

Health and wellbeing at work

A resource guide



**WORK
WELL**

**LIVE
WELL**

A Public Health Agency initiative

Contents

Introduction.....	2
A model for healthy workplaces	3
Physical work environment.....	7
Psychosocial work environment.....	12
Personal health resources.....	19
COVID-19 and the workplace	30
Enterprise community involvement	35
Examples of good practice	38
References	40

Health and wellbeing at work: a resource guide

Introduction

This document aims to support employers and employees to access information on improving health and wellbeing at work. Using the workplace as a setting to promote and support health and wellbeing makes good business sense and has many benefits for both employers and employees, especially important as workplaces emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic. Putting in place an effective workplace health programme that meets the needs of each business requires access to effective tools and information, which will help assess the needs of employees and assist with developing and implementing plans.

The Public Health Agency (PHA) initiative Work Well Live Well is a new workplace support programme that started on 1 March 2020. The overall aim of Work Well Live Well is to engage with small, medium and large businesses to seek ongoing commitment to improve the health, safety and wellbeing of employees within the workplace setting.

The Work Well Live Well programme delivers free support directly to 250 businesses each year through the two service providers: Northern Ireland Chest Heart and Stroke (NICHHS) and Developing Healthy Communities (DHC). Support from Work Well Live Well includes training and support for Workplace Health Champions; delivery of health information; help with online employee surveys and development of workplace health and wellbeing action plans.

Businesses who would like to get involved in Work Well Live Well and who are based in Southern, South Eastern, Belfast and Northern Health and Social Care Trust areas can contact Emma McCrudden at NICHHS emccrudden@nichs.org.uk

Businesses based in the Western Health and Social Care Trust can contact Sabrina Moore at DHC sabrina@dhcni.com

The PHA recognises the importance of health and wellbeing at work and suggests that those responsible for assessing and addressing the needs of employees apply the World Health Organization (WHO) framework for developing a workplace health strategy.

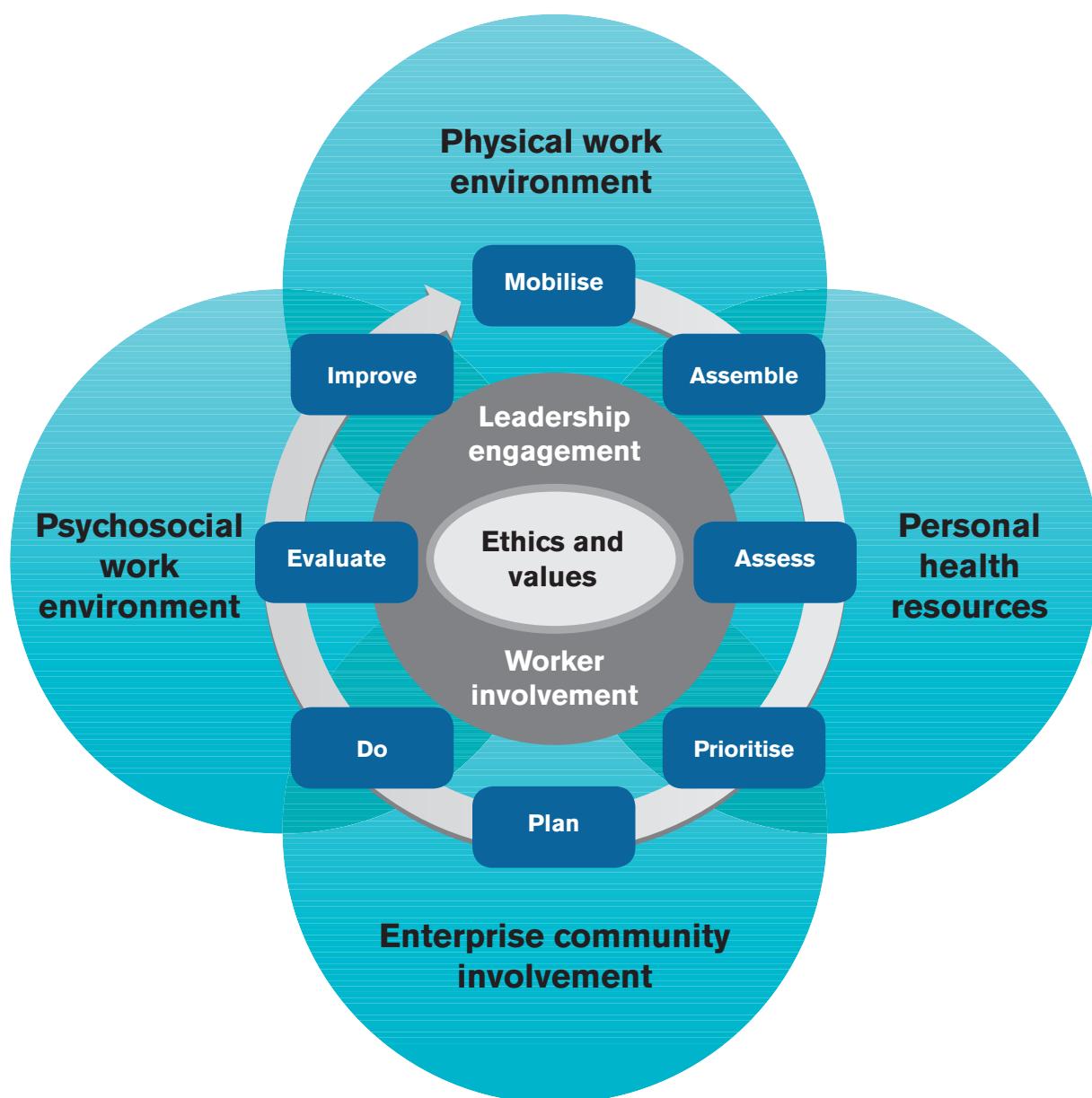
According to the WHO, the definition of a healthy workforce is:

'... one in which workers and managers collaborate to use a continual improvement process to protect and promote the health, safety and wellbeing of all workers and the sustainability of the workplace by considering the following:

- *health and safety concerns in the physical work environment;*
- *health, safety and wellbeing concerns in the psychosocial work environment, including organisation of work and workplace culture;*
- *personal health and resources in the workplace;*
- *ways of participating in the community to improve the health of workers, their families and other members of the community.'*¹

A model for healthy workplaces

The WHO has developed a model for healthy workplaces, which explains the four aspects involved, the eight step tool for taking action and the underlying principles that enable the creation of a healthy workplace.¹



www.who.int/occupational_health/healthy_workplace_framework.pdf

Why do we need healthy workplaces?

