



Public Health  
England



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# Workplace health needs assessment

How to use the assessment  
and HNA questions

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# About Public Health England & Healthy Working Futures

*Public Health England exists to protect and improve the nation's health and wellbeing, and reduce health inequalities. It does this through world-class science, knowledge and intelligence, advocacy, partnerships and the delivery of specialist public health services. PHE is an operationally autonomous executive agency of the Department of Health.*

The Health Work and Wellbeing Group (HWWG), led by Healthy Working Futures (formerly The Fit For Work Team), is one of 22 partners who make up the Health and Care Voluntary Sector Strategic Partner Programme.

### The other members of the HWWG are:

- » Nottingham Fit for Work Service
- » Pathways Community Interest Company

- » Sheffield Occupational Health Advisory Service

The Strategic Partner Programme enables VCSE organisations to work in equal partnership with the Department of Health, NHS England and Public Health England to help shape and deliver policies and programmes, for the benefit of the sector and improved health and wellbeing outcomes. It provides a way for policy makers to reach thousands of VCSE organisations across England through the extensive depth and reach of the partners' networks. This helps to ensure that the voice of small VCSE organisations is in direct contact with national bodies at the heart of decision making.

In exchange, the programme offers wider support to the VCSE sector to further their skills and knowledge to improve health and social care services. It offers a valuable opportunity to ensure the sector is able to contribute to the development of health and social care policy. Due to their unique expertise,

strategic partners are ideally placed to support work to reduce health inequalities.

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# Executive summary

*As Employers we know we have a responsibility to protect and support the health and wellbeing of their staff. We know that companies that work with staff to develop approaches that invest in the health and wellbeing of their staff see higher rates of retention, reduced sickness absence and increased productivity.*

Sometimes it can be hard to understand where to prioritise investment in staff health and wellbeing, especially when moving beyond the basic health and safety legislative requirements. A health needs assessment can be a useful and simple way to gather anonymous information about the health of a company's workforce and also provides a baseline of data against which to track progress.

This document provides a tested tool to carry out a workplace health needs assessment. It is for employers of all types and sizes. It provides practical advice including survey questions and advice on their use with workplace health.



# Introduction

## What is a health needs assessment (HNA)?

A Health Needs Assessment describes the process of gathering information on a specific population, in this case employees working within a specific company, in order to decide where to invest to improve health and wellbeing.

Within the context of a programme to work with staff on improving health and wellbeing, a HNA is a process designed to help employers find out about staff health needs within their organisation and to set a baseline of employee health. It involves conducting a survey of staff and analysing the results to help an organisation plan a programme of health and wellbeing activities that staff will value and feel appropriate to their needs.

## Why should you do a HNA?

The HNA helps with measuring the impact of health and wellbeing activities that are put in place. Repeating the survey after a suitable period, such as a year, would help to show the difference made by the activities that have been implemented.

The questions aim to gather information from employees which can also be compared with national data so you know how your workplace compares.

## Issues you may want to consider

Some staff may find the questions intrusive and, although they are anonymous, in a small workplace people may feel that they could be identified from their replies. Think carefully about whether this will be a problem for your organisation.

People may be suspicious about the motives behind the survey. Proper explanation, and support from staff representatives will help overcome this.

Using an external organisation to run the survey and focus groups can help reduce concerns about confidentiality as well as draw on external expertise to develop the action plan.



# How does it work?

The survey has three stages:

- 1.** Gathering data on health need, usually through a survey but you may add to this by analysing sickness absence data, employee assistance programme usage and occupation health data if it's available. Collecting the data can be done through a stand alone survey (which you might use an external company to carry out..., or internally, or through taking part in a national survey like Britain's Healthiest Company). The important thing is that the survey is anonymous and this document provides some questions that you can use.
- 2.** Involving staff and gathering their thoughts and views on what matters to them, this might be through free text questions in the survey or could be through focus groups and staff engagement fora.
- 3.** Develop an action plan and implement it. Working with staff to develop that action plan helps them to share it and also help shape practical solutions to some of the challenges that arise from the HNA.

## A

You can use an external organisation (with expertise in health, work and HNAs) to carry out the survey for you. This helps with anonymity and impartiality.

## B

Or with the support of this document you can administer the survey yourself and collect anonymous responses. Collating and analysing the results will provide useful information about employee health and wellbeing.

## C

You could also nominate someone from your own organisation to manage the process for you.



# How to carry out the survey

Ensure that the senior management team is engaged with and committed to the HNA and to improving the health and wellbeing of staff. It is essential this team is committed as it will need to endorse its use and promote it to staff.

Ensure employees are involved in the planning of the HNA as this will help them engage with it and to show employees that you are supportive of their health and wellbeing; this may include trade union involvement.

Decide who is collecting the information, the timescales for collecting the data and have plans for circulating the findings.

Decide on what demographic information you will collect. Demographics are characteristics

of a population and could include age, gender, occupational group and working hours, for example shift work. Think carefully about what to include. If your organisation is small, employees may feel that giving their age and gender for example will identify them.

Have a clear statement to explain why the information is being collected, how the information will be used, how the privacy of staff will be assured and how their data will be used.

Be clear about how the results will be used.

Consider if you would like to add any additional questions. If so we recommend you use those validated from national surveys.

Talk to staff about the HNA and explain that it is anonymous. You may wish to ask staff to not write their names anywhere on the survey and emphasise that that you will not reveal any potentially identifying information.

Distribute the surveys to staff and stress that participation is voluntary.

Provide information on how to complete the survey, how to return it, and who to return it to (in a very small business you may wish to use the survey as a prompt for group discussion rather than to collect individual responses).

