD and Simplyhealth has found that nearly half (46%) of employers have staff who have experienced Long COVID in the last year. The study involved 804 organisations, representing over 4.3 million employees. In addition, the study found that a fifth of employers said that they did not know whether any employees have suffered from Long COVID, meaning that the full scale of the problem could be underestimated.

Long COVID is where symptoms of COVID continue for more than 12 weeks after initial infection. Common symptoms include extreme tiredness, shortness of breath and problems with memory and concentration.

It is important that employers are aware of Long COVID as, in some circumstances, employees with Long COVID may meet the definition of a disability under the Equality Act 2010. The study suggests that there are employers who unknowingly have employees with Long COVID. It is important that employers create a supportive environment where employees feel able to share information regarding their health to ensure that any necessary steps are taken. This may include, for example, referring employees to occupational health to assess whether any adjustments need to be made to their role or implementing flexible working arrangements. It is also important that Line Managers are aware of the issue and receive appropriate training on how to support employees with the condition.

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