Effective workplace health programmes can make a real difference to the health and wellbeing of employees, businesses and the communities in which people live and work. Research evidence shows that promoting health in the workplace improves the working environment and is beneficial to the organisation and its employees in the following ways:

- Reduction in illness-related absence and ineffectiveness caused by presence at work when ill.²
- Reduction in staff turnover.²
- Increased motivation among staff and improved working atmosphere, leading to more flexibility, better communications and improved use of resources.³
- Measurable increases in the quality of products and services, more innovation and creativity, and a rise in productivity.¹
- More prestige, which improves the public image of the organisation and makes it more attractive as an employer.¹

How to create a healthy workplace programme based on the WHO model

The WHO has developed an easy-to-follow eight step tool for organisations developing a healthy workplace strategy. Organisations can adapt this to suit their workplaces.¹

Step 1: Mobilise

Before an organisation starts to develop a workplace health strategy, it is important to seek support from key stakeholders such as senior managers, employees, union leaders, human resources etc. It is necessary to gain the support of all involved. Before mobilising, it may be necessary to gather some information to convince stakeholders this is the right thing to do. Having done so, an organisation can then develop a comprehensive workplace health policy, signed at senior level and communicated clearly to all members of staff.

Step 2: Assemble

Once the key stakeholders have been mobilised, the next step is to assemble the required resources. The team who will implement the workplace strategy should be identified – this group can be referred to as the healthy workforce team. In large organisations, the team should include people from all sectors, eg health and safety professionals, human resources personnel, engineers, medical professionals, trade union representatives etc. The team should also have suitable gender representation. For small organisations, it is a good idea to include experts from outside organisations as much as possible, such as representatives from community or occupational health clinics. This is also a good time to pinpoint the other resources that will be required, eg places to meet and a budget.

Step 3: Assess

When the team has been assembled, their first task will be to assess two main things, the present situation and the desired future for both the organisation and its workers. Evaluating the present situation of the organisation will be done differently depending on its size. Large organisations should gather some baseline data on employee demographics, workplace injuries and illnesses, disability, staff turnover and any issues that have arisen from workplace inspections and risk assessments. If a risk assessment has not been carried out, now would be the time to do it. As well as evaluating the present situation, it is a good idea to assess the overall health of workers. This can be done through a confidential staff survey such as an online assessment tool.

When the present situation has been evaluated, it makes sense to outline the desired future for the organisation and its workers. For large organisations, this could involve some benchmarking exercises to determine how similar organisations are doing. It is also a good idea to ask workers for their thoughts and ideas on what could be improved. For small organisations, it is a good idea to look at what other local organisations are doing.

Step 4: Prioritise

When all this information has been collected, the team need to prioritise which issues they are going to tackle as there may be too much to deal with at once. Before issues are prioritised, it is necessary to set some criteria for making decisions. It is a good idea to consult with major stakeholders on which actions should be prioritised.

Step 5: Plan

Next is the planning stage. The size of the organisation is very important when deciding how far ahead you should plan. The plan should set out things such as general activities and broad timescales. It is not necessary to have a list of specific actions right away but there should be some long-term goals and objectives. From this, an annual plan should then be established with higher priority aims. This should be done for the first three to five years. Once the annual plan is complete, it is time to set out specific actions to achieve each of the goals. The budget, facilities and resources required need to be included in these action plans.

Step 6: Do

This step simply means implementing the action plan. Responsibilities should be assigned in the plan.

Step 7: Evaluate

Evaluation is important to examine what is working and what isn't, and to learn what improvements could be made. Evaluations should be carried out for both long-term and short-term goals.

Step 8: Improve

This involves making changes based on the evaluation results to improve the overall performance of the programmes. However, it is also important to acknowledge the success of the programmes.



Physical work environment

The physical work environment is defined by the WHO as:

“The part of the workplace facility that can be detected by human or electronic senses, including the structure, air, machines, furniture, products, chemicals, materials and processes that are present or that occur in the workplace and which can affect the physical or mental safety, health and wellbeing of workers.”¹

Northern Ireland is governed by health and safety legislation. This legislation includes the *Health and Safety at Work (NI) Order 1978*: www.legislation.gov.uk/nisi/1978/1039 and the *Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2000*: www.legislation.gov.uk/nisr/2000/388/contents/made. Despite this legislation, many work-related accidents and illnesses occur each year.

Actions that will help ensure a safe and healthy physical work environment include:

- implementing a health and safety policy, which is well communicated and understood by all employees;
- ensuring health and safety is included in the induction of employees;
- having a health and safety manual for employees and a health and safety staff handbook;
- health and safety training for all staff, particularly those who work with equipment at work;
- mandatory use of protective equipment by all employees working in high-risk environments;
- performing regular safety checks and routine maintenance on machines and equipment;
- employee involvement in identifying workplace hazards and input on how to minimise or reduce risk;
- regular and ongoing risk assessments alongside good housekeeping;
- adequate employee breaks to ensure they can work safely and be more productive;
- adequate hygiene and catering facilities for employees (toilets, staff area etc);
- regular fire drills and fire safety training for all staff;
- ensuring emergency procedures are in place, documented and understood;
- ensuring any hazard controls are defined, documented and understood;
- installing good lighting and ventilation in work areas;
- ensuring designated employees have current certificates in first aid.

There are a number of organisations that can offer information, support and tools to help maintain a healthy and safe physical work environment.

Health and safety

Health and Safety Executive Northern Ireland (HSENI)

HSENI is the lead agency in Northern Ireland for promoting health and safety standards in the workplace. Their website provides a number of resources and services to employers, employees and CEOs/directors.

HSENI has also developed information and support, including websites and resources, for particular business sectors:

Stay farm safe: www.hseni.gov.uk/farmsafe

Construction industry: www.buildhealthni.com

Website: www.hseni.gov.uk

Telephone: 0800 0320 121

Email: mail@hseni.gov.uk

Northern Ireland Safety Group (NISG)

NISG promotes safety in the workplace to organisations throughout Northern Ireland. They provide information and support to businesses through events and meetings for employers and employees.

Website: www.nisg.org.uk

Telephone: 028 9336 8928

Email: info@nisg.org.uk

Health and Safety Works Northern Ireland (HSWNI)

HSWNI is a small business advisory service of the HSENI, which aims to specifically help Northern Ireland small businesses:

- improve their workplace health and safety management;
- understand their legal responsibilities;
- compete effectively in the marketplace.

Website: www.healthandsafetyworksni.gov.uk

Email: hswni@detini.gov.uk

Health Matters (Health and Safety) Ltd Northern Ireland

Health Matters Northern Ireland offers accredited health and safety training to employers throughout Northern Ireland.