The survey can be done paper based or electronically.



# What to do with **the results**

*Collate the responses. Using a programme such as Excel, will allow you to analyse the data to give an overview snapshot of employee health and wellbeing. You are unlikely to get a 100% return, however a sample of reasonable size should enable you to put in place a programme that is appropriate for your staff group*

The following pages give advice for each question about basic analysis and, where possible, provides a comparison with national figures. You may also wish to compare your findings with local figures for your local authority area. This can be found on your local council's public health webpages. The data can be explored further by seeing if there are any differences across, for example, gender, age or occupational group depending on what you collected.

Then think about what types of interventions you would be willing to implement.

Consider what is available locally, either free or at low cost, and what you would potentially pay for. Discuss with staff what they would be interested in doing. Then implement and monitor the effectiveness of the initiatives.

After some time has passed, usually a year, ask staff to complete the HNA again. You can then compare these results with the results from the first survey. This will show the impact of the initiatives in terms of improving the health and wellbeing of employees.





# What do the questions tell you and what to do with the results

*Each section of the HNA covers a different aspect of workplace health and wellbeing. There is more detail below on why the questions are asked, what the results tell you, and what to do next*

## General health and wellbeing

This section aims to find out about the self reported health and wellbeing of employees.

### Q1

How is your health in general?

### Q2

Overall, how satisfied are you with life in general? (on a scale of 0-10, where 0 is not at all satisfied and 10 is completely satisfied).

### Q3

Overall, how happy did you feel yesterday? (on a scale of 0-10, where 0 is not at all happy and 10 is completely happy)

### Q4

Overall, to what extent do you feel the things you do in life are worthwhile? (on a scale of 0-10, where 0 is not at all and 10 is completely happy)

### Q5

Overall, how anxious did you feel yesterday? (on a scale of 0-10, where 0 is not at all anxious and 10 is completely anxious)

## Why is this important to employers?

Research suggests that people with higher levels of personal wellbeing make better lifestyle choices – they are more likely to eat healthily, be more physically active and are less likely to smoke<sup>1</sup>. People who are employed tend to have higher levels of wellbeing but this depends on factors such as job quality and security, and the quality of relationships at work. A staff team with higher levels of wellbeing are likely to be more productive.



# How do I interpret the answers?

## Question 1

The table below gives national data for this question. For example 34% of people surveyed nationally in 2011 felt their health was very good.

	Very Good	Good	Fair	Bad	Very Bad
<b>General Lifestyle Survey 2011</b>	34%	43%	18%	5%	1%

## Question 2-5

Source Annual Population  
Survey 2011

Questions 2, 3 and 4 can be analysed by comparing the data with the national survey. For example 78.5% of people rated their satisfaction with life as a 7, 8, 9, or 10. The anxiety percentage relates to the percentage of people that answered 3 or less to the question.<sup>2</sup>

Question	National data - % people rating satisfaction as 7, 8, 9, 10
<b>Q2 Satisfaction with life:</b> 0 = not at all 10 = completely	78.5%
<b>Q3 Happiness yesterday:</b> 0 = not at all 10 = completely	73.3%
<b>Q4 Satisfaction with life:</b> 0 = not at all 10 = completely	81.8%

Question	National data - % people rating 3 or less
<b>Q5 Anxious yesterday:</b> 0 = not at all 10 = completely	63.1%

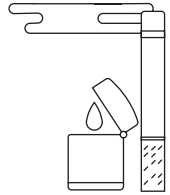
## What do I do next?

- » Consider what different tools you could promote to employees to raise awareness of wellbeing. One example is the 5 ways to wellbeing tool. These are five behaviours that have been shown to improve wellbeing
- » If employees have lower than expected levels of wellbeing then have a look at the questions on workplace culture and line manager questions and see if it has anything to do with the quality of the job or relationships at work
- » Consider hosting discussions or focus groups with employees to get further information on what issues they face and the sort of support they would like. This could range from time management training, to workshops on mental health coping strategies or training for their line manager
- » Develop a mental health at work policy and ensure it includes stress, anxiety and depression as these are the three most common mental health condition

<sup>2</sup> Evans, Mccrory and Randall, (2015) Measuring National Well-being: Life in the UK 2015, ONS: [http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20160105160709/http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/dcp171766\\_398059.pdf](http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20160105160709/http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/dcp171766_398059.pdf)



01



# Smoking

*This section aims to find out the number of employees who smoke and what support they feel would help them quit*

Q6.

Do you currently smoke:

Cigarettes

Cigars

Pipes

Shisha/Waterpipe/Hookah

None of the above

Q7.

Which best describes you?

1. I smoke daily

2. I smoke occasionally but not every day

3. I used to smoke daily but do not smoke at all now

4. I used to smoke occasionally but do not smoke at all now

5. I have never smoked

Q8.

If you smoke what support would you find most helpful for quitting smoking?

Advice from a GP

Expert help from a stop smoking adviser

Support from manager/colleagues

Support from family/friends

Nicotine replacement therapy / e-cigarettes

Other (please specify)



Smokers take **between 1 and 2.7** more sick days off per year than non-smokers



Smokers may also **take more breaks** during the working day

This equates to

**136**

**hours of lost productivity time** every year for the average smoker – costing the average business

**£1,522**

**in unproductive wages**



**71%**

say they would find **free information on quitting smoking** useful



**67%**

say they would like their employers to **promote campaigns** like Stoptober and No Smoking Day

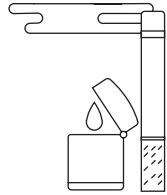


**78%**

would like information about their **local stop smoking service** for support



01



# Smoking

12

## Why is this important to employers?

Smoking is the leading cause of premature death and preventable illness in England. Studies suggest that smokers take between 1 and 2.7 more days off sick per year than non-smokers<sup>3</sup>. Employers who provide smoking cessation support could benefit from reduced sickness absence, increased productivity and contribute to promoting healthy living among the workforce<sup>4</sup>. It has also been found that when smoking cessation initiatives are offered in the workplace they are successful in reducing the number of employees who smoke.<sup>5</sup>

## How do I interpret the answers?

According to national data 18% of adults in England smoke – nearly eight million people (Integrated Household Survey, Jan – Dec 2014)<sup>6</sup>. The answers from questions 6, 7, 8 will help to identify the number of employees who smoke and what support they feel would help them stop smoking.

