Health, Work and Public Health – the importance of the Charter

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‘The workplace interventions which will have the greatest impacts on individuals and organisations are health and safety and ergonomic interventions, line manager awareness, early referral and lifestyle change interventions’

Government Health and Work Aims

“To improve health outcomes and employment outcomes for working age people in Great Britain who have, or may acquire, health conditions (including mental health conditions) and disabilities, in order to:

• Halve the disability employment gap
• Contribute to improving productivity and growth of the economy
• Reduce health inequalities
• Ensure effective and sustainable use of public resources”
The case for action in the workplace and in tackling worklessness
“It is the working man who is the happy man. It is the idle man who is the miserable man.”
Benjamin Franklin, C.18

“Being in good employment is protective of health. Conversely, unemployment contributes to poor health.”
Marmot Review, 2010
Why is health at work a public health issue?

- Over 70% of economically active adults aged 16-64yrs in the UK are in employment.
- Employment is a **primary determinant of health**. It is estimated that socio-economic factors – of which employment is key – are responsible for 50% of an individual’s health status. Employment provides an important source of income; social interaction; and a core role, identity and purpose.
- **People in work are healthier and use health and social care services less than the unemployed.**
- Unemployment is associated with an increased **risk of mortality and morbidity**, including limiting illness, cardiovascular disease, poor mental health, suicide and health-damaging behaviours.
- There is a bi-directional relationship between health and worklessness. Ill-health can be associated with poor employment outcomes, and being out of work may precipitate or exacerbate ill health and compound cycles of disadvantage. There are significant **inequalities in employment** across population groups.

The importance of creating **fair employment and good work for all** was identified as one of six policy priorities to address health inequalities by Sir Michael Marmot in the 2010 report ‘Fair Society Healthy Lives’.
PHE Areas for Action

1. Improving health and wellbeing in the workplace
2. Getting people into work and job retention
3. Supporting economic growth and regeneration

Source: Dahlgren and Whitehead, 1991
The benefit for business

- Inclusive recruitment practices with people with health issues or disabilities can address skill gaps and bring in experience.
- A contented, settled workforce where issues like stress are well managed is more likely to be a productive one – with financial returns.
- A productive business is good for the local economy.
- A workforce that promotes health is more likely to recruit good candidates and retain good employees for longer.
- Promoting health reduces sickness absence and costs.
- It's supported by business leaders (CBI. Getting better: workplace health as a business issue. London: CBI; 2014) as part of CSR and economically.
- PwC estimated Employee wellness programmes may return between £2 and £10 for every £1 spent - mostly through reduced sickness.
Better health at work? An evaluation of the effects and cost-benefits of a structured workplace health improvement programme in reducing sickness absence

Braun T, Bambra C, Booth M, Adetayo K, Milne E.

- Results suggest that the Better Health at Work Award could be a cost-effective way of improving health and reducing sickness absence particularly in the public sector.
- Participation was associated with a mean reduction in sickness absence of 0.26-1.6 days per employee per year depending on the length and level of participation in the programme. The estimated cost for the programme was £3 per sickness-absence day saved.

PHE work

1. Workplace Wellbeing Charter
2. Tools for Businesses
   • Return on investment tool
   • Health needs assessment
   • Evaluation framework
   • Topic Guides
3. Toolkit on mental health and work
   1. Working to ‘practice what we preach’ across the public sector
   2. One You and Health Checks
The Workplace Wellbeing Charter - National Standards

- Previously 30+ variations of the scheme across England
- In 2013-14, PHE commissioned a set of National Standards
- Launched in June 2014, these provide core content for existing Charter schemes and a common baseline to build from
- National website – www.wellbeingcharter.org.uk – signposts to local schemes, provides free resources & helps create Charter community
**COMMITMENT**

Your organisation has a set of health, safety and wellbeing policies in place and has addressed each area, providing employees with the tools to help themselves to improve their health and well-being.

**ACHIEVEMENT**

Having put the building blocks in place, steps are being taken to actively encourage employees to improve their lifestyle and some basic interventions are in place to identify serious health issues.

**EXCELLENCE**

Not only is information easily accessible and well publicised, but the leadership of the organisation is fully engaged in well-being and employees have a range of intervention programmes and support mechanisms to help them prevent ill-health, stay in work or return to work as soon as possible.
Supporting work by PHE

Ten Topic Guides on….

Physical activity, healthy eating, mental health, - alcohol, - smoking and tobacco control, - dementia, supporting carers, - weight management, - health checks, - Inclusive employment.

3 tools to help evaluate impact of interventions, measure return on investment and profile your workforce
More actions

Rapid Reviews of evidence published:

Productivity Rapid Review

Physical environments - impact of on workplace health

Shortly to be published:

Interventions to prevent burnout in high risk individuals
Leading by example: Work with NHS England for their workforce

1. A suite of interventions across 10 NHS pilot sites, involving:
   - On-site NHS health checks
   - Better access to talking therapies, physiotherapy and weight management services
   - A local physical activity offer
   - Accreditation under the Workplace Wellbeing Charter

2. A new nationally-specified occupational health service for GPs

3. National action raising food standards through catering contractors and PFI providers
One You + Health checks

One You is a national campaign focused on 7 core behavioural change areas:

Moving More, Eating Healthily, Stop Smoking, Stress Less, Sleep Better, Drink Sensibly and Check Yourself

Umbrella brand that ties together the messaging targeting adults, primarily 40-60yr olds and signposts to local and national resources through a series of individualised health quizzes. Strong employer focus – resources available.

NHS Health Checks for older adults can be delivered in the workplace to identify health problems and address them early
Questions?