Website: www.healthmattersni.com

Telephone: 028 9002 0044

Email: info@healthmattersni.com

Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH)

The Institution of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH) is the world's leading chartered professional body for people responsible for safety and health in the workplace. IOSH has more than 47,000 members in over 130 countries. IOSH acts as a champion, adviser, advocate and trainer for safety and health professionals working in organisations of all sizes. Its focus is to support its members in their efforts to create workplaces that are safer, healthier and more sustainable. Its shared objective is a world where work is safe and healthy for every working person, every day. Through its 2017-2022 strategy, 'WORK 2022 – shaping the future of safety and health', IOSH enhances the occupational safety and health profession, builds strategic collaborative partnerships across industry and strengthens its influence globally through impactful research and development.

IOSH's website offers a number of free resources for businesses on the topic of workplace health. These include:

- an occupational health toolkit, which includes information, guidance, factsheets, case studies, training materials and access to presentations aimed at helping tackle workplace health issues;
- various documents and publications on workplace health;
- information to help employees gain an IOSH health and safety qualification, which allows them to carry out IOSH training on health and safety within the workplace.

Website: www.iosh.co.uk

Telephone: 0116 257 3100

St John Ambulance (SJA)

SJA in Northern Ireland offers a number of first aid training courses for the workplace, which include:

- emergency first aid at work;
- first aid at work;
- National Examination Board in Occupational Safety and Health (NEBOSH) General Certificate in occupational health and safety;
- IOSH managing safety;
- IOSH working safely.

Website: www.sja.org.uk

Telephone: 028 9079 9393

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA)

RoSPA is a national organisation with one of its branches in Belfast. They offer safety advice and training to workplaces throughout Northern Ireland.

Website: www.rospace.com/Home-Safety/UK/Northern-Ireland

Telephone: 028 9050 1160

Email: help@rospace.com



Psychosocial work environment

As well as ensuring the physical work environment is safe and healthy for employees, the WHO places great importance on ensuring there is the same standard of psychosocial work environment.

The WHO defines this as:

*"The organisation of work and the organisational culture; the attitudes, values, beliefs and practices that are demonstrated on a daily basis in the enterprise/organisation, and which affect the mental and physical wellbeing of employees. These are sometimes generally referred to as workplace stressors, which may cause emotional or mental stress to workers."*¹

A poor psychosocial work environment can be caused by a number of factors such as poor work organisation, the organisational culture, poor communication, lack of constructive feedback and lack of support for work/life balance. This can result in stress, alienation and job dissatisfaction, which are all detrimental to staff mental health.³

However, employers can take a number of steps to promote a positive psychosocial work environment and prevent stress at work, including:

- commitment from management to support the health and wellbeing of employees as part of the core values and overall business planning of the organisation;
- mechanisms to regularly record and monitor staff satisfaction, absenteeism, staff turnover and/or productivity levels;
- employee assistance programmes (eg services that can be provided by an outside organisation, aimed at meeting the needs of employers in the management of employees' psychosocial health);
- human resource policies that cover health and wellbeing, work/life balance and bullying and harassment;
- effective communication systems throughout the business or organisation;
- jobs that are clearly defined, where everyone understands how their role contributes to the overall business/plan/objectives for the organisation;
- training systems that ensure staff have the skills and knowledge required for their role;
- appraisal systems that recognise and reward staff/organisational achievements;
- flexibility to allow employees to deal with work/life conflicts, working schedules and work location (as much as possible);
- commitment to ensuring that workloads, scheduling and demands made on employees are reasonable;
- appropriate measures and support for disabled members of staff, or those returning to work after a long period of absence;
- systems to address the impact of shift work on employees' health and wellbeing.

A number of organisations provide information and support to the workplace on dealing with stress at work and promoting a healthy psychosocial work environment.

Psychosocial aspects

Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS)

ACAS aims to improve organisations and working life through better employment relations. They help by supplying up-to-date information, independent advice and high quality training, and working with employers and employees to solve problems and improve performance. ACAS have produced an online tool which is available free and is designed to help organisations check that they have the right people management policies in place.

Website: www.acas.org.uk

Telephone: 0300 123 1100

Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities (NICEM)

NICEM works to bring about social change through partnership and alliance building, and to achieve equality of outcome and full participation in society. Its aims are to promote good race relations, eliminate racial discrimination and promote racial equality.

Website: www.nicem.org.uk

Telephone: 028 9023 8645

Stronger Together Network

The Stronger Together Network is a network of professionals (both paid and unpaid) representing organisations that work predominantly with culturally and linguistically diverse communities. Its aims are to share information and knowledge, provide a central shared resource to connect service providers within the sector, and identify new opportunities for partnership and innovation. There are currently more than 130 members from BME organisations and groups, BME individuals, and the community, voluntary and public sectors.

Website: www.strongertogetherni.org

Telephone: 028 8775 0211

Email: info@strongertogetherni.org

Belfast Migrant Centre

The Belfast Migrant Centre is a consortium of UNISON, the Irish Congress of Trade Unions, the Polish Association (NI) and NICEM, under the Welcome House Project. The overall aim is to tackle racism and eliminate barriers against new and settled migrant communities in Northern Ireland. The centre provides outreach services and helps victims of racial harassment and those in crisis situations, with bi-lingual staff to prevent language barriers.

Website: www.migrantcentreni.org

Telephone: 028 9043 8962

Email: admin@migrantcentreni.org

Equality Commission for Northern Ireland

The Equality Commission Mental Health Charter is an important framework for working towards mentally healthy workplaces. The Charter has five commitments for developing best practice in the workplace:

1. To create an open and inclusive workplace culture which displays respect for those with mental ill health
2. To promote equality of opportunity and challenge discrimination in the workplace
3. To promote equality of opportunity in recruitment and selection for those with mental ill health
4. To identify and provide sources of information and support regarding mental ill health
5. To adopt 'Every Customer Counts - promoting accessible services' recommendations

More information is available at www.equalityni.org/MentalHealthCharter

The commission provides an employer training programme on specific equality, policy and practice areas. The training programme can be viewed at: www.equalityni.org/training

Website: www.equalityni.org

Telephone: 028 9050 0600

Email: information@equalityni.org

Stress

HSENI

The HSENI has produced excellent tools for managers and employees on developing a positive psychosocial work environment and recognising and preventing stress in the workplace.

These resources include management standards for work-related stress and examples of a stress policy and a stress management toolkit.

