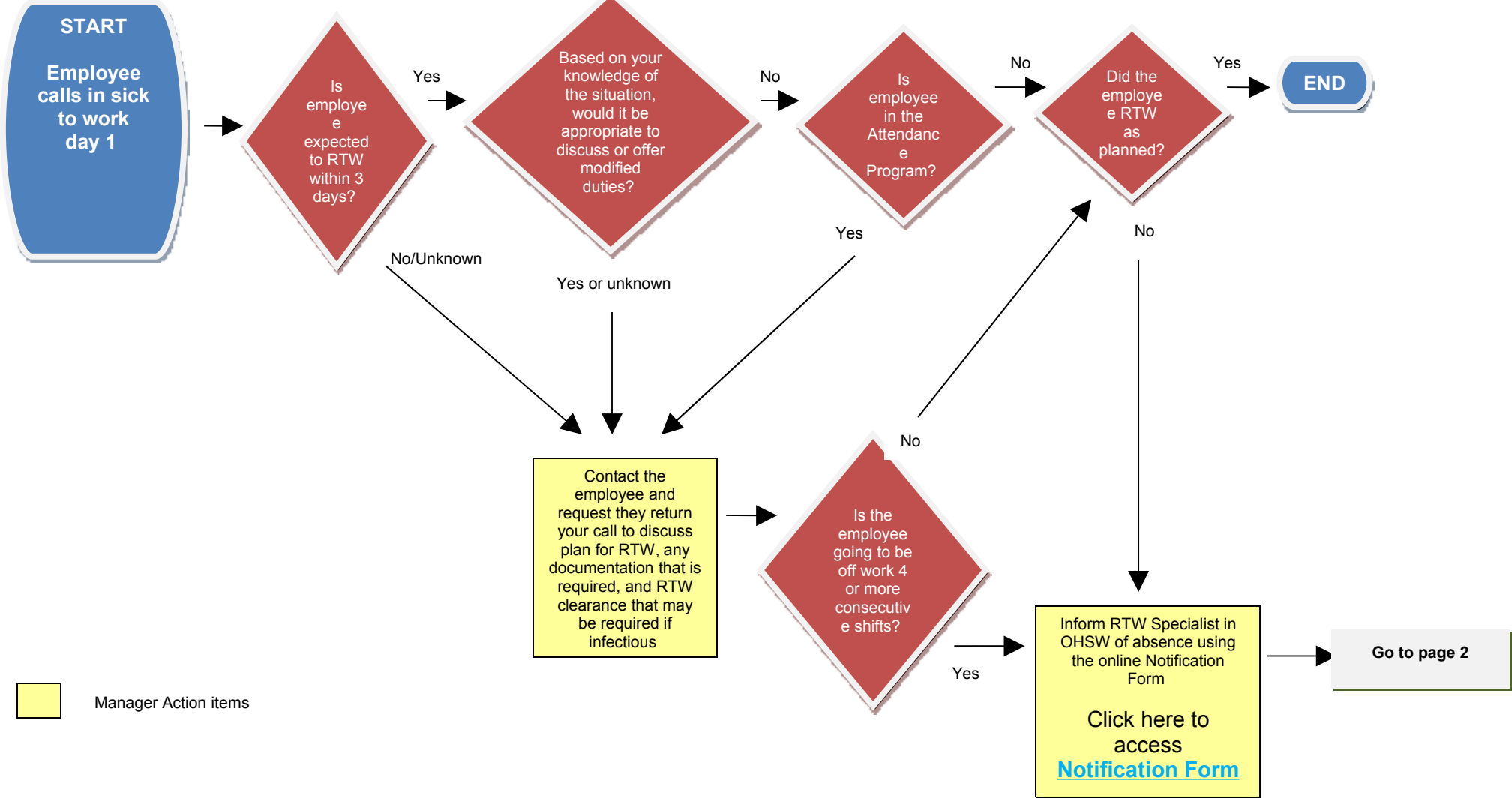


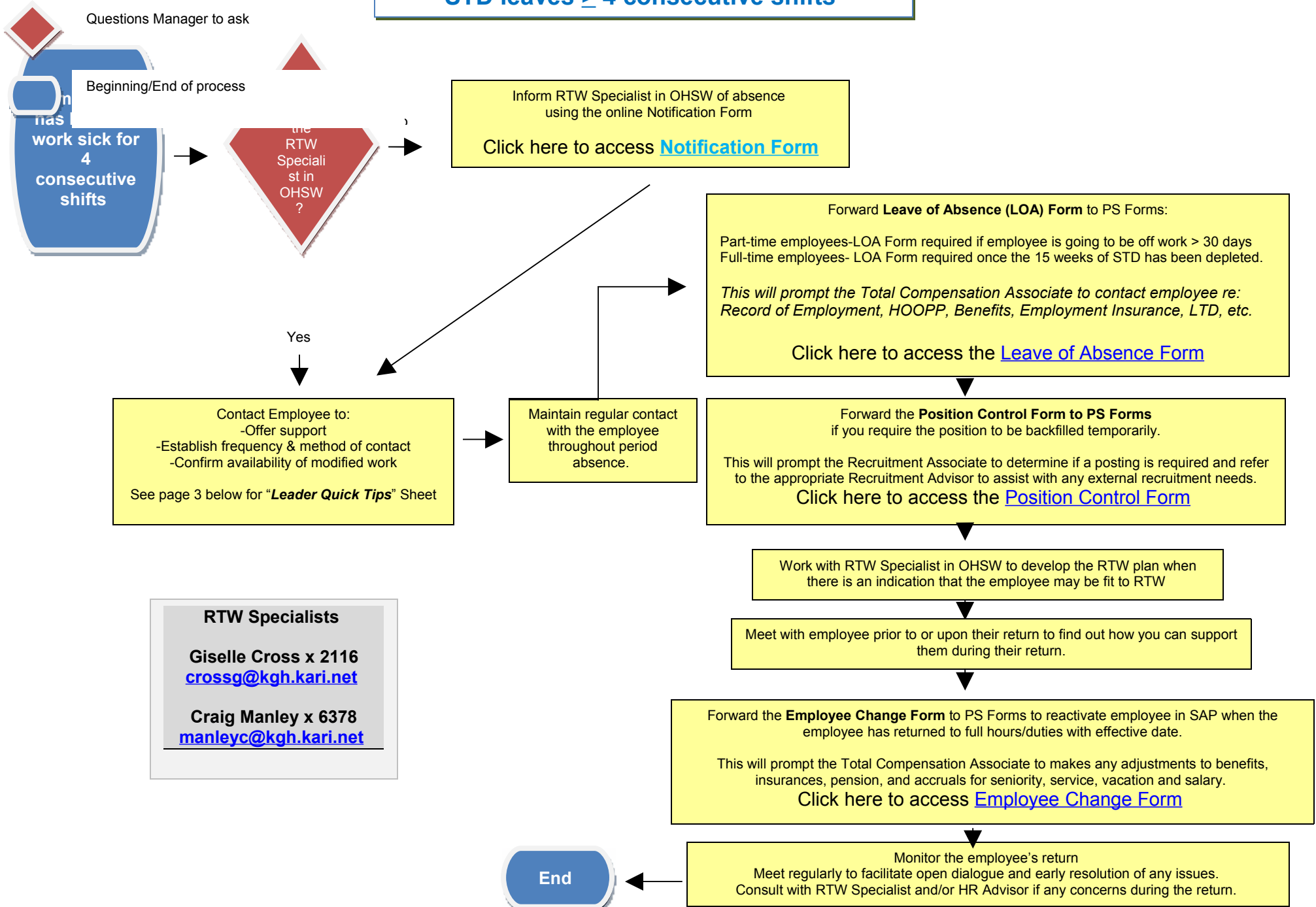
Leader Responsibilities in the Management of Employee Sick Time/Disability/RTW

Sick leaves 1-3 days in duration



Leader Responsibilities in the Management of Employee Sick Time/Disability/RTW

STD leaves \geq 4 consecutive shifts



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Leader Quick Tips for Managing Absence & Return to Work (RTW)

1) Initiate early contact with the employee who calls in sick and maintain regular communication throughout the period of absence. The intent is not to be intrusive, but to be supportive. It is important to establish with your employee the parameters of this contact including:

- the frequency of contact and their preferred method of contact (phone, email)
- whether they wish to be informed of unit/department activities, news, celebrations
- whether their co-workers can contact them from time to time

2) Discuss with your employee any physical and/or psychosocial factors about the work or the work environment that are affecting their ability to return and determine whether there are options for you to make adjustments to accommodate the employee's needs to facilitate a more timely RTW. Return to work planning is an important component of rehabilitation/recovery and should begin early.

3) Prior to RTW it is important for the Leader to meet with the employee to discuss the return to find out how they best can support the employee. Things to be considered or discussed may include:

- How does the employee feel about RTW-do they feel ready, excited, anxious, fearful?
- What is the employee looking forward to? What parts of their job do they feel may present a challenge?
- What has changed since they've been off work- is buddying, training, or re-training needed?
- What support do they need to be successful in their job- from you their supervisor? from their co-workers?
