

## CASE STUDY



## How did FirstCare help Coca-Cola Enterprises to streamline their absence management process and reduce absence by 34%?



Across multiple geographical locations, Coca-Cola Enterprises has three different divisions within the same business: supply chain, sales (mostly home/field based), and corporate functions. Absence incurs both direct and indirect costs for the company. For example, an absent fork lift truck driver not only represents lost working hours, but also carries the direct cost of a temporary replacement. Despite its impact on the bottom line, in the past absence reporting differed for each division, with little consistency and varying policies in operation across the organisation. As part of a thorough review of internal policies Coca-Cola Enterprises researched a number of differing strategies, before deciding to bring in FirstCare.

Outsourcing to a day one absence management specialist has proved to be a highly successful approach to absence issues, and has allowed Coca-Cola Enterprises to apply a consistent policy across all its locations and divisions. Understanding the essential differences between East Kilbride and Northampton, for example, was impossible under the previous multiple systems, whereas it is now possible to compare like with like and achieve a new perspective on problems and opportunities to improve.

FirstCare staged a road show to educate department managers and line managers about the service benefits and how it works, in order to instil confidence and support prior to implementation.

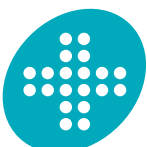
“From the outset, FirstCare has consistently delivered against our Service Level Agreement and helped to improve our attendance rates within the first year. FirstCare has not been thrown by the fact that we’re a very complex organisation with many line managers, departments and functions. The team took a lot of time to understand how we work, our culture and our company ethos, and as a result we are enjoying significant benefits from a specially tailored service.”

**Michele Asbury,**  
HR Manager  
Employee Relations  
Coca-Cola Enterprises Ltd

### Outcome

In January 2008 the system began a staged roll out across the organisation; the whole of the business going live by September 2008. For the first time, a consistent reporting, analysis and management system for absence was put in place, allowing analysis of real time transparent data which could compare widely contrasting departments and job functions across the entire UK organisation. Policies on triggers for frequency of absence were agreed and can now be applied, and a structure for conducting return to work (RTW) interviews implemented. Already, Coca-Cola Enterprises has achieved a marked decrease in absence, and identified a number of specific areas which can be addressed in order to improve still further.

Within the initial twelve month period, absence across the organisation as a whole had reduced by 34%, from 5% absence in January 2008 to 3.32% in January 2009. This has delivered valuable savings, the pay back period for FirstCare’s services being met within a few months. Coca-Cola Enterprises is now working to improve its RTW interview completion rates, which empirical evidence has shown will help to improve attendance still further.





## The FIRSTCARE® Service

**FirstCare offers people solutions for commercial and public sector organisations.**

Services include: absence management, pre-employment screening and background screening. FirstCare is the largest provider of absence management services to the public sector, and a major provider of absence management solutions for a number of leading commercial organisations.

FirstCare's innovative services move people seamlessly from traditional ways of managing employee sickness to the new FirstCare absence management system. Its efficient absence management tools bring improved workforce planning and greater cost-savings, ensuring compliance with all HR policies. This transforms employee attendance, resulting in a more productive and motivated workforce. Combining transparent, real-time reporting and skilled data analysis, FirstCare's solutions enable managers to identify trends and hotspots, ensuring issues are dealt with in a timely manner.

### Stage 1: Employee Calls

a dedicated number is available 24/7 to report absence and, if due to medical causes, is offered a consultation with a nurse.

### Stage 2: Confidential medical advice is provided

employee is given confidential medical advice and a return 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

where an absence is for medical reasons, employees are contacted by a nurse for a follow-up conversation; managers are notified by automatic update.

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

manager receives confirmation of RTW and all information required to complete RTW interview in line with policies.

### Stage 6: Triggers

tailored alerts to prompt appropriate action by managers.

### Stage 7: Management reporting

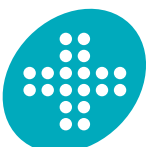
real-time, confidential absence analysis to enable organisations to identify trends and problem areas.



“Working with FirstCare has been an absolute pleasure; but better than that, it has shown measurable results, improved operations and delivered genuine savings for us within the first year.”

**Michele Asbury,**  
HR Manager, Employee Relations  
Coca-Cola Enterprises Ltd

- ▶ Overall absence is already down 34%
- ▶ The implementation was positively received by all staff
- ▶ System accepted by all unions represented within the business
- ▶ Employees feel they're 'in safe hands' when speaking with FirstCare's nurses
- ▶ Complete transparency and rapid delivery of absence data and trends across the whole organisation
- ▶ Meaningful comparisons of disparate departments can now be made and underlying problems addressed
- ▶ The top reasons for absence have been identified department by department
- ▶ Areas of strength and targets for further improvement have been identified within each company function and geographical location
- ▶ All SLAs have been met consistently and professionally
- ▶ Line managers are very positive about the day-to-day running of the service and the way their own responses and queries are handled



For a free absence assessment or to find out how the FirstCare service can help you reduce absence rates in your organisation please contact us by either calling 08454 565 730, emailing [info@firstcare.eu](mailto:info@firstcare.eu) or visiting [www.firstcare.eu](http://www.firstcare.eu)

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