## What do I do next?

- » Consider raising awareness about the benefits of stopping smoking through free employer resources from PHE. These can be accessed: <https://campaignresources.phe.gov.uk/resources/campaigns/15-smokefree/overview>
- » Signpost staff to NHS smokefree for information and resources – and links to local stop smoking services
- » The most effective way to stop smoking is with expert support from a stop smoking advisor. Consider allowing staff reasonable time off to attend stop smoking support without loss of pay. It may be possible to arrange support at your workplace<sup>7</sup>
- » Develop and promote a smoke-free policy that protects the health of all employees at work. Make sure that it includes a position on e-cigarettes<sup>8</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Wing, Ali and Leonardi-Bee (2013). Smoking and absence from work: Systematic review and meta-analysis of occupational studies. *Addiction*, 108(2), 307-319.

<sup>4</sup> NICE (2007). Workplace health promotion: how to help employees stop smoking. Public Health Intervention Guidance 5. [guidance.nice.org.uk/PH5](http://guidance.nice.org.uk/PH5)

<sup>5</sup> Cahill, Moher and Lancaster, (2008). Workplace interventions for smoking cessation. *The Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews*, Issue 4

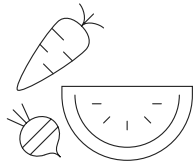
<sup>6</sup> Integrated Household Survey, January to December 2014, ONS, October 2015

<sup>7</sup> For information on best practice in supporting staff to stop smoking in the workplace, visit [www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ph5](http://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ph5)

<sup>8</sup> Further guidance is available from the CIEH/ASH briefing 'Will you permit or prohibit electronic cigarette use on your premises? Five questions to ask before you decide', [www.ash.org.uk/files/documents/ASH\\_900.pdf](http://www.ash.org.uk/files/documents/ASH_900.pdf); examples of policies are available at: [www.smokefreeengland.co.uk/files/smokefree\\_policy.pdf](http://www.smokefreeengland.co.uk/files/smokefree_policy.pdf)



02



# Healthy eating

13

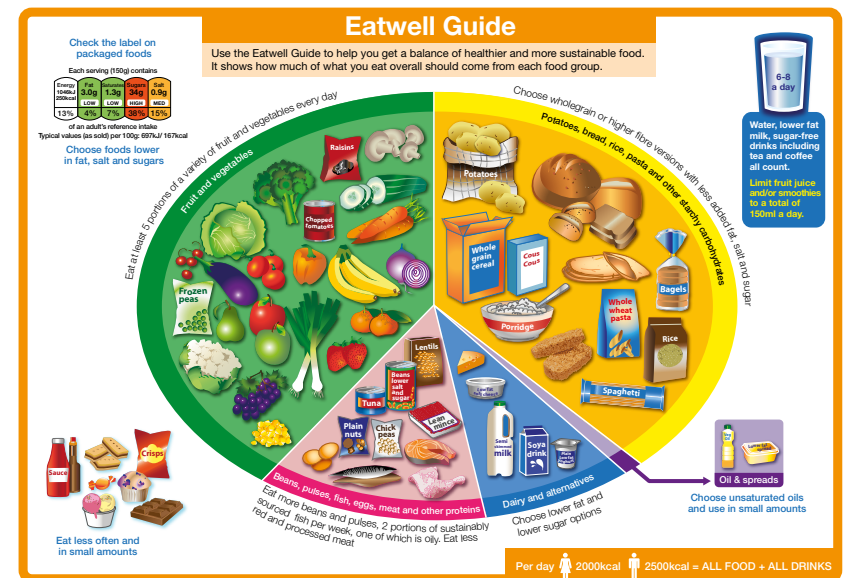
This section aims to find out whether employees have a healthy diet. The question is about fruit and vegetable intake, which research suggests is a reasonable marker for a healthy diet

**Q9. A portion of vegetables approximately equals 3 heaped tablespoons of vegetables or salad vegetables.**

A portion of fruit approximately equals a heaped tablespoon of dried fruit, one medium sized piece of fruit (eg, apples), two small pieces of fruit (eg, kiwi, apricot), or a 150ml glass of pure unsweetened fruit juice.

How many portions of fruit and/or vegetables, of any sort, do you eat on a typical day?

- 0
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5+



Source: Public Health England in association with the Welsh Government, Food Standards Scotland and the Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland. © Crown copyright 2016



02



# Healthy eating

14

## What do I do next?

### Why is this important to employers?

People who have a healthy diet and are a healthy weight are better protected against ill health, such as heart disease, high blood pressure, stroke and diabetes.

### How do I interpret the answers?

Compare the percentage of your employees eating their five a day with this national average.

