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# The New Post-Pandemic Age of Occupational Health and Wellbeing

# Current situation

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Most organizations will be combining remote and on-site working. Despite the embrace of a hybrid model, though, most organisations have only begun to think through and articulate the specifics of how to carry out a more permanent mix of remote and on-site working for all roles that aren't essential to perform on-site.

As many as 25 percent more workers may need to switch occupations than before the pandemic. The most disadvantaged workers may have the biggest job transitions ahead, in part because of their disproportionate employment in the arenas most affected by COVID-19.

Many employees are feeling anxious as a result. The sustainability of pandemic-style productivity gains might well depend on how organizational leaders address the anxiety their employees feel—and the associated levels of burnout.

## Current situation - McKinsey

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Disruptions will be highest in four arenas: on-site customer interaction, such as in retail; work in leisure and travel, including restaurants and hotels; indoor production and warehousing, which includes factories; and computer-based office work - low-wage, hourly, frontline service jobs.

COVID-19 accelerated a shift to remote work and virtual meetings. Even after the pandemic, most companies are planning to continue some form of work from home.

Business travel may be permanently replaced by virtual meetings, although the same will not be true for leisure travel and tourism.

E-commerce and other digital transactions, from restaurant delivery to telemedicine.

Automation and AI, with companies using technology to adapt to the new realities and planning to implement more technologies in the future.

# Good news

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- Growth in jobs that require socio-emotional skills, such as negotiation, influencing, and decision-making.
- New positions emerging because of COVID-19, such as remote-work coordinators.
- Hiring focusing more on skills
- Companies are reimagining themselves- embracing speed and flexibility and agility, and the flattening of hierarchies in an effort to make decisions faster and better.
- For workers, this can be an opportunity to move onto career pathways that offer greater upward mobility.
- For the economy, we could see higher productivity growth if we help workers make those transitions

# Current situation – Occupational Health

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- Occupational Health professionals well placed to advise employers and employees of the benefits of COVID-19 vaccines e.g. vaccine provision occurring at Jaguar Land Rover
- As roll out of the vaccine will take many months, it is important that OH professionals continue to emphasise to employers and employees that risk management using the hierarchy of controls and hygiene measures will remain essential during 2021 to keep the likelihood of exposure to COVID-19 as low as possible: “**hands, face, space**”.

# Current look forward issues for occupational health

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Scaling up the occupational health offer to facilitate:

- Return to offices for those working at home
- Improved mental health – particularly for those with existing mental health issues
- Managing employees with long Covid and return to work
- Presenteeism
- Travel health and vaccines - and changes with the new vaccine?
- Diversity and Inclusion - ensure workplaces reflect this
- Facilitating transition

Using a risk management approach

# Role for occupational health to “build back better”

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Leadership role to

1. Managing change – from restructuring, redundancy to home working
2. Sustainably managing stress, burnout and fatigue
3. Articulate benefits of diversity
4. Creating better quality work – “job design”
5. Developing a COVID secure health and wellbeing strategy

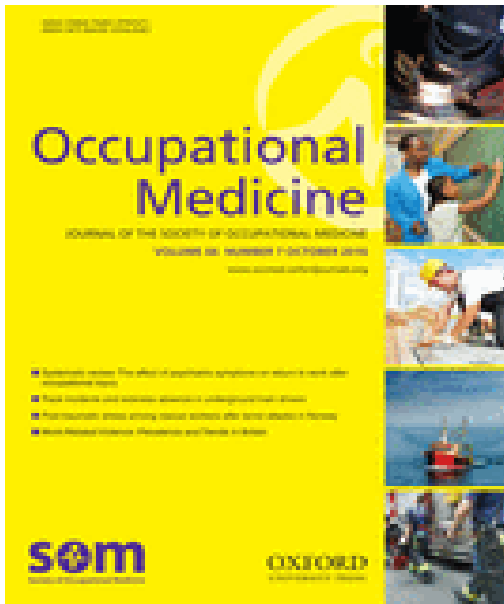
# OH Awareness Week - 28th June to 2nd July

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- Aiming to raise the profile of OH with business / with clinicians who may change to OH as a career
- [Resources | The Society of Occupational Medicine \(som.org.uk\)](http://som.org.uk)



# Encouraging research



Please submit articles via [om@som.org.uk](mailto:om@som.org.uk)

## Links:

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[What should Occupational Health Professionals know about Mental Health and COVID-19](#) written by Professor Neil Greenberg of King's College London

[Returning to the workplace after the COVID-19 lockdown toolkit](#) in partnership with CIPD, BITC, Mind and ACAS

[COVID-19 Return to work guide - For health professionals advising patients and employers](#)

[Sustaining Work-Relevant Mental Health Post COVID-19](#) produced in partnership with the Royal College of Psychiatrists and CIPD

## Links:

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[Small and Medium Enterprise focused risk assessment tool](#)

[Helping keep the high street safe in the pandemic](#)

[Understanding the use of face coverings, facemasks and respirators](#) in partnership with IOM, BOHS and CIEHF

All coronavirus resources including blogs on wide range of COVID topics: <https://www.som.org.uk/coronavirus-resources.php> (and COVID Statements here <https://www.som.org.uk/coronavirus-statements.php>).

Online Learning Zone: <https://www.som.org.uk/occupational-health-learning>