

A one-day workshop from The At Work Partnership in association with the journal *Occupational Health [at Work]*

TRAINING



Medical decision-making in ill-health retirement

Thursday 5 March 2026
A Virtual Event

Chaired by Dr John Ballard, *Occupational Health [at Work]*

CPD:
Self-certification schemes:
6 hours

Additional CPD can be gained after the event via our CPD scheme.

- > Giving evidence-based advice in IHR cases
- > Roles of the OH doctor and the OH nurse
- > IHR and the law
- > Is IHR always a good option?
- > Working with HR, line managers and the pension administrator
- > Case studies
- > Expert panel Q&A

SPECIAL OFFER

Book and pay by
20 January 2026 and
save **£50 + VAT!**



Quality conferences at value for money prices

"A great opportunity to hear from experts in the field about their approach... and how to develop our own process that meets the requirements for excellent IHR reporting."
Dr Mark McCaldin, NPH Group Ltd

"Brilliantly informative, superbly presented, and highly relevant to current OH practice."
Dr John Cooper, OH consultant, independent

"An excellent conference with an expert panel who are passionate and experienced in their field."
Michelle Moore, OH Manager, Hertfordshire County Council

Programme

The full course programme can be found on our website: www.atworkpartnership.co.uk

9.05 Registration

9.10 Introduction and welcome

Dr John Ballard, Occupational Health [at Work]

- Trends in ill health retirement (IHR)
- Different types of schemes

9.30 Role of occupational health (Part 1)

Dr Mark Groom, Health Partners Group

- Understanding the scheme's health criteria
- Required medical evidence
- Medical examinations
- Medical reports from primary/secondary care
- Consent and confidentiality in practice
- Audit and quality improvement activity

10.25 IHR and the law

Prof Diana Kloss, barrister

- Pensions regulations – a brief introduction
- Consent, confidentiality and data handling
- Age discrimination and disability discrimination
- Key cases

11.15 Tea break

11.35 Role of occupational health (Part 2)

Dr Tony Williams, Working Fit Ltd

- Role of OH doctors and OH nurses
- Skills, training and competence
- How to become an approved doctor for a particular pensions scheme*
- Writing the report/recommendations to the employer's scheme
- Internal dispute resolution and medical appeals processes

**Includes local government, fire, NHS, teachers and in-house schemes, but excludes police schemes*

12.25 Lunch

13.15 Is IHR always a good option?

Dr Tony Williams, Working Fit Ltd

- Prognosis following IHR
- Discussing options with employees
- Ethical decision-making
- Difficult issues for OH, from terminal illness cases to employee requests for IHR

14.00 Fitness and age

Dr Tony Williams, Working Fit Ltd

- Pensions, lifestyle factors and chronic disease

14.15 Working with HR, line managers and the pension administrator

Dr Tony Williams, Working Fit Ltd

- Best advice – timely and good value
- When to refer
- Support with appeals and reviews

14.55 Tea

15.15 Case studies

Led by *Dr Mark Groom, Dr Sarah Porter* and *Dr Tony Williams*

- A series of case studies examines the process of reaching a decision in complex cases

16.15 Expert panel Q&A

Your chance to ask *Dr Mark Groom, Claire Johnson, Prof Diana Kloss, Dr Sarah Porter* and *Dr Tony Williams* your pre-submitted and live questions

16.55 Final questions

17.00 Close of day

Medical decision-making in ill-health retirement

Ill health retirement (IHR) is one of the most complex areas in occupational health and should only be considered when all other options, from reasonable adjustments to alternative work, have been explored.

Applications are often subject to appeals and may be turned down by trustees if the application is not made in accordance with the rules. This can lead to complaints from both the individual and the employer.

This workshop from The At Work Partnership looks at how occupational health can advise employees and employers – to help make fair decisions, which are less likely to be challenged.

How will attending this training benefit you?

You will gain:

- A detailed knowledge of how to give evidence-based advice in ill-health retirement (IHR) cases
- A comprehensive understanding of your roles and responsibilities – either as an OH doctor or OH nurse
- An insight into the complexity of scheme rules and relevant law
- Enhanced comprehension of the ethical issues
- An opportunity to learn from the experience of others in our case studies and to benchmark your opinions with peers
- Improved knowledge and understanding to assist in decision-making

ABOUT OUR EXPERT TUTORS

Dr John Ballard has been researching and writing on OH and disability issues for over 30 years. He edits The At Work Partnership journal, *Occupational Health [at Work]*. He is an honorary fellow of the FOM.

