



## How did FirstCare help British Gas to reduce absence by 21% within one year?

### British Gas Leading the way in absence management

As one of the UK's leading gas suppliers, part of the British Gas vision is a commitment to delivering the highest quality services and expertise. This is achieved on a daily basis by its army of engineers based in five regional centres.

Customer care is at the heart of service centre operations. Any staff absence within the service division impacts directly on customer service levels, causing last minute changes to scheduled service appointment times. In the past, the attendance management reporting system had weaknesses that affected the accuracy and consistency of the data it produced.

In tandem with an organisational restructure, British Gas was keen to improve its attendance management. Having heard FirstCare discussing the issue of employee absence on national television, British Gas investigated outsourcing its attendance management to a specialist.

Following a competitive pitch, FirstCare was appointed to implement a pilot scheme at the British Gas Stockport service centre during 2006/2007. Due to its success, FirstCare's attendance management system was rolled out to all remaining UK British Gas service centres between 1 January and 29 February 2008.

FirstCare now manages attendance issues in all five British Gas service centre sites, managing attendance for over 6,900 service engineers, (compared to the trial figure of 1,764). By the end of June 2008, the service will be extended to manage all office staff, taking this total to over 9,000 staff.

### Outcome

- Reduced absence levels ensure customers experience fewer cancelled or re-scheduled appointments
- Combined with restructuring, the Stockport centre went from having the highest absence levels in the country to the lowest over the trial period
- Absence reduction can be equated to a saving of approximately one day of time, per engineer over 18 months
- Early absence reporting enables British Gas to plan and schedule more effectively in relation to staff absence and their return to work
- FirstCare's flexible approach suits British Gas's workforce and culture
- FirstCare's real-time reporting and analysis enables British Gas managers to become much closer to attendance issues and address problems early on
- The service reduces the administrative burden on managers
- Customers enjoy greater flexibility in relation to appointment times
- An organisational restructure coincided with the introduction of FirstCare's service; together they have contributed to an improvement in the delivery of customer service KPIs

## FIRSTCARE® Valuing People

To find out how the FirstCare service can help you reduce absence rates in your organisation please contact us by either calling 08456 041 999, emailing [info.ukolutions@sungardps.com](mailto:info.ukolutions@sungardps.com) or visiting [www.sungardfirstcare.co.uk](http://www.sungardfirstcare.co.uk)



## About FirstCare

FirstCare is an absence management specialist that has extensive experience of supporting clients in reducing absence in their organisations.

We are a dynamic, client focused company and a market leader in absence management in the UK. Our clients are from both the public and private sectors and include NHS trusts, train operating companies, utility companies, retailers and professional service providers.



## About FirstCare Service

From the start of an absence and in conjunction with a client's existing policies and procedures, FirstCare will:

- Record absence and return to work details
- Provide confidential medical advice to employees
- Immediately notify managers via our automated system
- Provide real time absence and accident trend information
- Produce comprehensive management reporting
- Provide best practice in absence management

### Stage 1 Employee Calls

A dedicated number is available 24/7 to report absence and consult with a nurse.

### Stage 2 Confidential medical advice is provided

Employees are given confidential medical advice and a back to work date is agreed.

### Stage 3 Immediate notification of absence

Employer receives immediate notification of absence with reason, and return to work date via email/SMS text/pager.

### Stage 4 Medical follow-up

All employees are contacted by a nurse for a follow-up conversation; managers are automatically updated.

### Stage 5 Return to work notifications (RTW)

Manager receives confirmation of return to work and all materials required to complete RTW interview in line with policies.

### Stage 6 Triggers

Tailored alerts to prompt appropriate action by managers.

### Stage 7 Management reporting

Real-time, confidential absence analysis to enable organisations to spot absence trends and problem areas.

"We are impressed by how FirstCare has created a bespoke service for us that continuously evolves to suit our needs"

**John Lochrie**  
General Manager British Gas Service Centre Stockport