Question	National data
<b>Q9</b>	30% of adults met the "5-a-day" recommendation in 2014

- » Raise awareness through a healthy eating campaign such as [www.nhs.uk/oneyou](http://www.nhs.uk/oneyou) and promote Sugar Swaps? Eatwell Guide. This site also provides information on local weight management services
- » Encourage healthy eating at work – if food is served on site then ensure there are healthy options, such as providing healthy food in vending machines. Consider promoting healthy snacks and limiting unhealthy food such as cakes and biscuits
- » Visit the government webpages for further guidance on healthy vending and catering for adults
- » Develop and promote a healthy eating policy or statement
- » Ensure water is easily accessible to all staff



03



# Alcohol

15

*This section aims to find out the number of employees that drink at a level that may put their health at risk, which would be above the government's lower risk guidelines*

### This is one unit of alcohol...



Half pint of regular beer, lager or cider



Half a glass of wine



1 single measure of spirits



1 small glass of sherry



1 single measure of aperitifs

### ...and each of these is more than one unit



Pint of regular beer, lager or cider



Pint of premium beer, lager or cider



Alcopop or can/bottle of regular lager



Can of premium lager or strong beer



Can of super strength lager



Glass of wine (175ml)



Bottle of wine

**Q10. How often do you have a drink containing alcohol?**

A: Never

B: Monthly or less

C: 2-4 times per month

D: 2-3 times per week

E: 4+ times per week

**Q12. How often have you had six or more units if female, or eight or more if male, on a single occasion in the last year?**

A: Never

B: Less than monthly

C: Monthly

D: Weekly

E: Daily or almost daily

Not applicable

**Q11. How many units of alcohol do you drink on a typical day when you drink alcohol?**

A: 1-2

B: 3-4

C: 5-6

D: 7-9

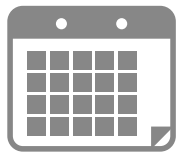
E: 10+



03



# Alcohol



17m

working days lost annually through absences caused by alcohol



£7bn

Estimated costs in lost productivity through unemployment and sickness related to alcohol



72%

of people entering treatment for alcohol problems were not in paid employment at the start of their treatment



50k+

individuals in Great Britain in 2013 were claiming incapacity benefits with a primary disabling condition of alcohol misuse

## Why is this important to employers?

Creating a culture in the workplace that supports employees to drink within the guidelines is important for the health and wellbeing of employees and for your organisation. Drinking above the lower risk guidelines can impact on an employee's ability to work. Drinking too much can increase the risk of a number of illnesses including heart disease, stroke, depression and some cancers, which is bad for health and bad for business. Businesses in the UK

lose an estimated £7bn each year as a result of time off work and lost productivity due to alcohol-related ill health.

## How do I interpret the answers?

A score across all three questions of 5 or more indicates that people are drinking at increasing risk. The higher the score the greater the risk. About one quarter of adults in England drink above the lower risk guidelines and are therefore putting their health at some degree of risk.

## What do I do next?

- » Provide resources on lower risk drinking using the One You drinks tracker app. This web page also has links to your local alcohol support service
- » Make available to staff, resources explaining that for both men and women, while no level of alcohol consumption is completely safe, you are safest not to regularly drink more than 14 units per week and that if you do drink as much as 14 units in a week it is best to spread this across the week
- » Contact your local authority public health team for advice on local services and training in delivering alcohol identification and brief advice, a very simple technique to help people to reduce their health risk from alcohol
- » Develop and promote an alcohol at work policy which covers all the key aspects: managing problems, prevention and organisational culture. There are a number of sources of alcohol policies, one example is available from The British Heart Foundation
- » Raise awareness through a campaign such as Dry January

Question	National data
<b>Q10, Q11, Q12</b>	This question has 5 answer choices. Score them as follows: <b>A</b> - 0 Points <b>B</b> - 1 Point <b>C</b> - 2 Points <b>D</b> - 3 Points <b>E</b> - 4 Points

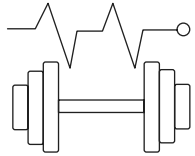
© Parliamentary Business: Health Committee Written evidence from the Department of Health (GAS 01):

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-matters-harmful-drinking-and-alcohol-dependence/health-matters-harmful-drinking-and-alcohol-dependence>





04



# Physical activity

17

*This section aims to find out the number of employees who are physically active enough to benefit their health and so meet the government's recommended physical activity guidelines*

**Q13. In the past week, on how many days have you done a total of 30 minutes or more of physical activity, which was enough to make you breathe harder?**

This may include sport, exercise and brisk walking or cycling for recreation or to get to and from places, but should not include housework or physical activity that may be part of your job.

**Q40. In the past week, on how many days have you done exercises that strengthen your muscles?**

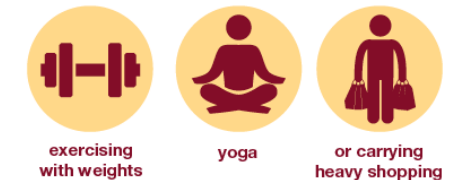
Activities such as lifting weights, sit-ups, yoga, carrying heavy bags or digging the garden.

## How much physical activity should you do?



This can also be achieved by 75 minutes of vigorous activity across the week or a mixture of moderate and vigorous.

All adults should undertake muscle strengthening activity, such as



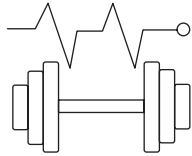
at least 2 days a week

Minimise the amount of time spent sedentary (sitting) for extended periods





04



# Physical activity

18

## Why is this important to employers?

The cost of physical inactivity in England has been estimated at £8.2bn a year.<sup>10</sup> Increasing physical activity could lead to many business benefits. Employees are less likely to suffer from major health problems, less likely to take sick leave, and less likely to face an injury at work. They are likely to be more productive. In fact, it has been found that physical activity in the workplace can reduce sickness absence by 20%.<sup>11</sup> Also, physical activity could help protect against musculoskeletal disorders which account for 19% of all sickness absence.<sup>12</sup>

## How do I interpret the answers?

If employees are doing less than 150 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity per week and are doing no muscle strengthening exercise then they are not meeting the recommended guidelines.

