



Employee Wellbeing Research 2020

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PURSuing BEST PRACTICE

How work culture
is emerging with
wellbeing at its core



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Using wellbeing to reshape the world of work

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The Covid-19 crisis of 2020 has concentrated a decade worth of ongoing workplace trends into just a few weeks. Those running employee wellbeing strategies have found their work front and centre to keep workforces coping month after month during the most extreme collective change since the two world wars.

Growing trends picked up by REBA's annual *Employee Wellbeing Research*, now in its fifth year, have accelerated rapidly. Already, employers were concerned at how hard organisational change was hitting employee wellbeing. This research, conducted before the crisis, found that the share of employers citing organisational change as a risk to wellbeing increased 235% between 2019 and 2020. Linked to this, resilience/mental health workshops were the services set to see biggest growth within wellbeing strategies.

To move away from a state where work damages physical, mental, financial and social wellbeing, we need to radically rethink the role of wellbeing within the workplace. Unless we design wellbeing into work (as opposed to offering wellbeing benefits and programmes to support wellbeing), feelings of pressure, stress and being overwhelmed as well as musculoskeletal and obesity problems will continue to worsen.

We are individual human beings, not machines. To humanise the workplace is also to acknowledge differences between people and be inclusive and fair to all. Employee wellbeing has been used effectively to bring down previously often unnoticed prejudices. Women's health has received huge focus over the past year, with 59% of our respondents saying they plan to introduce menopause support in 2020 or beyond. This tactic means more women staying in work, as well as moving into or staying in leadership roles, which in turn shifts the culture of organisations.

Given the vital role wellbeing should play in reshaping work and jobs, it is not surprising that measuring effectiveness is receiving greater focus. This year, as many as 92% of our respondents said they use some form of management information to gauge the success of their wellbeing initiatives. However, most measures are proxy figures, such as employee engagement, rather than an attempt to see shifts at a strategic business level. In time, we may see more focus on how secure employees feel in their jobs, whether they feel a sense of purpose in their work, or feel their employer is a good citizen that exercises fairness and kindness. Risks also need to be measured and assessed more often – be they to business finances, workforce planning, governance and employer brand, as well as population data on non-communicable diseases, mental health and ageing.

To be sustainable, an organisation needs to be innovative and resilient, which will only happen with a good culture and employee experience. Wellbeing is absolutely at the core of achieving this.

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PURSuing BEST PRACTICE

In numbers: five key findings for 2020

Higher profile, more inclusive

Wellbeing programmes are becoming a defining feature of business' culture, helping to develop resilient, successful organisations.

Events in 2020 are set to push the workplace health agenda further towards centre stage. Employers have indicated that, even in the face of cuts and risk of recession, they are committed to wellbeing spend. The percentage of employers that deliver wellbeing consistently across their whole business has doubled since 2019.



Mental health focus intensifies

Senior leaders remain committed to addressing poor mental health and are gaining more in-depth understanding of its causes.

Employers are recognising that personal concerns, such as caring responsibilities, are sources of poor mental wellbeing alongside workplace issues like volume and pressure of work. There is also recognition of the impact that business issues, such as organisational change, have on employees' wellbeing.



Wellbeing scope expands

Gender-based health services as well as mental health are immediate priorities.


Expansion of wellbeing in 2020 focuses on improving financial wellbeing and supporting mental health and resilience. Women's wellbeing, particularly menopause support, is another area of focus, as is support for carers. Progressive employers are now more willing to tackle taboo subjects and create open cultures that promote inclusivity and enhance wellbeing.

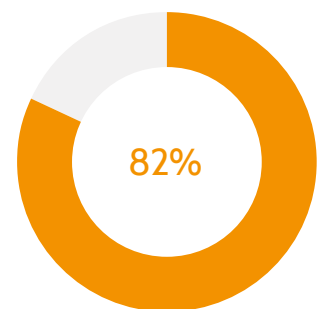


Benefits, culture and strategy join up

Insurance benefits are starting to integrate more closely with wider wellbeing strategies.

If benefits, culture and strategy are more closely aligned, this will boost the value of wellbeing and potentially reduce costs. Overcoming barriers such as siloed offerings and disjointed decision-making will also help to support this.

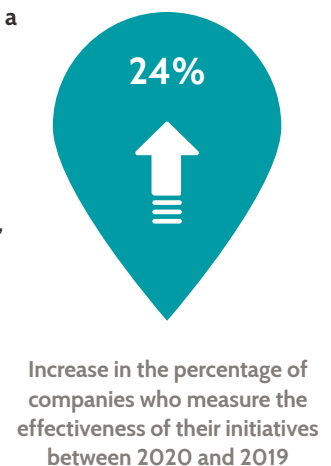
 Say insurance benefits and wellbeing are fully or partly integrated



Data drives decision-making

There is a growing appetite for a more data-driven approach to wellbeing and measuring effectiveness is on the rise.

However, organisations say they still lack usable data they can turn into actionable insight, or where data is available, the infrastructure or expertise to make it relevant. It's an area in which employers may have to invest further, so they can better explore the data and bring in skills to analyse information.



Wellbeing has landed, now let's more purposefully track its progress

Soraya Chamberlain

Director, Corporate
AXA PPP healthcare



“While the direction of wellbeing travel is good, we need to be smarter about evidencing progress.”