The HSE stress management standards cover six key areas of work design that, if not properly managed, are associated with poor health and wellbeing, lower productivity and increased sickness absence. The six management standards cover the primary sources of stress at work:

- demands
- control
- support
- relationships
- role
- stress

HSENI resources on managing stress in the workplace can be accessed at: www.hseni.gov.uk/resources/publications.htm

Website: www.hseni.gov.uk

Telephone: 0800 0320 121

Email: mail@hseni.gov.uk

British Heart Foundation

The British Heart Foundation has developed a 'Health at work' programme and provides very useful resources on stress and other aspects of health improvement as part of the *Health at work: Mission very possible toolkit*, which explains how to promote a positive psychosocial work environment by delivering a successful workplace health and wellbeing programme.

More information on the British Heart Foundation and the 'Health at work' programme can be found on the website below.

Website: www.bhf.org.uk/how-you-can-help/health-at-work

Telephone: 0300 330 3322

Email: heretohelp@bhf.org.uk

Labour Relations Agency

The Labour Relations Agency (LRA) is a non-governmental public body responsible for improving employment relations in Northern Ireland. The LRA provides an impartial and confidential employment relations service to industry, commerce and public services.

Website: www.lra.org.uk

Telephone: 0330 0552 220

Email: info@lra.org.uk

Aware NI

Aware NI is a Northern Ireland charity that offers information and support in relation to mental illness. They provide a varied education programme that promotes knowledge and development of understanding on the importance of mental health and depression. The programmes also help encourage help-seeking behaviour in the people who attend.

Website: www.aware-ni.org

Telephone: 028 9035 7820

Email: help@aware-ni.org

Parent support

Employers for Childcare

Employers for Childcare is a charity that works with employers and encourages family friendly policies in the workplace. Their aim is to make it easier for parents with dependent children to get into, and stay in, work.

Website: www.employersforchildcare.org

Telephone: 028 9267 8200 (Freephone: 0800 028 3008)

Email: hello@employersforchildcare.org

Parenting NI

Parenting NI was established as Parents Advice Centre and is a leading parenting support organisation committed to delivering high quality services. Parenting NI has a regional remit to promote positive parenting by providing support, training and information on family issues, and influencing policy, provision and practice at all levels.

Website: www.parentingni.org

Telephone: 028 9031 0891

Email: info@parentingni.org

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC)

HMRC provides guidance on childcare support for employers and employees.

HMRC also provides online help services that enable employees to find out about available support and childcare vouchers or tax credits they should be getting.

Website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/hm-revenue-customs

Telephone: 0845 605 5999

Kith & Kin Financial Well-being C.I.C

Kith & Kin Financial Well-being is a unique social enterprise that provides employees with access to financial information, education and advice. This is done by organising on-site financial well-being training seminars and clinics.

- Financial well-being training to employees
- On-site financial clinics where staff can pre-book individual appointments.

Website: www.kithandkinfinance.org

Telephone: 028 9087 7777

Email: info@kithandkinfinance.org

Carers

Carers Northern Ireland

Carers Northern Ireland is a charity that:

- supports carers;
- provides information and advice about caring;
- influences policy through research based on carers' real life experiences;
- campaigns to make life better for carers;
- helps carers remain in paid work.

They also provide a helpline service for carers.

Website: www.carersuk.org/about-carers-northern-ireland

Telephone: 028 9043 9843

Email: info@carersni.org

Disability

Disability Action

Disability Action is a charity that works to ensure the rights of disabled people. The organisation has branches throughout Northern Ireland and works with the Department for Employment and Learning (DELNI) on their Workable NI programme, which helps disabled people. The support they offer includes:

- assistance on job matching and job finding;
- workplace support for disabled employees;
- support for employers, including various training opportunities;
- job coaching.

Website: www.disabilityaction.org

Telephone: 028 9029 7880

Email: hq@disabilityaction.org

Royal National Institute for Blind People (RNIB)

The RNIB offers services to employers, including:

- help ensuring the workplace is equipped and accessible to blind and partially sighted employees;
- advice and training on equipment and computer software that can help blind and partially sighted people do their job;
- visual awareness training for staff who work with blind and partially sighted colleagues.

Website: www.rnib.org.uk/northern-ireland

Telephone: 028 9032 9373

Email: employmentni@rnib.org.uk

Action on Hearing Loss

Action on Hearing Loss is a charity that provides a range of services, including:

- support for people with hearing loss and tinnitus;
- day-to-day care for people who are deaf;
- communication services and training;
- practical support to help people protect their hearing.

At a strategic level, Action on Hearing Loss campaigns for policy change and supports research into hearing loss.

Website: www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk

Telephone : 028 9023 9619

Textphone : 028 9024 9462

Email: information.nireland@hearingloss.org.uk



Personal health resources

The WHO defines personal health resources in the workplace as:

“A supportive environment, health services, information, resources, opportunities and the flexibility an enterprise provides to workers to support or motivate their efforts to improve or maintain healthy personal lifestyle practices, as well as to monitor and support their ongoing physical and mental health.”¹

The WHO recognises the importance of the workplace as a setting to promote healthy lifestyle practices such as healthy eating, physical activity, and avoiding smoking and alcohol abuse. There are a number of things an organisation can do to promote a healthy lifestyle. These should start with a process of employee engagement that assesses the needs of staff and asks them what they believe their healthy workplace programme should include. Employees are then included in decision-making and planning, and feedback about the programme is actively encouraged.

Specific actions to support employees to use personal health resources in the workplace and adopt a healthier lifestyle include:

1. healthy food choices in the canteen or refrigeration to allow employees to store healthy lunches;⁴
2. flexible working hours to give employees the opportunity to take breaks for exercise, for instance walking groups at lunchtime, yoga or exercise groups at work;
3. employers adopting a green travel plan, designed to reduce car dependency for commuter and organisation travel, which can also increase employees' physical activity levels (like cycle to work schemes);⁶
4. providing information and education on health-related topics in the workplace through training, staff notice boards, leaflets, emails or wage packet inserts;^{6,7}
5. health checks and assessments in the workplace, either through company occupational health services or an outside organisation that provides this service;⁸
6. raising awareness about health issues by participating in national campaigns, such as No Smoking Day, Bike2Work Week, World Mental Health Day etc.

There are a number of organisations that offer help, support and information on how workplaces can promote healthy lifestyle practices to their employees.

General support for workplace health

Business in the Community Northern Ireland (BITC)

BITC is a membership organisation for successful companies committed to doing business in a responsible way that helps them impact positively on their people, the planet and the place where they're located. In Northern Ireland, they have a growing membership of almost 250 companies. BITC has a number of tools and services that can support employers from the initial stages of developing a strategic wellbeing plan to the challenge of sustaining programmes that address the wellbeing of employees.