Question	National data
<b>Q13 and Q14</b>	67% of men and 55% of women meet the national guidelines for physical activity

## What do I do next?

- » Promote the benefits of physical activity by signposting staff to [www.nhs.uk/oneyou](http://www.nhs.uk/oneyou)
- » **Encourage employees to:**
  - Take their breaks
  - Carry out lifting and handling safely
- » **Encourage desk-based staff to:**
  - Move away from their desk and speak to their colleagues, rather than emailing
  - Use the stairs, not the lift
  - Sit less, move more
  - Take phone calls standing up
  - Centralise printers and bins so people get up more often during the day
- » Develop and promote a physical activity policy to maximise opportunities for staff to be active<sup>13</sup>
- » Consult with employees on the activities they would be interested in, such as a lunchtime walking group, yoga, dance, pedometer challenge, running group. Visit the national Workplace Challenge website for a challenge in your area

<sup>10</sup> Guidelines on physical activity for adults 18-65 CMO (July 2011) London: Department of Health

<sup>11</sup> Department for Work and Pensions and Department of Health (2008). Working for a Healthier Tomorrow. Dame Carol Black's review of the health of Britain's working age population. [www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/hwrb-working-for-a-healthier-tomorrow.pdf](http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/hwrb-working-for-a-healthier-tomorrow.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> Department for Work and Pensions. Analysis of the Labour Force Survey, October 2010 – September 2013 [Internet]. London: DWP; 2014 [cited 2015 Dec 16]. Available from: [www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/277572/long-term-absentees-feb14.xls](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/277572/long-term-absentees-feb14.xls)

<sup>13</sup> See NICE guidance on physical activity in the workplace, available at: <http://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ph13>



05



# Sleep

19

*This section aims to find out the number of employees who report having problems with their sleep as this can impact on their health and wellbeing*

**Q15. Over the last month, to what extent has your sleep troubled you in general?  
(Not at all to very much)**

Not at all

A little

Quite a bit

Very Much

**Q16. How many days a week do you have a problem with your sleep?**

A: 1

B: 2

C: 3

D: 4

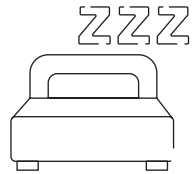
E: 5

F: 6

G: 7



05



# Sleep

20

## Why is this important to employers?

Sleep has been linked to many benefits to basic human functioning, such as improved memory and immunity. Regular poor sleep puts you at risk of serious medical conditions, including obesity, heart disease and diabetes – and it shortens your life expectancy. Individuals who get insufficient sleep have significantly worse workplace productivity, performance and safety outcomes in comparison to people who get enough sleep. Almost half of British people say that stress or worry keeps them awake at night.<sup>15</sup>

## How do I interpret the answers?

Consider taking action if the responses from these questions demonstrate that employees are troubled by their sleep. Poor sleep can be linked to other factors so compare the results to other questions in the survey, in particular ones around stress and anxiety.

## What do I do next?

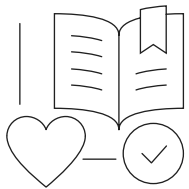
- » Raise awareness through campaigns such as One You and signpost employees to resources on sleep, such as those provided by the Sleepio website and toolkits such as the TUC's toolkit: <https://www.tuc.org.uk/workplace-issues/health-and-safety/fatigue-guide-health-and-safety-representatives>
- » Regular exercise is a good way to improve sleep quality so promote this wherever possible
- » Promote the following tips on sleep: go to bed at the same time each night and rise at the same time each morning, avoid large meals before bedtime, avoid caffeine and alcohol close to bedtime, avoid nicotine

<sup>14</sup> Rosekind et al. The cost of poor sleep: workplace productivity loss and associated costs. *Journal of Occupational & Environmental Medicine*: January 2010 - Volume 52 - Issue 1 - pp 91-98

<sup>15</sup> Healthy Sleep Tips: Sleep Foundation: <https://sleepfoundation.org/sleep-tools-tips/healthy-sleep-tips>



# Work & health



*As an employer you will be familiar with the need to provide a healthy and safe work environment and to manage risks appropriately. Evidence shows the health and wellbeing benefits of ensuring that employees have good jobs and are in a supportive social and physical work environment*

An employee's job role, along with the social and physical work environment, are all elements of what can make work good or bad and will have either a positive or negative impact on staff health and wellbeing, and in turn on organisational performance.

Research suggests that good work is good for health. Conversely bad work will have a negative impact on workforce health and wellbeing which in turn could leave to increased sickness absence, higher staff turnover, and lower productivity.

Good work includes having a living wage, control over work, in work development, flexibility, protection

from adverse working conditions, ill health prevention and stress management strategies, and support for sick and disabled people that supports a return to work. See appendix A for a more detailed explanation of 'good work'.

**The social environment** at work is the organisation of work and its culture: the attitudes, values and beliefs, and practices which affect the wellbeing of employees.

**The physical environment** at work, for example, an uncomfortable temperature or a poorly designed work area can be as much a source of pressure as the social environment.