PPP HEALTHCARE

This the fifth edition of REBA's *Employee Wellbeing Research* report offers insight and guidance that will hold employers in good stead as they navigate through these turbulent times. Undertaken on the eve of the coronavirus outbreak, its findings – evidencing the good work employers are doing to safeguard their workforces' wellbeing – are more relevant now than ever.

And what have we learned? First and foremost, wellbeing has landed. Nearly two thirds (62%) of the benefits and HR professionals REBA polled say their organisations have put 'joined-up' employee wellbeing strategies into place – more than doubling the 30% who said that when the survey began in 2016.

Mind gains

Mental health is still the big issue. Well it should be, with respondents identifying a high pressure working environment and organisational change as the biggest risks to workforce wellbeing. Risks surely heightened by the coronavirus crisis. Not to mention time ticking down on Brexit.

Reassuringly, more than three quarters (77%) of those with wellbeing strategies have a specific focus on managing employee mental health. Typically, this includes strong, visible leadership, backed up by workforce training and support – 79% of employers with mental health strategies say their senior managers lead by example – making clear to employees that mental health is a priority for them and their organisation.

Minding the wellbeing gaps

Good too it is to see the wellbeing net widening to better meet employees' needs. For instance, while fewer than half (42%) of employers with a wellbeing strategy include women's wellbeing (for example, miscarriage and menopause), 45% say they're planning to do so going forward.

Health tech marches on

Health tech benefits continue to make their mark. The percentage of employers offering access to virtual private GP services has trebled from 12% in 2016

to 36%. With the impetus coronavirus has given to remote working, technology is bound to play an even bigger part supporting workforce wellbeing. Indeed, we know from our own experience that the number of GP consultations that members of our corporate clients' schemes have had through our Doctor@Hand service has more than doubled since the outbreak.

A concerted effort – backed by insight

Employers' commitment to integrating their health insurance and wellbeing benefits is heartening. The proportion of respondents who agree their complement and support each other has jumped to 82% from 68% last year. Reassuring too to see the vast majority (92%) employing management information to measure the effectiveness of their wellbeing initiatives – up from 74% in 2019. But demonstrating value remains a challenge. Only a fifth measure the ROI of programme costs against the likes of absence, recruitment and retention costs. Incomplete or poor quality data, lack of suitable platforms for data collection and lack of data analytics expertise are big impediments. Little wonder, then, that only just over half (53%) say they're confident they can interpret and understand the impact of their wellbeing programme's data on their organisation's wider business strategy.

So, while the direction of wellbeing travel is good, we need to be smarter about evidencing progress – and building on success. As we transition to a brave new normal way of working, an old truth rings true – good work works. Look after your employees' wellbeing and they'll look after you.

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A note about the 2020 survey:

The survey questions and findings in this report were compiled before it was evident that Covid-19 would hit in such a dramatic way. The very first few cases to hit the UK came just as we closed the survey. As such, the findings reflect a 'pre-Covid-19' world but still have enormous relevance, providing valuable insight into long-term trends among employers of their wellbeing provision for employees.

To stay as up-to-the-minute as we can, we have included additional relevant findings from REBA's snapshot survey, *Impact of the coronavirus crisis on pay, bonuses and employee benefits*. This was carried out between 31 March and 6 April 2020 and received 213 responses from REBA member organisations. See Appendix 1 for more details.

Interview: Professor Dame Carol Black



“Employers could share the action they have taken in response to certain problems and issues, and what the results were.”

By Maggie Williams

Professor Dame Carol Black won REBA's Employee Wellbeing Visionary Award in 2020. With a lifetime career in medicine and healthcare, she is a leading voice of reason, persuasion, and expertise in public policy on health at work.

Employee wellbeing has undergone a seismic shift since 2008 when Dame Carol published *Working for a healthier tomorrow*, her review of the health of the UK's working population.

“Most organisations now understand that having a physically and mentally healthy workforce is linked to engagement and therefore productivity,” says Dame Carol. However, while REBA's 2020 research shows that the majority of workforces now have some form of wellbeing strategy, there are still challenges to overcome.

“Employers often lack understanding about their risk profile. They don't know what percentage of their workforce suffers from anxiety because of financial problems, which employees may be affected by lack of sleep, or how many middle-aged female employees might be experiencing menopause symptoms, for example,” she explains.

Offering generic services, such as nutrition advice or employee assistance programmes, without, as Dame Carol says, “knowing the numbers” can limit the effectiveness of a wellbeing strategy.

Drawing up a health and wellbeing risk profile, she adds, “allows employers to put in targeted interventions that can then be measured.” This more scientific approach to employees' health and wellbeing will help to raise it further up the corporate agenda. “Companies have a system for measuring financial capability, for example, but don't apply the same rules to collecting baseline data around health and wellbeing.”

As well as enabling individual employers to develop more effective health and wellbeing strategies, Dame Carol believes that targeted strategies and detailed measurement will also benefit the wider workforce. “We could start to build up a database of evidence. Employers could share the action they have taken in response to certain problems and issues, and what the results were.”

She identifies changing work patterns and employment models, such as the shift towards gig working explored in Matthew Taylor's 2017 report *Good work: the Taylor review of modern working practices*, as another challenge.