Website: www.bitcni.org.uk

Telephone: 028 9046 0606

Email: info@bitcni.org.uk

PHA health and wellbeing at work resources

The PHA is the lead organisation in Northern Ireland for health protection and health and social wellbeing improvement. The PHA is committed to addressing the causes and associated inequalities of preventable ill-health and lack of wellbeing. Support for workplace health within the PHA sits with the health improvement division and four key themes have been identified:

- Give every child and young person the best start in life.
- Ensure a decent standard of living for all.
- Build sustainable communities.
- Make healthy choices easier.

The importance of creating an environment that encourages and supports health is critical and the PHA is committed to working across a range of settings to ensure that healthier choices are made easier for individuals.

The PHA has developed resources and a workplace health and wellbeing online assessment tool for employees. The online assessment tool is completely confidential and the overall results can then be used by employers to develop a workplace health and wellbeing action plan. In completing the assessment tool, employees are provided with the opportunity to think about their own health and wellbeing and are then signposted to available information and support. The online assessment tool is free to access and can be found at: www.workwellivewell.co.uk

The PHA has individual websites on key health topics including:

Healthy eating: www.choosetolivebetter.com

Physical activity: www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/physical-activity

Alcohol: www.knowyourlimits.info

Mental health: www.mindingyourhead.info

Smoking: www.stopsmokingni.info

An extensive list of information leaflets and other resources on various health issues can be viewed by searching on: www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications

The PHA provides leaflets aimed at employees on the following:

- healthy eating;
- mental health;
- physical activity.

These can be viewed online at: www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications

These resources may also be available from local health promotion resource centres. To request copies, contact the health promotion resource centre in your local Health and Social Care Trust (HSCT).

Belfast and South Eastern HSCTs – Tel: 028 9504 6627, Email: hazel.fisher@belfasttrust.hscni.net

Northern HSCT – Email: healthandwellbeing.resources@northerntrust.hscni.net

Southern HSCT – Tel: 028 3741 2889, Email: cst.training@southerntrust.hscni.net

Western HSCT – Tel: 028 7186 5127, Email: patricia.concannon@westerntrust.hscni.net

Website: www.publichealth.hscni.net

Telephone: 0300 555 0114

Developing Healthy Communities (DHC)

Developing Healthy Communities (previously Derry Healthy Cities) is a charity in Northern Ireland that exists to offer people and communities the opportunity to live healthier and more fulfilling lives.

DHC is the provider in the Western Health and Social Care Trust area of the PHA-funded programme 'Work Well Live Well'. Eligible businesses can get free support from DHC for planning and implementing effective workplace health and wellbeing policies.

DHC also provide support to employers through their own workplace programme, Health@Work NI, which offers a one-stop-shop for employers, with products and services that include information sessions, health clinics, tailored wellbeing plans, training courses and a comprehensive workplace health support service.

Website: www.dhcni.com

Telephone: 028 7161 1384

Email: sabrina@dhcni.com

Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council Partnership

Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council, in partnership with the PHA and other agencies that support businesses, manages an innovative workplace health partnership called 'Invest in Health Profit in Business'. This is a support service that works with local businesses and provider organisations/agencies to improve the health and wellbeing of employees and employers.

Website: www.lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk/business_solutions/invest-in-health-profit-in-business

Telephone: 028 9244 7300

Email: economic.development@lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk

Cardiovascular disease and stroke

Northern Ireland Chest Heart and Stroke (NICHS)

NICHS is a registered charity working in Northern Ireland to prevent and care for those affected by chest, heart or stroke conditions. 'Well NI' is their range of workplace health promotion services, which are aimed at improving people's health through early detection, education and lifestyle changes. Workplace health and wellbeing packages include comprehensive health check packages, health and wellbeing talks and webinars, Well Mind workshops to help cope with stress and PHA-funded Work Well Live Well programme. NICHS delivers the PHA-funded programme 'Work Well Live Well' across Belfast, South Eastern, Northern and Southern Health and Social Care Trust areas. Eligible businesses can get free support from NICHS with planning and implementing effective workplace health and wellbeing support. More information on these services can be found by contacting NICHS.

Website: www.nichs.org.uk/wellni

Telephone: 028 9032 0184

Email: healthpromotion@nichs.org.uk

Diabetes

Diabetes UK (Northern Ireland)

Diabetes UK raises awareness about the signs of diabetes and provides information and support to people living with diabetes and their families. Diabetes UK has a Northern Ireland branch, which is involved in promoting a healthy lifestyle among employees and will attend workplace health events and provide information and support to employees.

Website: www.diabetes.org.uk/NorthernIreland

Telephone: 028 9066 6646

Email: n.ireland@diabetes.org.uk

Cancer

Cancer Focus NI

Cancer Focus NI helps people who are living with cancer, funds cancer research and offers advice and information to people on how to lower their risk of cancer and live a healthy lifestyle. Programmes include:

- breast awareness;
- bowel cancer;
- weight management;
- stopping smoking;
- physical activity for health.

Specialist health promotion staff use resources such as the skin scanner and body composition scales to deliver tailored programmes in workplaces. Sessions are interactive, positive and tailored so that participants see how they can improve their health. Men or women-only sessions can be provided on request.

Website: www.cancerfocusni.org

Telephone: 028 9066 3281

Email: hello@cancerfocusni.org

Action Cancer

Action Cancer in Northern Ireland offers services to workplaces including:

- counselling;
- complementary therapy;
- MOT health checks.

The Action Cancer Big Bus services workplaces and will travel anywhere in Northern Ireland to offer health advice. There are charges for some of these services.

Website: www.actioncancer.org

Telephone: 028 9080 3344

Email: info@actioncancer.org

Smoking

Stop smoking services

Smoking is the single greatest preventable cause of ill health and premature death in Northern Ireland, killing around 2,300 people each year. Of these deaths, approximately 800 are the result of lung cancer, which is now the most common cause of cancer death in both men and women. Other illnesses for which smoking is a major risk factor include coronary heart disease, stroke and other diseases of the circulatory system.

The PHA is responsible for developing public information campaigns that highlight the dangers of smoking and signpost smokers to services that will help them quit. Further information on smoking and the workplace can be found on the PHA's www.stopsmokingni.info website, which is specifically aimed at those who wish to find out more about stop smoking services. The PHA also has a number of publications related to stopping smoking, which can be accessed at: www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications by searching using the word 'smoking'.