## Q17. In general, how satisfied are you with:

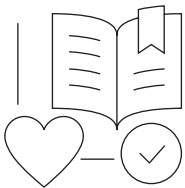
	Very dissatisfied	Quite dissatisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Quite satisfied	Very satisfied
A. Your job					
B. The social environment at work					
C. The physical environment at work					

## Q18. In general, how do you find your job?

- Not at all stressful
- Mildly stressful
- Moderately stressful
- Very stressful
- Extremely stressful



# Work & health



## Why is this important to employers?

Providing good jobs and ensuring a good social and physical workplace environment will, as well as addressing any health and safety risks, improve the health and wellbeing of employees. When people are happy at work and have good quality jobs they are more likely to be more productive and less likely to leave the organisation.<sup>16</sup>

## How do I interpret the answers?

Question	National data
Q17	The British Heart Foundation Well@Work survey found that 66% of people were very or quite satisfied with their job. 18% were very or quite dissatisfied with their job.
Q18	The HSE Survey in 2009 16.7% of respondents found their job stressful or very stressful.

<sup>16</sup> Investors in people Press release, 19th January 2015:  
<https://www.investorsinpeople.com/press/60-cent-uk-workers-not-happy-their-jobs>

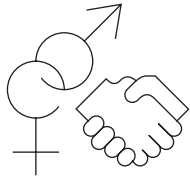
<sup>17</sup> More information is available at:  
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/STRESS/standards/step1/index.htm>

## What do I do next?

- » Consider holding focus groups or one-to-ones to get more detail on why staff may feel dissatisfied
- » Raise awareness of stress through campaigns such as One You
- » Train line managers to recognise the signs of stress and take steps to manage these. Consider offering to carry out a stress risk assessment<sup>17</sup> developed by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE)
- » Look at staff communication and whether that could be improved
- » Consider factors that could improve the quality of jobs, and the physical and social environment at work
- » Consider the responses to question 19 as this will give you more information on levels of satisfaction with the organisation of work and culture
- » Depending on which questions receive poor satisfaction scores you may wish to rethink and improve managerial approaches, flexible working, team building and skill development



06



# Workplace Culture

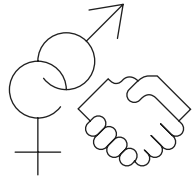
*This section aims to find out a bit more about work organisation and culture which might be affecting staff wellbeing and work performance*

**Q19. Considering the working conditions in your workplace in the last three months, please indicate how true the following statements are for you.**

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
We can use personal initiative or judgement							
We can decide on the order in which we do things							
We can adapt my job roles accordingly to the workplace needs							
Negative feedback is provided in a constructive way							
We feel listened to							
The management show that they have confidence in the people who work for them							
There are opportunities to develop friendships							
People are open to sharing ideas							
There is good cooperation between colleagues							
There is support for us if we need to provide informal care for a family member							
Communication is good							
We can have 1:1 meetings with my manager							
In our own work, it is possible to learn new things and skills							



06



# Workplace Culture

## Why is this important to employers?

Improving the organisation's workplace culture can improve employee wellbeing and build staff engagement. Research suggests that a number of factors can increase employee engagement including: clear visible leadership, effective line management, employees feeling they have a voice, and believing that their employer has integrity and is true to values. Conversely a sense of injustice and unfairness arising from management processes or personal relationships can increase stress and risks to mental health.<sup>18</sup>

## How do I interpret the answers?

If employees report 'somewhat disagree', 'disagree' or 'strongly disagree' across the majority of the questions in this section then this demonstrates dissatisfaction with the workplace environment, how they are treated and/ or how they are allowed to work. More information on this question is in appendix B.

## What do I do next?

Depending on which questions receive poor satisfaction scores you may wish to consider the following:

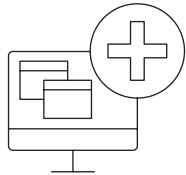
- » Ensure staff have control where possible, for example in how they do their work, flexible hours or home working
- » Think about how staff could participate more, for example by involving staff in planning new practices or activities
- » Encourage a good work/life balance and support opportunities for staff to socialise together – doing a shared activity for the community such as volunteering together or a team challenge can be a good way of building team morale and relationships
- » Praise staff for good work and help them feel valued and appreciated
- » Give line managers adequate time, training and resources to ensure they balance the aims of the organisation with concern for the health and wellbeing of employees<sup>23</sup>
- » Find opportunities for staff to learn new things and develop their skills
- » Encourage employees to take care of themselves. For example, promote support for employees who are carers
- » Depending on which questions receive poor satisfaction scores you may wish to rethink and improve managerial approaches to flexible working, team building and skill development

<sup>18</sup> NICE Guidance Mental wellbeing at work PH22 November 2009  
www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ph22/chapter/1-recommendations





06



# Workplace illness

25

*This section aims to find out the number of employees that have suffered an injury or illness caused or made worse by their job, and the level of presenteeism*

**Q 20. In the last 12 months, have you suffered from an injury or illness that was either caused or made worse by your current job?**

Yes

No

If yes, please specify if you wish to

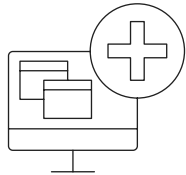
**Q21. In the last 12 months, have you gone to work despite feeling that you should have taken the day off sick?**

No, never

Yes, once

Yes, 2-5 times

Yes, more than 5 times



# Workplace illness

## Why is this important to employers?

This toolkit sits alongside HSE guidance that sets out the legal expectation for health and safety by employers to protect their staff.

Poor quality work or poor working conditions can cause ill health. Some employees attend work whilst sick, rather than taking sickness absence. This is known as presenteeism and can be a greater financial burden to businesses than the cost of sickness absence. It is estimated that the costs of presenteeism can be one and a half times greater than that of absenteeism.