 - are there different communication needs related to how information/instructions or feedback is given?
 - does the employee require additional time to learn new job tasks
- How would the employee like to be welcomed back- email, team meeting, more informally?
- Have they thought about what they might say to others about their absence?
- Are there strategies that can be used to support the employee's reintegration?
- How does the employee want future issues to be addressed should they occur, where you are concerned about their well-being?

4) Collaborate with the RTW Specialist in Occupational Health to develop the RTW plan. The RTW plan will outline the work hours/shifts and how they will be graduated (if applicable) as well as any work restrictions. It is important to engage the employee in developing the RTW plan to allow for his or her commitment to its success.

5) Monitor the RTW- meet regularly with the employee during their RTW to provide feedback and to provide the employee with an opportunity to voice any concerns. Work with the employee to develop solutions to any issues that present.

6) Respond in a timely and supportive manner where physical, mental, personal or behavioural changes are observed as these changes can be indicative of illness recurrence; those with mental illness tend to have a higher rate of recurrence/ relapse of disability episodes in comparison to those with physical disabilities.

7) Stigma, together with misinformation about mental health disorders, can make it difficult for the employee who is returning to work from a mental health related illness. Take every opportunity at the team level to reduce stigma and promote an accurate understanding of mental illness. Educate coworkers about their role in the return to work process and set the expectations for respect and support.