

What is Occupational Health?

Occupational Health is the specialty of medicine and nursing that deals with the effects of health on work and the effects of work on health.

What is a Specialist in Occupational Medicine?

This is a doctor who has completed higher professional training and is a member of the Faculty of Occupational Medicine of the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland. The doctor is registered with the Medical Council of Ireland as a Specialist in Occupational Medicine and partakes in continuous medical education. The term occupational health physician OHP refers to any doctor who works in occupational medicine and who may or may have completed full training. In Medwise an OHP will work under the direction of a specialist in occupational medicine

What is an Occupational Health Advisor?

An occupational health advisor OHA is a nurse registered with An Bord Altrains (The Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland) and who holds a recognized qualification in occupational health and engages in ongoing education and training in work related health issues. An OHA works under the guidance of a specialist in occupational medicine.

Referral for an occupational health assessment:

You may be referred to Medwise by your manager, human resource department or health and safety department. The manager will inform you of the reason for the referral prior to your appointment at Medwise. You are welcome to bring a letter from your own doctor to the occupational health assessment.

The common reasons for referral for an occupational health assessment:

1. To provide treatment for a work related injury or illness.
2. To offer you support regarding a health problem and its effect on your work and to facilitate you in providing reliable and effective service.
3. To ensure that you are medically fit to work safely to protect your health and that of your colleagues.
4. To allow recommendations of reasonable adjustments to the work environment to accommodate your health needs.
5. To comply with legal health and safety requirements for fitness standards, e.g. eyesight for drivers of HGVs.
6. To offer vaccination against infectious diseases that you may encounter during the course of your work.
7. As part of a health surveillance program to allow early detection of health effects from exposure to work place hazards e.g. hearing tests in workers exposed to loud noise.

What happens during the occupational health assessment?

On arrival, please check in with the receptionist. You will be issued with a registration and consent form. You are requested to give your consent to undergo a medical assessment on behalf of your employer and to allow a report on the outcome of the assessment to be issued to your employer and to allow retention of your health and personal data under GDPR in a confidential occupational health file by Medwise. The consultation cannot take place unless you are happy to sign this consent form.

You will be seen by the an occupational health doctor who will carry out the medical assessment, which may include a relevant physical examination. You may also see the OHA who will carry out any additional investigations such as lung function testing, vision testing or administer vaccines. If necessary, the Medwise doctor or nurse will recommend that you receive further treatment or investigation. For example, you may be referred for an MRI scan or to a physiotherapist or a counselor

No confidential medical details will be disclosed to your employer or any other third party without further specific written consent. At the end of the assessment the OHP or OHA will discuss your options to give further consent to allow disclosure of medical details to your employer and to allow the occupational health team communicate and liaise with your own treating medical team /doctor.

On completion of the assessment, the Specialist in Occupational Medicine will issue an occupational health report on the outcome of the assessment to your employer.

What will the occupational health report contain?

The report will outline the implications of your health status on your ability to attend work and perform your role reliably, safely and effectively. The report may recommend reasonable adjustments to your workplace to accommodate your health needs. If you are unwell, the report will outline when you are likely to be fit to resume work and if any modifications to the working conditions are necessary to facilitate your recovery and return to work e.g. a phased return to work as part of an occupational rehabilitation program. The term "medical condition" may be used to describe an illness that you do not wish disclosed to your employer.

May I see the occupational health report?

Under the GDPR and the Freedom of Information Acts you have access to the medical file, consent form, investigation results, medical correspondence, referral letters and the occupational health report. The employer is the Data Controller for the occupational health report, Medwise is the Data Controller for the remainder of the occupational health file.

What if a further appointment is required?

If a follow up appointment is required this will be arranged through your employer. If you are unable to attend for an appointment we request that you give reasonable notice of cancellation otherwise your employer may be charged for the clinic time.