Presenteeism is on the increase<sup>24</sup> and can result in significant loss of output and productivity. Attending work whilst sick leads to reduced productivity and increases the chances of passing on infectious illness to someone else. Presenteeism has been found to be higher in small organisations and is more likely when work load is high and operational matters take precedence over staff wellbeing.<sup>20</sup>

## How do I interpret the answers?

Consider taking action if employees report having an injury or illness that was caused or made worse by their work, or if employees are coming into work when they should have taken sick leave.

Mental health and musculoskeletal disorders are the two leading causes of sickness absence. Employers should use the evidence-based PHE BITC Mental Toolkit and the PHE BITC ARMA Musculoskeletal health in the workplace: a toolkit for employers, as road maps to improve their employees health. These toolkits are relevant to all employers, irrespective of their size, sector or stage on your journey. They are designed to help employers take simple, positive actions to build a culture that champions good mental and physical health and provide a greater understanding of how to help those who need more support. Toolkits can be downloaded:

[http://wellbeing.bitc.org.uk/sites/default/files/mental\\_health\\_toolkit\\_for\\_employers\\_-\\_small.pdf](http://wellbeing.bitc.org.uk/sites/default/files/mental_health_toolkit_for_employers_-_small.pdf)

[http://wellbeing.bitc.org.uk/sites/default/files/business\\_in\\_the\\_community\\_musculoskeletal\\_toolkit.pdf](http://wellbeing.bitc.org.uk/sites/default/files/business_in_the_community_musculoskeletal_toolkit.pdf)

## Employers should also consider:

- » Ensure appropriate and adjustable work equipment, such as office chairs and desks. Visit the Health and Safety Executive website for details of workstation assessments
- » Ensure you undertake regular workplace health and safety assessments and train staff on manual handling
- » Encourage a culture which promotes staff health and wellbeing and enables discussions about health to be open and supportive. Provide support and training for line managers with this<sup>21</sup>
- » Develop and promote an absence management policy which encourages employees to take sick leave when they are ill rather than attending work or in other words discourages presenteeism

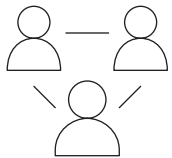
<sup>19</sup> Department of Health, (2012) Advice for employers on workplace adjustments for mental health conditions. Available from: [www.nhs.uk/healthatwork.co.uk/images/library/files/Government%20policy/Mental\\_Health\\_Adjustments\\_Guidance\\_May\\_2012.pdf](http://www.nhs.uk/healthatwork.co.uk/images/library/files/Government%20policy/Mental_Health_Adjustments_Guidance_May_2012.pdf)

<sup>20</sup> CIPD Absence Management Survey 2015: available from: [www.cipd.co.uk/binaries/absence-management\\_2015.pdf](http://www.cipd.co.uk/binaries/absence-management_2015.pdf)

<sup>21</sup> Workplace health: management practices. NICE guidelines [NG13] Published date: June 2015: [www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng13](http://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng13)



06



# Health and Wellbeing Support

27

*This section aims to find out what support employees would be interested in having and what options there are to provide this in the workplace to improve staff health and wellbeing as a whole*

**Q22. Would you like information or help to access any of the following health promoting activities at work? Tick all those that apply.**

	Extremely interested	Fairly interested	Not interested	Undecided/ not applicable
Health checks (inc. NHS Health Checks)				
Healthy eating/ weight management				
Stopping smoking				
Physical activity				
Advice on aches and pains				
Alcohol and drugs				
Mental health and stress				
Sleep				

**Q23. If there was one thing in your workplace that would improve your health, what would it be?**

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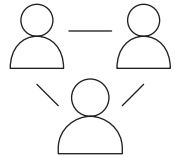
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06



# Health and Wellbeing Support

28

## Why is this important to employers?

Completing the HNA will have given employees an opportunity to consider what they are interested in when it comes to their health and wellbeing. Employees are far more likely to engage in activities that they have expressed an interest in so the responses from this section are a starting point for planning any workplace health activities.

## How do I interpret the answers?

You can see which health promoting activities have received most interest from employees. As a starting point you may wish to pursue the activities that have had the most ratings of 'extremely interested'.

## What do I do next?

- » Visit One You for advice on raising awareness of self-checking, healthy eating, stopping smoking, physical activity, alcohol, mental health and stress and sleep
- » Promote NHS Health Checks; a free MOT for adults 40-74 without a pre-existing medical condition. Contact your GP for details
- » You may also wish to provide signposting information on drug use
- » Supporting staff with aches and pains is important as musculoskeletal disorders are the second biggest cause of absence. Promote physical activity and risk assess tasks<sup>22</sup>
- » Consider what the organisation is willing to do, and potentially pay for, to support the wellbeing of the workforce. Then discuss with employees what they would be interested in doing to benefit their health and wellbeing
- » Poor health and wellbeing may be due to financial worries. Signpost employees to sources of advice with regard to debt<sup>23</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Health and Safety Executive Guidance, available at: [www.hse.gov.uk/msd/risk.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/msd/risk.htm)

<sup>23</sup> Examples include: Stepchange: [www.stepchange.org/](http://www.stepchange.org/)  
CAB: [www.citizensadvice.org.uk/debt-and-money/help-with-debt/](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/debt-and-money/help-with-debt/)  
National debtline: [www.nationaldebtline.org/](http://www.nationaldebtline.org/)



# Supplementary questions for line managers

*Line managers have a key role in promoting health and wellbeing in the workplace, and in supporting workplace health initiatives. This section aims to find out the level of line manager competency and confidence in promoting good health and wellbeing practices*

**Q24. How confident are you in discussing and/or providing support and advice, on any of the following, to those you directly manage?**

	Very confident	Quite confident	Neither confident or unconfident	Not so confident	Not confident at all
Sickness absence					
Return to work interviews					
Workplace adjustments					
Having difficult conversations					
Bullying or harassment					
Physical activity					
Healthy eating					
Mental health eg, stress					
Stopping smoking					
Alcohol consumption					
Sleep					

**Q25. What barriers prevent you from being able to promote and encourage good health and wellbeing practices to those you directly manage? Eg, being active, eating healthily, not smoking etc (tick all that apply)**

- Lack of knowledge
- My manager does not see it as a priority
- Lack of time
- I don't see the point
- The organisation is resistant to change
- I don't believe it's part of my job
- I already promote good practice to those I manage
- Lack of training



# Supplementary questions for line managers

## Why is this important to employers?

By identifying the barriers faced by line management to promoting health and wellbeing in the workplace, adequate training and systems can be put in place to encourage them to take a more proactive approach.