Website: www.stopsmokingni.info

Physical activity

Physical activity initiatives

The PHA recommends that for good physical and mental health, adults and children should aim to be active every day. Adults should accumulate at least 150 minutes of moderate physical activity across the week and kids should be active for an average of at least 60 daily minutes across the week. Employees can try to fit in some walking or cycling as part of the daily journey to work and businesses can create a workplace travel plan. If the total trip distance is too far, get off the bus a bit early or park the car a bit further away.

There are several organisations that can provide information and support to workplaces that would like to support their employees to get active:

- Cycle to work scheme: www.cycleni.com
- Outdoor physical activity opportunities: www.outdoorni.com

Council leisure centres

Leisure centres are available in all council areas in Northern Ireland. The majority provide opportunities for both indoor and outdoor physical activity, with a wide range of sports usually on offer. To find out what is available in your area, visit your local council website. A full list of council contact details and web addresses can be found at: www.nidirect.gov.uk/local-councils-in-northern-ireland

Sustrans

Sustrans is a UK charity that enables people to travel by foot, bike or public transport on more of the journeys they make every day. Sustrans works with families, communities, policy makers and partner organisations so that people are able to choose healthier, cleaner and cheaper journeys, with better places and spaces to move through and live in.

Website: www.sustrans.org.uk

Telephone: 028 9043 4569

Email: belfast@sustrans.org.uk

Nutrition

Food Standards Agency Northern Ireland

The Food Standards Agency is an independent government department responsible for food safety and hygiene across the UK. They work with businesses to help them produce safe food, and with local authorities to enforce food safety regulations. The Northern Ireland branch of the Food Standards Agency provides policy advice and carries out food law enforcement activities.

Website: www.food.gov.uk

Telephone: 0330 332 7149

Email: infofsani@food.gov.uk

British Dietetic Association (BDA)

The BDA Work Ready Programme is the answer to your workplace health and nutrition needs. It offers bespoke nutritional wellbeing services to engage employees.

A 'pick and mix approach' means businesses can choose the level of support required to meet current wellbeing priorities or achieve workplace wellbeing awards.

Whether it is a full Work Ready Programme or key elements to be combined with existing services, employers can be assured that they are receiving a quality-assured service, soundly based in scientific research and principles, provided by dietitians, specifically trained in workplace nutrition.

Website: www.bdaworkready.co.uk

Telephone: 0121 200 8030

Email: info@bda.uk.com

Sexual health

Informing Choices NI

Informing Choices NI is a sexual health charity championing informed choices around sex, sexuality and reproductive health and emotional wellbeing through advocacy, counselling, education, information and training. They provide a sexual health information service comprising of the provision of a sexual health helpline, free contraception and STI leaflets and a biannual newsletter; offer non-directive pregnancy choices and post pregnancy counselling, information and support services; deliver Relationships and Sexuality Education programmes for parents as well as individuals with a learning disability/difficulty/ASD; campaign for sexual and reproductive health services to be readily accessible to meet the needs of all citizens in Northern Ireland; and provide bespoke training on Relationships, Sexuality Education for professionals working with young people or individuals with a learning disability/difficulty/ASD.

Website: www.informingchoicesni.org

Telephone: 028 9031 6100

Email: info@informingchoicesni.org

The Rainbow Project

The Rainbow Project is a health organisation that works to improve the physical, mental and emotional health of gay, bisexual and non-heterosexual men in Northern Ireland. It is the largest organisation of its kind in Northern Ireland and has two centres, one in Belfast city centre and the other in Londonderry.

Website: www.rainbow-project.org

Telephone: 028 9031 9030

Email: info@rainbow-project.org

Sexual orientation and gender identity

'Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender – Creating Inclusive Workplaces' is a new e-learning programme that has been developed by the PHA in partnership with the Southern HSCT and informed by the experiences of individuals who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or transgender (LGBT) and their carers.

The programme has been designed to be used by individuals working in any setting, including staff and management. We hope it will better inform individuals and organisations about the issues faced by lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people, and encourage workplace settings to be more LGBT inclusive. We hope you can take time to complete the 45 minute programme and promote it to other colleagues within your workplace.

For further information see: www.lgbtelearning.hscni.net

LGBT Northern Ireland

This website provides information on different organisations and services dedicated to supporting lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people and their families across Northern Ireland.

Website: www.lgbtni.org

Alcohol and addiction

Addiction NI

Addiction NI offers a bespoke service to employers to deal with drug or alcohol problems in the workplace. Services they offer include:

- support to develop policies on alcohol and drugs in the workplace;
- awareness training;
- treatment for those who have alcohol or drug dependency;
- screening tools to help identify those at risk of alcohol misuse.

Website: www.addictionni.com

Telephone: 028 9066 4434

Email: enquiries@addictionni.com

PHA alcohol and drugs directories of services

There are five Drug and Alcohol Coordination Teams (DACTs) in Northern Ireland and each team has produced a directory of services available in its area. To find out which services are available in your area, visit: www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications/drug-and-alcohol-directories-services

Mental health and wellbeing

Action Mental Health (AMH)

AMH works with employers to highlight that health, work and wellbeing are closely and powerfully linked and need to be addressed together. AMH provides opportunities to be as active as possible – physically, socially and mentally – and encourages clients to adopt a healthier lifestyle and widen their social networks. AMH also gives people the tools they need to:

- build a better future;
- set personal goals;
- learn coping skills;
- become more employable.

Website: www.amh.org.uk

Telephone: 028 9182 8494

Lifeline

If you are experiencing a crisis or struggling to cope, call Lifeline on 0808 808 8000.

Lifeline is the Northern Ireland crisis helpline that provides immediate support for those in crisis, distress and despair and struggling to cope. Lifeline is available to anyone across Northern Ireland 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Lifeline is staffed by qualified crisis counsellors who will provide immediate help and support over the phone. If appropriate, Lifeline can refer you for follow-on face-to-face counselling or signpost to other follow-up services. Lifeline counsellors are experienced in dealing with issues such as suicidal thoughts, self-harm, abuse, trauma, depression and anxiety.

Website: www.lifelinehelpline.info

Lifeline: 0808 808 8000



Covid-19 and the workplace

In January 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the outbreak of a new coronavirus disease in Hubei Province, China to be a public health emergency of international concern and we witnessed the virus spread across the globe. The WHO and public health authorities have taken action to contain the COVID-19 outbreak. However, all sections of our society, including businesses and employers, must play a role if we are to prevent the spread of this disease.