“There needs to be an inclusive approach. Organisations tend to think they don't have responsibility for [non-permanent staff and gig workers] because they can go off and work for another employer. However, if businesses change that mindset and see it as beneficial to build up a pool of workers who are productive, fit, healthy and could therefore contribute more to their organisation, it would be a positive move for themselves and the individuals.”

Probably the biggest immediate challenge to wellbeing at work will be the long-term impact of the Covid-19 crisis, which could precipitate permanent change to workplaces and employment practices. However, Dame Carol is confident that health and wellbeing will continue to be a priority. “I feel positive that employers' focus on wellbeing, particularly around mental health, won't be lost. It also paves the way for more trusting and compassionate relationships, and even more positive working cultures.”

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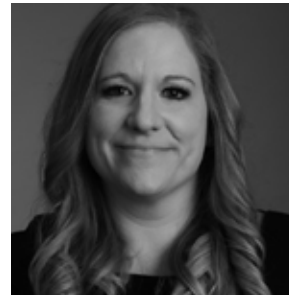
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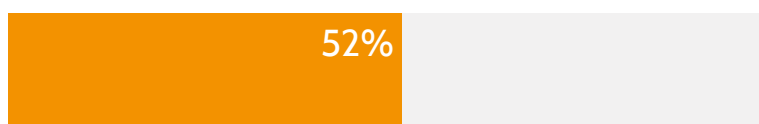
Rima Evans
Research Editor

Executive Summary

Wellbeing strategies are becoming a central pillar of resilient organisations and part of company culture

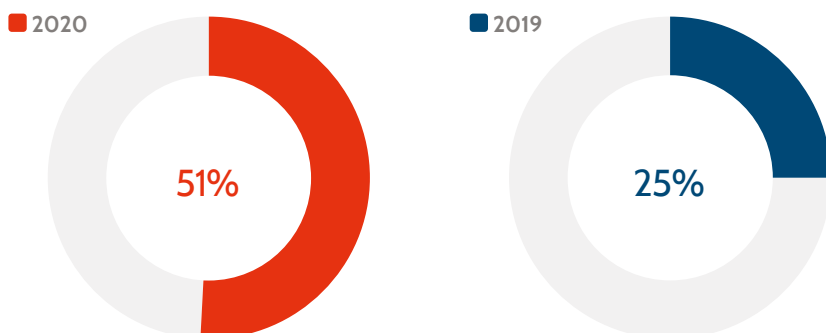


The percentage of employers with a joined-up strategy for managing employee wellbeing



The percentage of employers without a joined-up strategy that plan to introduce one this year

Employers are developing more consistent and inclusive strategies



Employers whose strategies are applied consistently for all staff

Workplace and personal concerns are key mental health risks

Employers say the top three issues causing mental health wellbeing issues are:



Work stress caused by deadlines or workload



Personal problems such as relationships or caring responsibilities



Major life events such as bereavement or divorce

In the past five years, the percentage of employers with wellbeing schemes has more than doubled – they are now embedded into the employer offer. The Covid-19 crisis has further cemented their status as a fundamental business driver, underlining the relationship between business success (even survival) and good employee health. According to a separate REBA snapshot survey,¹ 63% of employers expect to continue plans to expand or introduce wellbeing support, amid the pandemic.

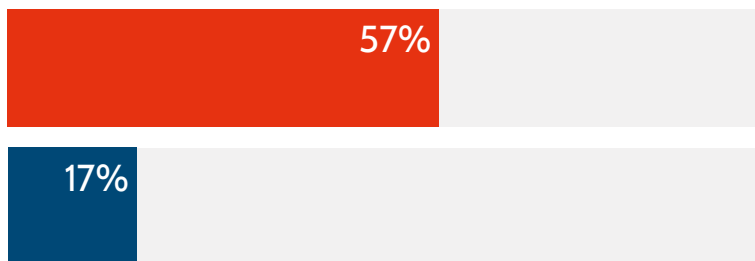
1. Impact of the coronavirus crisis on pay, bonuses and employee benefits, Second snapshot survey, REBA, 31 March to 6 April 2020.

Employers are making their wellbeing strategies more inclusive, ensuring they are applied consistently across all parts of the organisation. More than half of employers now have an all-staff wellbeing scheme. Making certain there are no employees excluded from wellbeing provision is a policy that will become increasingly important in future if working patterns become more varied post-Covid-19, and there is a surge in remote home working.

Boards continue to flag concerns about mental health – a huge 89% of employers say mental health is their leaders' top or second biggest wellbeing concern. The main trigger factors for poor mental health include work stress, day-to-day personal problems and life-changing events. This indicates strongly that mental health strategies must address both workplace and personal concerns if they are to really meet employees' needs.

Organisational change is posing a significant risk to employee wellbeing

■ 2020 ■ 2019

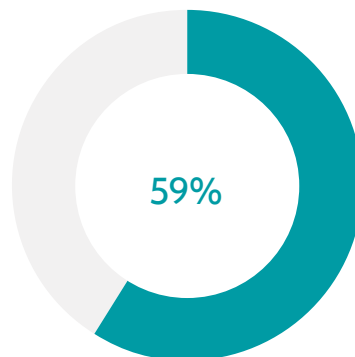


Percentage of companies that see organisational change as a major risk to employee wellbeing

Organisational change is hitting employee wellbeing hard. The share of employers that cite organisational change as a risk to wellbeing increased 235% between 2019 and 2020. That may have reflected the turbulence employers faced as the UK prepared to leave the EU, events which have fast been overtaken by Covid-19.