## How do I interpret the answers?

If line managers report feeling lower levels of confidence in some or all of the areas listed in Q24 then Q25 may reveal some reasons for this, which can be addressed.

## What do I do next?

- » Lack of knowledge or training can be addressed through accessing support. For example, ACAS provide a range of line managers training including mental health awareness for managers
- » Contact your local authority public health team for information on accessing support to promote healthy lifestyles
- » If the lack of line manager confidence to promote health and wellbeing is due to workplace culture, for example, 'the organisation is resistant to change' or 'I don't see the point' then consider what leadership could be put in place to support staff. This could include more staff/leadership consultation and discussion, opportunities for regular meetings and discussions on health and wellbeing
- » Provide opportunities for staff skills development, for example, by supporting them to lead health and wellbeing activities and interventions. Consider supporting a member of staff to become a workplace health champion. Visit the British Heart Foundation website for details



## Next steps

### Once the results have been collected:

- » Evaluate and rate how feasible each intervention is
- » Propose an action plan which includes descriptions, deliverable and a time line
- » Conduct an HNA a year later to see whether there has been a improvement
- » Propose an action plan which includes descriptions, deliverables and a time line
- » HNA should report to the senior management team and board, who should engage with staff on the action plan
- » The HNA action plan should be easily accessible to staff
- » Conduct an HNA a year later or every other other year (depending on organisational fit) to see whether there has been an improvement



# Appendix A

## Definition of 'good work' taken from the Marmot Review: Fair Society Healthy Lives 2010

1. Stable employment and minimum standards of employment protection
2. Element of individual control over work pattern, timescale, delivery
3. Appropriate balance of productivity and capacity
4. Fair salary reflecting level of productivity
5. Opportunities for skills development and learning
6. Prevention of social isolation, discrimination or violence
7. Good communication between staff and senior management
8. Support for carers and those with family responsibility
9. Support for those with health issues and impairments to remain in, and return to, work
10. Support for individual employee wellbeing by meeting basic psychological needs of self-esteem, self-efficacy, sense of belonging and meaningfulness
11. Marmot et al 2012. Fair Society, Healthier Lives. p112





# Appendix B

Further information to support analysis of question 19

## We can use personal initiative or judgement

### We can decide on the order in which we do things

If their work is demanding and employees feel that they have little control, this can increase stress. One of the six aspects of work that can be altered to reduce the risk of stress is 'control': that is giving employees more say where possible in the way they do their work For more information visit the HSE Management Standards on Stress.

If possible, and within the needs of the organisation, be flexible about work scheduling, giving employees control and flexibility over their own time. It is important also to recognise and praise good performance.<sup>28</sup>

### We can adapt my job roles accordingly to the workplace needs

### Negative feedback is provided in a constructive way

### We feel listened to

### The management show that they have confidence in the people who work for them

### Communication is good

## We can have 1:1 meetings with my manager

It is important to actively seek staff participation in decision making and promote employee engagement and communication. Consult regularly on daily procedures and problems. Value and acknowledge employees' contribution across the organisation. If practical, act on their input and explain why this action was taken. If employees' contributions are not acted on, then clearly explain the decision.<sup>28</sup>

If staff feel that the decision making process and treatment of employees is unfair, or in other words there is 'organisational injustice' this is associated with poor health including increased cardio vascular disease. Ensure any unfair treatment of employees is addressed as a matter of priority and line managers know where to direct staff towards sources of support.<sup>28</sup>

### There are opportunities to develop friendships

### People are open to sharing ideas

### There is good cooperation between colleagues

Workplace relationships are important. Having a high level of social support has been shown to reduce workplace stress.

Promoting team working and a sense of community is important to ensure employees feel valued and trusted by the organisation.<sup>28</sup>

### There is support for us if we need to provide informal care for a family member

Employees now have a legal right to request flexible working. One in every five working carers may end up reducing their hours or leaving employment if unsupported so it is important to consider how you can support staff who are carers, and staff generally, to maintain a work life balance. When implementing flexible working, balance the needs of the business with the workloads and needs of other employees.<sup>28</sup>

### In our own work, it is possible to learn new things and skills

People with less formal qualifications are at higher risk of poor health for a range of reasons. Learning throughout life is associated with higher wellbeing and a greater ability to cope with stress. Setting targets and hitting them can create positive feelings of achievement. This can also increase wellbeing by helping staff build and strengthen social relationships. Offering support and training to help staff feel competent is also a good way to ensure employees feel valued and trusted by the

organisation.<sup>31</sup> It is important to ensure that older employees are offered the same opportunities as younger staff, for example, to learn new skills

Improving digital skills is a key priority so staff and businesses can take advantage of technology, for example, to improve sales. Encourage and support all employees to access learning and development opportunities. This includes older employees or those with few qualifications or who may have received education and training some years ago. This includes where possible giving them the necessary time off for training.<sup>28</sup>