The outbreak of COVID-19 has changed our workplaces unrecognisably and has impacted on each of the four areas of influence detailed in the WHO Healthy Workplace Model, as follows:

- **Physical work environments** have been changed unrecognisably in the majority of cases due to social distancing, PPE and remote working. Some workplaces were forced to stop operating completely.
- **Personal health resources** has changed as Covid-19 has impacted on our lifestyles changing our diets, physical activity levels, reduced social supports, drug and alcohol consumption and the restrictions around screenings and health services during outbreak.
- **Psychosocial work environment** is affected through changing structures, amended lines of communication, remote line management. Many staff has been furloughed leading to uncertainty and worry around job security or what changes lay ahead within their role. Management are dealing with more complex working environments and a changing environment, while employees are adapting to change at levels that perhaps haven't been experienced before by being key workers in pandemic response, working from home and government furlough scheme. All of which have been evidenced to show will have an effect on employee mental health.
- **Enterprise community involvement** has potentially been positively impacted upon with businesses linking with communities more readily as partnership working across sectors became an essential way of working. However, many charitable organisations have had the negative impact of corporate fundraising initiatives being hugely reduced due to the impact of the pandemic.

Throughout the Work Well Live Well programme, employees are encouraged to adopt the continual improvement process of the WHO Healthy Workplace Model, underpinned by the four main elements of workplace health above. In addition, Work Well Live Well will support workplaces to put strategies in place on how Covid-19 has impacted the psychosocial work environment, using the HSE Management Standards for Stress, as follows:

- **Demands** – such as work environment, workload or work patterns
- **Control** – such as control over how you do your job whether working from home or returning to the workplace
- **Support** – such as support in doing your job and adapting to changes
- **Relationships** – such as your working relationships with colleagues and your manager
- **Role** – such as understanding of your role and how it fits into the workplace
- **Change** – such as communication and support from managers on organisational change, job role or departments

Useful links

WHO

www.who.int/news-room/q-a-detail/q-a-coronaviruses

Public health information

www.publichealth.hscni.net/covid-19-coronavirus

Subscribe for regular updates on www.pha.site/subscribeupdate

Government response to coronavirus

www.gov.uk/coronavirus

www.health-ni.gov.uk/coronavirus

www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-list-of-guidance

www.assemblyresearchmatters.org/2020/03/27/sources-of-guidance-and-support-on-the-impactof-coronavirus-covid-19/

www.gov.uk/government/publications/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-infection-prevention-and-control
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-infection-prevention-and-control>

Local government districts

Antrim and Newtownabbey www.antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk/

Ards and North Down www.ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk/about-the-council/covid19

Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon www.armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk/coronavirus/

Belfast www.belfastcity.gov.uk/council/covid19.aspx

Causeway Coast and Glens www.causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk/covid19

Derry City and Strabane www.derrystrabane.com/Council/Corona-Virus-Advice/corona-advice

Fermanagh and Omagh www.fermanaghomagh.com/covid-19-coronavirus-information-advice-council-services/

Lisburn and Castlereagh www.lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk/

Mid and East Antrim www.midandeastantrim.gov.uk/covid-19

Mid Ulster www.mid-ulster-council-covid-19-response-midulster.hub.arcgis.com/

Newry, Mourne and Down www.newrymournedown.org

Information links for workplaces

Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland

www.hse.gov.uk/news/coronavirus.htm

A practical guide to making workplaces safer

<http://connect.publichealthagency.org/sites/default/files/covid-19-working-through-this-together.pdf>

Government Services

www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-workers

WHO

www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/getting-workplace-ready-for-covid-19.pdf

British Occupational Hygiene Society

www.bohs.org/coronavirus-hub

NI Business

www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/campaign/coronavirus-updates-support-your-business

Labour Relations Agency COVID-19 - Advice for Employers and Employees

www.lra.org.uk/covid-19-advice-employers-and-employees

Mental health and wellbeing

PHA

www.publichealth.hscni.net/sites/default/files/202003/Coronavirus%20Take%205%20A5%204pp%2003_20_0.pdf

www.mindingyourhead.info/

NHS

www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/coronavirus-covid-19-anxiety-tips/

www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/coronavirus-covid-19-staying-at-home-tips/

WHO

www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/mental-healthconsiderations.pdf

HSC

<https://ni.stresscontrol.org/>

HSENI

www.hse.gov.uk/gohomehealthy/assets/docs/StressTalkingToolkit.pdf

www.hseni.gov.uk/articles/stress-and-mental-health-work-and-home-good-practice

Samaritans

www.samaritans.org/how-we-can-help/support-and-information/if-youre-havingdifficult-time/if-youre-worried-about-your-mental-health-during-coronavirus-outbreak/

AWARE

www.aware-ni.org/covid-19-support

NI Chest Heart and Stroke

<https://nichs.org.uk/information/covid19>

Inspire

www.inspirewellbeing.org/our-services/professional-services/inspire-workplaces

Covid Wellbeing Hub

<https://covidwellbeingni.info/>

Anxiety UK

www.anxietyuk.org.uk/coronanxiety-support-resources/

Mental Health Foundation

www.mentalhealth.org.uk/coronavirus

MIND

www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing/

People with a disability

Guidelines on making information about COVID-19 accessible to blind and partially sighted people - Royal National Institute for the Blind

www.nib.org.uk/coronavirus

www.nib.org.uk/campaigning/priority-campaigns/accessible-health-information/coronavirus-and-accessible-online-information

Access in BSL and ISL to NHS111 Northern Ireland COVID-19 Advice Line

<https://interpreternow.co.uk/nhs111ni>

Public Health Agency – Resources for managers and support for people with learning difficulties and/or autism

www.publichealth.hscni.net/covid-19-coronavirus/guidance-hsc-staff-healthcare-workers-and-care-providers/staff-health-and-0

Public Health Agency – Coronavirus advice for people with learning disability

www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications/coronavirus-advice-people-learning-disability

Enterprise community involvement

The WHO defines this as:

“The activities, expertise, and other resources an enterprise engages in or provides to the social and physical community or communities in which it operates; and which affect the physical and mental health, safety and wellbeing of workers and their families.”¹

The WHO places a great deal of importance on ensuring that businesses have a positive impact on the communities in which they are situated. Employee engagement can help improve the health and wellbeing of workers and individuals who live in these communities. Ways in which businesses can get involved include:

- drawing up a sustainable development plan for the organisation;
- working to reduce the organisation's carbon emissions and waste;
- making highly efficient use of resources such as energy, water, land and products;
- protecting green space and biodiversity;
- making sure procurement supports and facilitates a reduction in resource use and waste;
- specifying environmental and social standards through the procurement process to influence supply chains and drive innovation;
- supporting a strong and sustainable local economy by involving local suppliers in appropriate procurement opportunities;
- working positively with key stakeholders to ensure local decisions (eg on planning or transport) are good for health and sustainability;
- understanding the local community and involving its representatives and members in decision-making and scrutiny;
- supporting local communities and economies wherever possible;
- introducing equality practices in the workplace to protect vulnerable groups;
- encouraging workers to volunteer for non-profit organisations during work hours;
- working with building contractors to ensure sustainable development objectives are properly specified, understood and delivered;
- supporting a strong and sustainable local economy by involving local suppliers in building projects.