Employers recognise the importance of gender-based health needs

■ Employers that plan to introduce menopause support this year or later down the line



Women's wellbeing is predicted to be one of the top five growth areas of health provision in 2020. While provision for women experiencing the menopause is gaining traction, support for carers, many of whom will be women, is also high on the agenda. A total of 52% of organisations have indicated they plan to introduce this either in 2020 or in the future.

Employers are focused on financial wellbeing and resilience for 2020 and beyond



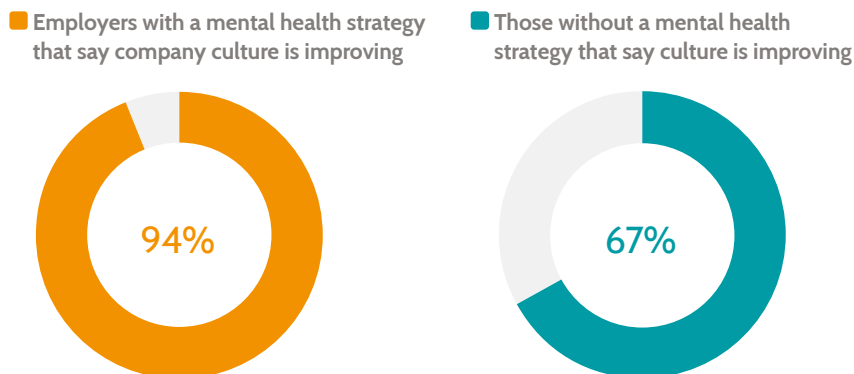
Intend to introduce financial education/guidance in 2020 or later



Intend to introduce mental health/resilience workshops in 2020 or later

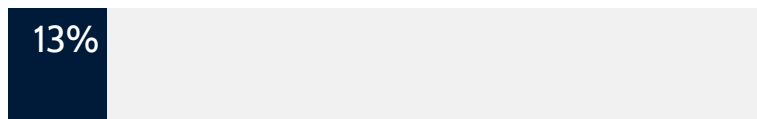
Financial education and mental health/resilience workshops are the two wellbeing initiatives set for the biggest expansion in 2020 and beyond. This is timely, as these are two areas of wellbeing likely to continue to be a priority for employers keen to support staff through the Covid-19 crisis.

Positive culture change is more prevalent among employers with a dedicated mental health strategy

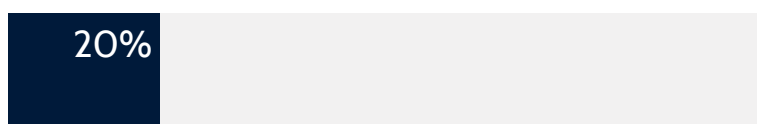


Companies that have a mental health strategy have leapt ahead of those without a strategy in place, in terms of the progress they have made in creating more open, supportive corporate cultures. It highlights the importance of a targeted and coherent approach when it comes to addressing mental health.

Despite progress, mental health continues to be a stigmatised issue for an eighth of employers



Employers that report staff and managers are not able to discuss mental health without fear of ridicule or stigma



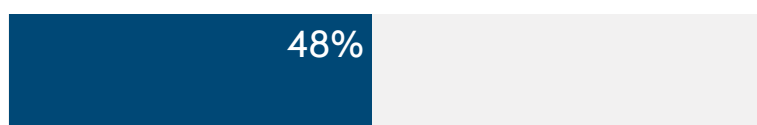
Employers unsure as to how a discussion about mental health would be received

Suffering in silence seems to be the only option for a significant portion of employees. Although many businesses have made great strides in supporting mental wellbeing in the workplace, evidently there is still a way to go in breaking down barriers and lifting stigma.

The role of line managers in employees' mental health support is being recognised



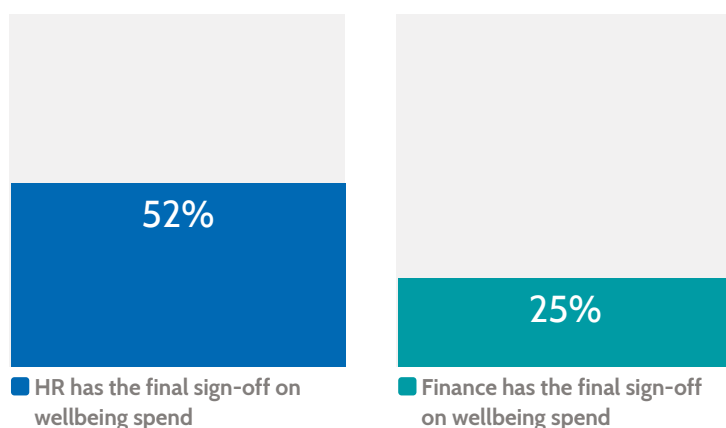
Employers offering mental health training for line managers in 2020



Employers offering mental health training for line managers in 2019

The sharp increase in the percentage of organisations providing training for line managers is welcome. Line managers are employers' main support base. Equipping them with knowledge and tools to assist with mental ill-health in the workplace forms a first line of defence in fighting it.

