



HM Government

Health and work

Our plan to make sure less people lose their jobs because of their health



Easy read booklet
Summary July 2021

Who we are and what this booklet is about

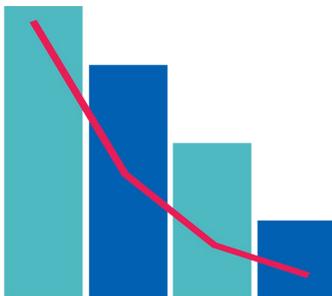


HM Government

We are the UK **Government**. The **Government** is in charge of running the country.



In 2019 we wrote a **consultation** called **Health is everyone's business**. A **consultation** is a document we write about a subject and ask people to read and tell us what they think.



The consultation was about how to make sure less people lose their jobs because of their health.



We've thought about what people told us and decided what to do. This booklet is a **summary** Easy Read version of our plan. A **summary** is a shorter version.

About employers



An **employer** is a person or company that pays people to do a job.

An **employee** is a person who has a job.



Most employers agree there's a link between work and health.

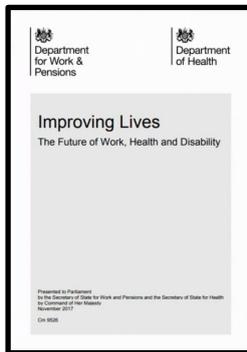


When employers spend time and money looking after their employee's health and wellbeing, they see good things happen like

- employees are off work because of illness less often.
- more work is done.
- people stay in jobs for longer.
- employees enjoy their jobs and work better.



How this fits in with our other work



In 2017 we wrote a document called **Improving Lives: The Future of Work, Health and Disability**. This told you about our plan to help disabled people and people with health problems to get jobs.



We said we want 1 million more disabled people to have jobs by 2027. We also said we want people to understand more about the link between health, work and disability.

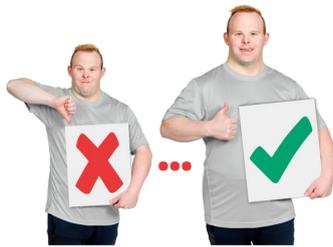


We want to see healthier places to work and more support for people in work. We are doing lots of things to make this happen.



Most of this booklet is about employers. We have written other plans and are doing lots of other work too.

What we want to happen



We want lots of people to have better lives because their employers make their places of work healthier.



We want to give advice that's helpful to employees when they get healthcare. This might mean their doctor will give them advice about work.

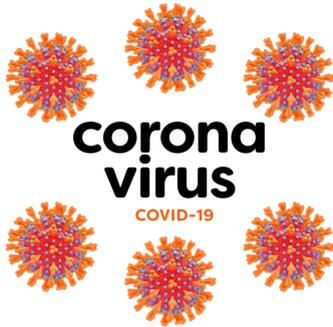


We have also worked with health organisations called **NHS England** and **Public Health England** to help local groups work together.



We want to find out more about how we can help groups to work together.

About COVID-19



COVID-19 is an illness affecting people all over the world. It is also called **coronavirus**.



When we first wrote our consultation, the number of people who had jobs was very high. This included disabled people. We wanted to make this even better.



When COVID-19 started, we made some quick changes to help people keep their jobs. Our support to employers and employees was one of the best in the world.



COVID-19 has made our plans even more important. We thought about COVID-19 when we wrote this plan.

Information and advice



We want to give employers good information and advice.



Some employers might not have enough time or experience to make their places of work healthier.

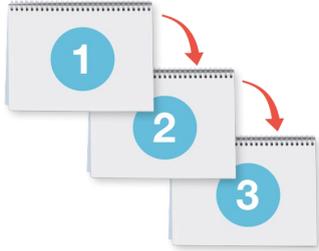


We have made our advice better because of COVID-19. This includes advice about how to go back to work safely.



We will make our advice about health, work and disability even better. We will make our advice easy to find and easy to use.

Support when employees are off work because of illness



We want better and clearer information for employers about what to do when their employees are off work because of illness.



The **Health and Safety Executive** (or **HSE**) is part of the government. We have asked them to work with other groups to write clear information.



They will write information to help disabled people and people with health problems to stay in work.



We will also make sure more people know what the law says about **reasonable adjustments**. **Reasonable adjustments** are changes that can be made to help someone do their work.

Pay for people who are off work because of illness



Statutory Sick Pay (or **SSP**) is the money the government gives to employees when they are off work because of an illness.



COVID-19 made many people realise how important SSP is. We made changes to SSP last year to help people who had to stay at home or couldn't work because of COVID-19.



We want the system for SSP to be simple and flexible. We want to change the amount of money that's paid and the rules about who can get it.



We decided not to make these changes at the same time as the changes for COVID-19. Now we will think again about what people told us about SSP in the consultation.

Advice from experts



We want small companies and people who work for themselves to get advice from **Occupational Health** (or **OH**) experts.

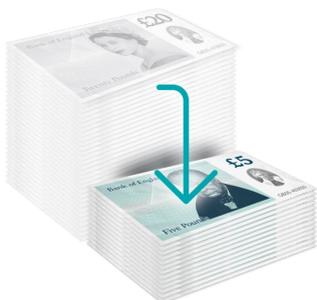


Occupation Health means health at work. OH experts work in OH services. Companies and people who work for themselves can pay for their advice.



We will

- help OH services get better quickly and use new technology.
- write some better information about paying for OH services.
- help employers find OH experts that are right for them.
- try out a lower cost for small companies and people who work for themselves.
- make sure there are enough OH experts.



Fit note



We want to make the **fit note** process better. A **fit note** is a note from a doctor that says you can't work because of illness.



We want to make fit notes **digital**. **Digital** means they are on a computer. We also want more Health workers to be able to give fit notes.

Insurance



Insurance is something you can buy to protect yourself from losing money.



We want employers to get better advice about insurance and to understand more about how insurance can help.

Tax



Tax is money people and companies have to pay to the government. We made changes in April 2020 so that employers don't pay tax on **counselling** for their employees.



Counselling is a type of meeting where an expert helps someone think about problems or decisions.

Access to Work



Access to Work is help we give to make sure disabled people or people with health problems can work. It might include money for reasonable adjustments.



We want to make sure more employers know about Access to Work.