The following are organisations that provide information and support to workplaces in the area of enterprise and community involvement.

Volunteer Now

Volunteer Now works to promote, enhance and support volunteering throughout Northern Ireland. The website is updated regularly with volunteering opportunities across Northern Ireland. As well as highlighting general volunteering opportunities, Volunteer Now also works to promote employer-supported volunteering. Employees involved in volunteering schemes not only give back to the community, but also benefit from positive mental health effects.

Website: www.volunteernow.co.uk

Telephone: 028 9023 2020

Email: info@volunteernow.co.uk

Invest NI

Invest NI was formed in 2002 as Northern Ireland's economic development agency.

Its purpose is to improve the Northern Ireland economy through business development. Its aim is to increase business productivity, support local businesses to create jobs, champion the growth of innovation, research and development and exports, and attract new inward investors to the region.

Invest NI operates as a Non Departmental Public Body under the Department for the Economy and is tasked with delivering the economic development priorities and outcomes in the Programme for Government in the most cost effective and efficient manner.

Website: www.investni.com

Telephone: 0800 181 4422



Examples of good practice

The Harvey Group PLC, Newtownabbey

The Harvey Group is a building service organisation that employs 60 people. The workforce is 90% male and 10% female, and represented by all age groups. As part of their workplace health programme, they identified the needs of their staff to be:

- physical activity;
- healthy eating;
- more communication with the company;
- health assessments for staff.

The organisation then got to work on improving these areas. They achieved this through a number of different measures, including the following:

- Running a step-o-meter challenge, during which staff were given a pedometer to count their steps every day for four weeks. The person with the most steps was then given vouchers for their local supermarket. A walking group was also set up.
- Fruit and vegetables were sold to staff at a reasonable price, supplied from the local fruit and veg shop. Employees were also provided with written advice on healthy eating to enforce the message of five portions a day.
- A telegraph, with details of what was happening within the company, was sent out to each staff member on a regular basis, in order to improve communication.
- Health assessments with NICHHS were set up for all members of staff.

One of the issues the organisation faced was that certain programmes took a while to set up and sometimes the organisation appeared to be resisting change. However, the programme worked well overall.

Benefits of the programme include the following:

- A marked improvement to staff's overall lifestyle practices.
- Increased physical activity and consumption of fruit.
- Improved communication with employees and better understanding of company business due to the telegraph.
- At the company's annual Christmas dinner, leaflets on men's and women's cancers were distributed to staff. Cancer Research were invited along to give a presentation and donations were also collected. This resulted in £752 being raised for the charity.

Housing Rights Service, Belfast

The Housing Rights Service is an organisation that works to promote the rights of those who are in need of housing in Northern Ireland. It employs 25 full-time and three part-time workers. As part of their workplace health programme, they identified key areas of need. These included:

- improving the health and safety standards of the work environment;
- stress management issues;
- promotion of physical activity;
- promotion of healthy eating;
- general promotion of health and wellbeing awareness.

The organisation then worked to improve these areas. Steps taken include the following:

- Members of staff attended first aid training courses.
- One employee attended accredited training on stress awareness.
- Stress management was incorporated into the organisation's overall health and wellbeing policy.
- Promotion of the existing employee assistance programme and counselling service, which included a briefing for all staff and an induction for new staff members.
- Taking part in a step-o-meter challenge. This had a positive effect on staff team building and morale.
- Setting up a walking group, which has participated in a number of charitable walks including the Race for Life.
- The local health and social care trust gave an information session on healthier eating.
- A section of the office was dedicated to health promotion, which included leaflets on healthy eating, smoking cessation, alcohol limits and cancer.
- Action Cancer provided information sessions for staff.
- NICHs provided health checks for staff.
- An external organisation came in to provide a range of relaxation therapies for staff.
- One member of staff attended a health fair at Belfast Castle and reported back to the office.

One of the main problems they faced when trying to implement this programme was finding the necessary resources.

The main benefits for staff and the organisation include the following:

- There is greater awareness of general health and wellbeing and healthy lifestyle practices. Absenteeism has also dropped.
- The programme has highlighted the importance of management when it comes to staff health and wellbeing. As well as this, there has been a noticeable improvement in staff morale and team building.

References

1. Burton J. WHO healthy workplace framework and model: Background and supporting literature and practice. Geneva: World Health Organization, 2010. Available at: www.who.int/occupational_health/healthy_workplace_framework.pdf
2. Black C. Working for a healthier tomorrow. Norwich: The Stationery Office, 2008. Available at: www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/hwwb-working-for-a-healthier-tomorrow.pdf
3. Health and Safety Executive. Managing the causes of work-related stress: A step-by-step approach using the Management Standards. Caerphilly: HSE, 2007.
4. Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety. A fitter future for all: framework for preventing and addressing overweight and obesity in Northern Ireland 2012–2022. Belfast: DHSSPS, 2012. Available at: www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/framework-preventing-addressing-overweight-obesity-ni-2012-2022.pdf
5. Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety. Fit and well: Changing lives 2012–2022. Belfast: DHSSPS, 2012. Available at: www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/fit-and-well-short-version.pdf
6. National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence. Workplace health promotion: how to encourage employees to be physically active. London: NICE, 2008. Available at: www.nice.org.uk/nicemedia/pdf/PH013Guidance.pdf
7. National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence. Workplace health promotion: how to help employees to stop smoking. London: NICE, 2007. www.nice.org.uk/nicemedia/live/11381/31969/31969.pdf
8. National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence. Managing long-term sickness absence and incapacity for work. London: NICE, 2009. www.nice.org.uk/nicemedia/live/11779/43545/43545.pdf



Public Health
Agency

Public Health Agency

12-22 Linenhall Street, Belfast BT2 8BS.

Tel: 0300 555 0114 (local rate).

www.publichealth.hscni.net

Find us on:



**WORK
WELL**

**LIVE
WELL**

A Public Health Agency initiative