HR departments are in charge of wellbeing spend



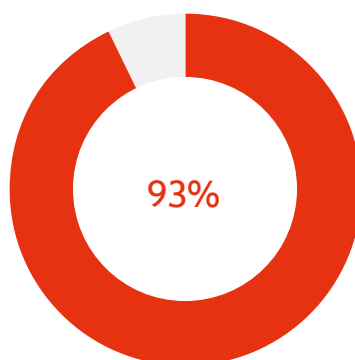
HR is most likely to hold the purse strings for wellbeing budgets. This makes sense since it's also most often the HR team that manages wellbeing schemes and will be best placed to know where resources can be most usefully directed. Median spend on wellbeing this year is between £1 and £25 per employee each year.

Employee assistance programmes (EAP) remain hugely popular but packages can differ markedly

■ Employers that provide an EAP

The top three EAP services provided as standard:

- telephone counselling
- grief and loss support
- support around family issues



EAPs continue to be a mainstay of wellbeing benefits provision. However, there are diverse services on offer and, particularly in the light of Covid-19, employers may need to review whether current provision meets future needs. For example, while 64% of EAPs offer critical incident support as standard, a further 13% offer this to employers at additional cost.

Most employers have yet to link wellbeing initiatives to areas of high insurance cost claims

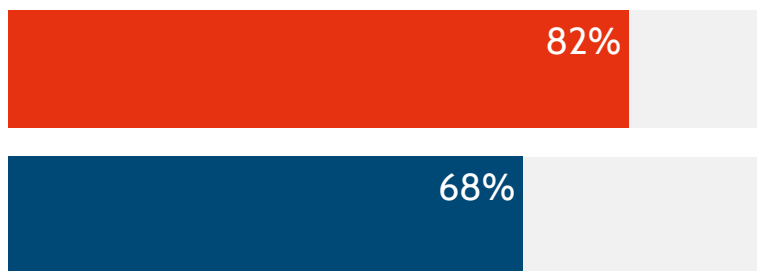


Employers that have not taken any specific action to address risks associated with higher insurance cost claims

The link between employers' wellbeing strategies and their insurance claims are not as closely aligned as they could be. For example, although musculoskeletal conditions incur the highest aggregate cost claims, it is only the sixth most popular area to be included in employers' wellbeing programmes.

Organisations are taking a more joined-up approach to their insurance benefits and wellbeing plans

■ 2020 ■ 2019



Employers whose insurance benefits and wellbeing strategy are fully or partly integrated

Our data suggests that insurance offerings are beginning to integrate more closely with other parts of employers' wellbeing offering. This is a positive trend – if the two sets of benefits are more complementary, it can boost the value of both. Cost, siloed product offerings and internal management of insurance and wellbeing benefits are seen as the biggest barriers to integration.

Evaluation of wellbeing plans is gaining ground

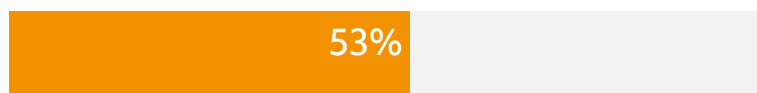
■ Employers that used management information to assess the effectiveness of their strategies in 2020

■ Employers that attempted to measure effectiveness of wellbeing activity in 2019

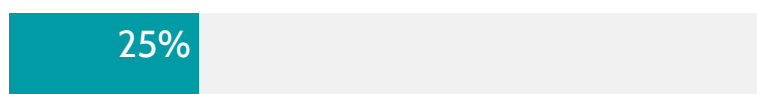


The effectiveness of wellbeing strategies is being more widely measured. The most common measures are 'proxy' figures, such as employee engagement (72%), absence rates (70%) and participation rates in wellbeing programmes (66%). We know, however, this is still a complex area for employers and that evaluation measurements do not always adequately convey the full benefit of strategies.

Employers are gaining a better grasp of the impact of wellbeing initiatives on staff



Employers that have a fair understanding of the impact of wellbeing initiatives on staff

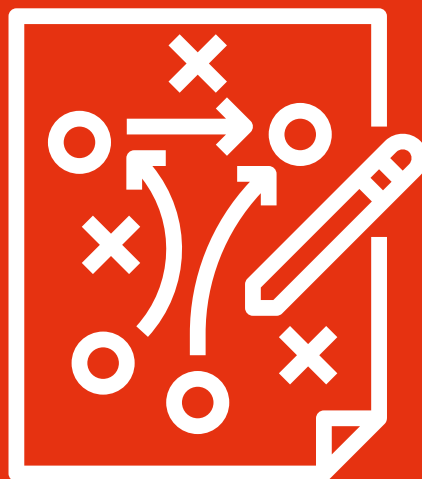


Employers that have a good understanding of the impact of wellbeing initiatives on staff

Organisations are building a better understanding of the effect of wellbeing services on their employees. This is despite metrics to measure individual initiatives being underdeveloped. Health and safety remains the category most widely measured (74%), followed by musculoskeletal conditions (58%) and flu (53%).