Dr Mark Groom is a consultant occupational health physician whose primary current role is the clinical lead for Police and Fire Service Medical Appeals, a service provided by Health Partners Group under contract with the Home Office. He was previously the pensions lead for Health Management.

Claire Johnson is a senior pensions advisor at the Local Government Association, specialising in firefighter pensions. Claire also serves as Board Secretary to the Scheme Advisory Board, providing governance and oversight support at a national level.

Prof Diana Kloss MBE is a barrister, former employment judge and honorary senior lecturer in OH law at the University of Manchester. Her publications include *Occupational Health Law* (Wiley Blackwell, 2020). She is an honorary fellow of the FOM, an ACAS arbitrator, and honorary president of the Council for Work and Health.

Dr Sarah Porter is an occupational physician whose pension work experience includes military medical retirement, SMP for police, and IRMP for local government pension schemes. She is currently chair of the Society of Occupational Medicine Northern Ireland group.

Dr Tony Williams set up Working Fit Ltd, an occupational health consultancy, in 2003. He advises on ill health retirement under the local government pension scheme. He was chair of the Government review into the Normal Pension Age for firefighters, and advised on pension age for the RNLI and prison officers.

Booking information

Medical decision-making in ill-health retirement

Thursday 5 March 2026 – Virtual event

SPECIAL OFFER: Save £50 with our early bird rate! Available for bookings paid before 20 January 2026!

Early bird rate (for payment **before** 20 Jan 2026)
£339 + VAT (£406.80) per delegate – save £50!

Main rate (for payment **after** 20 Jan 2026)
£389 + VAT (£466.80) per delegate

Self-funded delegates* £289 + VAT (£346.80) if paid **before** early bird closing date OR £339 + VAT (£406.80) if paid **after** early bird closing date (**rate applies to sole traders or when your employer does NOT fund your fee*)

ADMINISTRATION

Format: The event will be held virtually on Zoom.

Bookings: Places can be booked online or by telephone. In cases, where your paperwork may take time to reach us, please contact us to reserve a no-obligation provisional place. Please contact us if you do not receive written confirmation of your booking within two weeks of making the reservation. To process your order, we keep your details securely on our database and we NEVER pass on your details to 3rd parties. At the time of booking, you will be given options to choose your preferred methods of communication with The At Work Partnership.

Conference administration details: Full instructions will be sent with your administration details. Zoom links will be sent to paid delegates approximately one week before the event. If you have not received these 3 days before the event, please telephone us on 0208 344 2328, or email conferences@atworkpartnership.co.uk.

Cancellation policy: For cancellations received in writing 14 days before the workshop, we will provide a refund, less a 25% administration fee. If the cancellation is received within 14 days of the workshop, no refund will be made, but we will accept an alternative delegate. Refunds are not available to delegates who fail to attend after confirming a booking.

Printed documentation: This will be posted to arrive with paid delegates 3 working days before the event. Please provide a preferred delivery address at the time of booking for receipt of your documents.

Special requirements: If you have any special needs, please let us know in advance and we will be delighted to try and help.

This programme was correct at time of going to press. In unavoidable circumstances, we reserve the right to change or cancel this event. If we do need to cancel this event, our liability is limited to a refund of fees

HOW TO BOOK

To secure your place use one of the 3 methods below

- 1 Book online: www.atworkpartnership.co.uk
- 2 T: +44 (0)208 344 2328
- 3 E: conferences@atworkpartnership.co.uk

BOOK ONLINE NOW
www.atworkpartnership.co.uk

ABOUT THE AT WORK PARTNERSHIP

Dedicated to bringing high quality, good value conferences and courses to OH and allied health professionals, **The At Work Partnership** researches the subjects that really matter to professionals in your field, and sources speakers who are true subject experts.

All delegates receive a Certificate of Attendance and can gain additional CPD by participating in further learning after the conference/course, via The At Work Partnership's CPD scheme.