1. Wellbeing Strategies

Wellbeing a critical pillar of employer strategy



Wellbeing a critical pillar of employer strategy

The wellbeing at work agenda continues to accelerate. Two thirds of employers now have strategies in place and half of those without a scheme plan to introduce one in 2020. Employers are applying strategies with increased consistency and extending the benefits of wellbeing plans to non-permanent staff.

Wellbeing strategies in place at almost two thirds of organisations

The percentage of employers with a joined-up policy for managing employee wellbeing has more than doubled in the past five years and stands at 62%.

On the face it, our data shows a slight fall in the share of organisations with a strategy compared with last year (68%). However, this shouldn't detract from the predominant growth of workforce wellbeing schemes seen since 2016.

The overall trend that has emerged since our first survey in 2016 is upward. The evidence is that the majority of employers now recognise the importance of employee wellbeing and the benefits to be had for individuals and organisations alike.

This year's data, showing a slight drop in the percentage of organisations with a scheme in place, is probably a reflection of sampling variance and not necessarily indicative of a significant slowdown.

What is a joined-up or defined wellbeing strategy? This is a planned and proactively managed scheme that is consistently applied in an inclusive way across a workforce. It's in contrast to a set of disparate or disjointed wellbeing initiatives introduced in an ad hoc way and with no overall plan in mind.

The private sector is now just ahead of the curve when it comes to employee wellbeing

For the first time since 2016, the percentage of private sector organisations with a joined-up wellbeing strategy (64%) exceeds that of the public sector (63%) – although only just.

When it comes to workforce wellbeing, the private sector has made huge strides in narrowing the gap between itself and the public sector, whose own adoption of the health agenda has been spurred on largely by central government.

Figure 1.1

Organisations with a joined-up employee wellbeing strategy (For 2020 n=309)

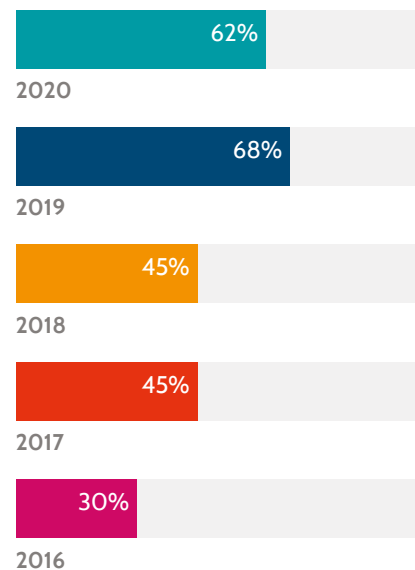
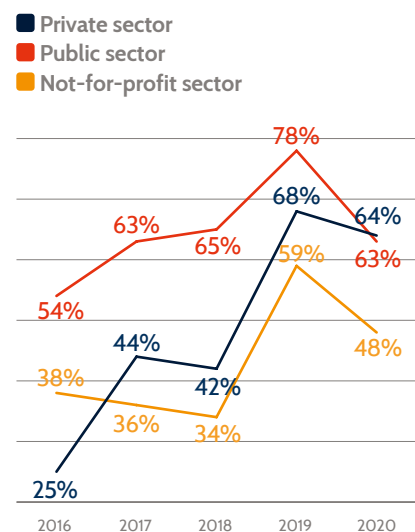


Figure 1.2

Organisations with a strategy for managing employee wellbeing – by sector (For 2020 n=309)



In 2016, only a quarter (25%) of private sector employers had a strategy for managing the wellbeing of their workforce, putting them firmly behind their peers in both the not-for-profit and public sectors. Just five years later, 64% of this group have a strategy in place, equivalent to an increase of 156%.

That private organisations, whose sights are always keenly on the bottom line, are now slightly ahead of public sector employers shows how persuasive the business case for investing resources into employee health has become.

Part of the drive to boost employee wellness is no doubt to curb costs, particularly when it comes to controlling the financial impact of sickness absence. A 2019 XpertHR survey on absence² found the median annual cost of sickness absence to be £517 per employee. This figure, striking as it is, may not even reflect the full cost of sickness absence. Most employers that participated in this research included only the salaries of absent employees in their calculations so additional costs, such as lost productivity or output, have not been factored in.

The business case for wellbeing at work extends beyond financial considerations. Employers recognise it also has a role to play in meeting key business objectives, particularly around recruitment and retention. A 2019 survey from Glassdoor³ found that 77% of people would consider a company's culture before applying for a job there, including wellbeing factors such as worklife balance or healthy relationships between co-workers. Employers risk missing out on critical talent if they don't draw up strategies that meet these expectations.

Wellbeing is also one of the eight categories measured in the Best Companies survey, which is used for *The Sunday Times* Best Companies to Work For accolade. To stand out in today's competitive labour market, employers need to show that they are serious about looking after the health and wellbeing of their employees.

More than half of employers without a wellbeing strategy plan to introduce one in 2020

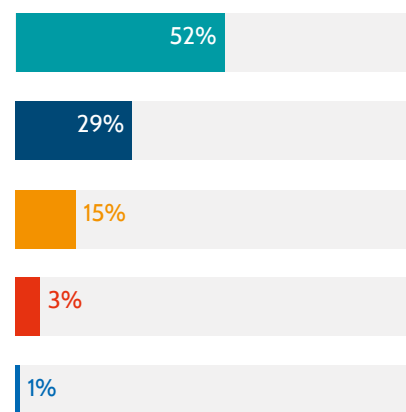
Of the 38% of organisations that do not currently have a joined-up wellbeing strategy in place, more than half (52%) plan to introduce one this year. Nearly a third (29%) tell us they will introduce a strategy at some point in the next few years. Just one in 100 told us they have no interest in establishing a wellbeing strategy for employees.

These figures chime with our long-term finding that employee wellbeing strategies are on the increase. Indeed, they are now mainstream – it is very unusual to find an employer who has no interest in promoting wellbeing among its workforce.

Figure 1.3

Are you likely to introduce a joined-up wellbeing strategy at any point? (n=116)

- Yes – we will introduce a wellbeing strategy in 2020
- Yes – we will introduce a wellbeing strategy in the next few years
- Yes – it is on our wish list but is not currently part of our plans
- Yes – but we do not know how to go about doing it
- No – we are not interested in introducing a wellbeing strategy



2. Absence rates and costs: 2019 XpertHR survey, XpertHR, May 2019. Available at: <https://www.xperthr.co.uk/survey-analysis/absence-rates-and-costs-2019-xperthr-survey/164430/>

3. New Survey: Company Mission & Culture Matter More Than Salary, Glassdoor, July 2019. Available at: <https://www.glassdoor.co.uk/blog/mission-culture-survey/>

That said, interventions and initiatives that meet identified priorities and reshape culture and practice in a meaningful way rather than serving as a tick-box exercise will be key. 2020 may be the year that sees wellbeing strategies as the determining factor of employers' future success and sustainability as workers' normal routines, working practices and even pay and reward structures have been thrown into disarray by unprecedented economic volatility.

Covid-19 update

Majority of employers resist taking a 'fair weather' approach to wellbeing strategies in the face of economic shock

The progress made in the health and wellbeing arena is at very real risk of unravelling amid the economic havoc brought on by measures to manage Covid-19. However, almost two thirds of organisations – 63% – say they will continue to expand their wellbeing strategy or pursue their plans to introduce one.

REBA's snapshot survey, *Impact of the coronavirus crisis on pay, bonuses and employee benefits*,⁴ carried out at the start of April, showed that even in the face of unexpected financial pressure, most employers are protecting employee wellbeing initiatives. Some respondents even said they had brought forward wellbeing plans, indicating how vital the health-related agenda is for many businesses and the prominence it is now given.

Where employers remain optimistic for their future prospects, it seems right that many would choose to respond to a major global health crisis by maintaining – or even ramping up – their focus on employee health.



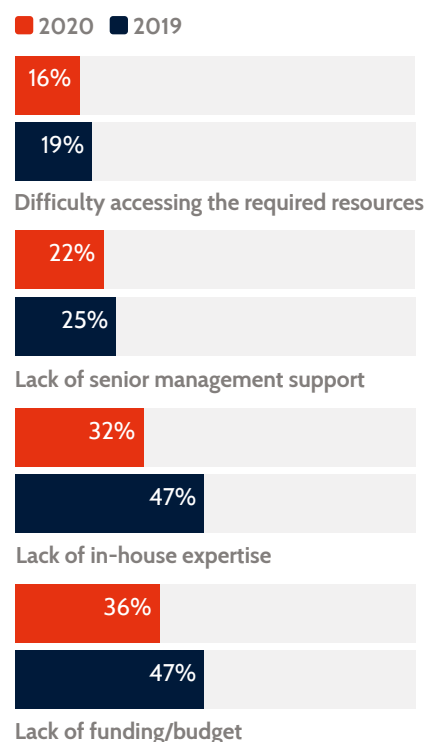
63% of employers say they will continue to expand or introduce a wellbeing strategy, despite the economic pressures caused by Covid-19.

Lack of money and expertise continue to stand in the way of wellbeing strategies

Among respondents without a joined-up wellbeing strategy, just over a third (36%) said a lack of budget has been a preventative factor (see Figure 1.4). A similar number (33%) said that a shortage of in-house expertise has held them back, while a fifth (22%) cited a lack of support from senior management. The percentage of respondents facing each of these barriers has fallen since last year.

Figure 1.4

What has prevented you from introducing a wellbeing strategy up to now? (2020 v 2019) (for 2020 n=116)



4. *Impact of the coronavirus crisis on pay, bonuses and employee benefits*, Second snapshot survey, REBA, 31 March to 6 April 2020.

The data indicates that barriers persist when it comes to putting in place employee wellbeing strategies, although there is evidence they are being addressed. The rapid growth of wellbeing as an area of investment means that many employers have been playing catch up and are only now able to redirect funding to this provision. It has also taken time for organisations to recruit and train the specialist personnel required to lead and manage wellbeing agendas. The fact that the number of strategies being introduced in organisations continues to grow suggests that employers are now starting to see the fruits of their efforts.

Wellbeing strategies also extend to gig workers and the supply chain

This year we asked respondents to tell us which groups of workers are covered by their wellbeing strategies. Unsurprisingly, all employers extend coverage to their permanent employees. However, more than half (55%) also ensure contracted staff receive the same access to wellbeing initiatives as their permanent employees. And around one in 10 respondents extend their wellbeing strategies to freelancers and gig workers (12%) or supply chain staff (8%).

The off-payroll working regulations (IR35), which will introduce new responsibilities for private sector employers from April 2021, look at factors such as employee benefits when determining whether workers should be considered as permanent employees for tax and National Insurance purposes. So, it is understandable that many employers are cautious about extending certain wellbeing benefits, such as subsidised gym membership and cycle to work schemes, to non-permanent members of staff.

However, even taking these regulations into account, it should be possible to ensure these workers are managed so that their physical and mental wellbeing are safeguarded in the same way as permanent employees. It's a matter that has gathered steam since Covid-19 hit, exposing all groups of workers to acute levels of stress and fear. However, even before the pandemic, there was a growing appetite among non-permanent employees for employers to offer more support in how they managed their health.

A 2019 report by Leapers⁵ (a freelance community) found that a quarter of the 500 freelancers surveyed felt they would benefit from having access to their employers' wellbeing programmes and mental health resources and tools. Furthermore, fewer than one in 20 believed that their employing organisation had their emotional wellbeing in mind but 36% would actively welcome their employing organisation taking some shared responsibility for it. Just fewer than one in five (18%) did not want them to be involved.

Figure 1.5

To which groups does your wellbeing strategy extend? (n=193)



5. Leapers: Research Study 2019. Available at <https://leapers.co/huru>

Coronavirus pandemic: what are the lessons for wellbeing at work?

EXPERT VIEW

John Philpott

Director
The Jobs Economist



“There may now be a case for introducing annual statutory audits of employee wellbeing practice in addition to standard health and safety legislation.”

Covid-19 has rendered 2020 a year of pestilence and death rather than health and wellbeing. But what are the chances that lessons learnt during the pandemic make this a moment when society takes steps toward building a better future?

The answer will depend on the extent to which both employers and public agencies make a genuine commitment to treating spending on wellbeing measures as a vital investment with long-term benefits rather than a burdensome cost to the bottom line.

We have known for almost 30 years that globalisation made some sort of viral pandemic inevitable. The uncertainty was when, not if. From now on, just-in-case must be the guiding principle for our health and care systems. As Covid-19 shows, the human and economic cost of not being prepared for pandemics far outweighs that borne to build resilience.

For the workforce as a whole, it's finally time to walk the HR talk on absence management. Sickness absence and presenteeism are problems of equal standing but far too many businesses are so fixated on curbing 'sickies' that staff who are genuinely poorly feel under pressure to soldier on.

Even in the toughest lockdown phase of the pandemic there were numerous stories of bosses questioning the need for employees to self-isolate, increasing the risk of spreading the virus. There may now be a case for introducing annual statutory audits of employee wellbeing practice in addition to standard health and safety legislation in order to shine a light on businesses that are not up to scratch.

In the meantime, existing regulation should be sufficient to require employers to protect workers until we have a widely available effective vaccine against the virus.

Most workplaces will have to be physically reconfigured to ensure adequate social distancing. To assist with this, working from home should be encouraged regardless of formal lockdown guidelines. Comprehensive sanitary procedures must become the norm, at a minimum including free provision of hand sanitising materials to employees. In some cases, regular deep cleaning of workplaces and/or use of equipment to check the temperature of people entering buildings might also be necessary.

Such measures are costly but unavoidable if employees and visitors are to be kept safe. Where the short run cost to organisations is too great to bear, especially for smaller businesses, public support in the form of subsidy payments may need to be considered.

Can we expect government and employers to truly heed the lessons Covid-19 has so painfully delivered? Despite frequent homilies on how 'everything will change', one can't be confident that old ways of thinking won't reassert themselves as soon as the memory of the initial lockdown begins to fade.

Public debt is set to soar as a consequence of combating the virus (even optimistic projections put the likely fiscal deficit for this year alone at close to £300 billion) and organisational balance sheets are under critical stress. The temptation to resort to short-term cost cutting will be immense. All one can hope is that enough of us call this out as false economy so that genuine change is forthcoming.

Just over half of employers make strategies available to all staff in all roles and locations

A total 51% of respondents apply their wellbeing strategies consistently, meaning that plans are offered across the board with no employees excluded. When we asked employers if that was the case 12 months ago, only 25% agreed.

Just one respondent in every 100 (1%) tells us there is no consistency at all in how they apply their strategy, a decrease from 6% last year.

Having a wellbeing strategy is one thing and putting it into practice is another. It is very easy to set out progressive policies and actions on wellbeing but sometimes these promises are not followed through. Or, they are applied for some groups of staff but not for others. It is encouraging to see so many of our respondents now applying their wellbeing strategies more consistently across their organisations to maximise their benefit for individuals and at corporate level.

In organisations where achieving consistency continues to be a challenge, comments from our respondents appear to show that this is mainly an issue when employees work across a number of different locations. This can create difficulties in terms of communication, culture and cost. For example:

“As a global organisation with a limited budget, we find there are many wellbeing initiatives we can only apply in certain countries. We are working towards a global framework under which these local initiatives can fall, but this is far more time consuming than having one overarching strategy.”

International Benefits Lead, technology sector

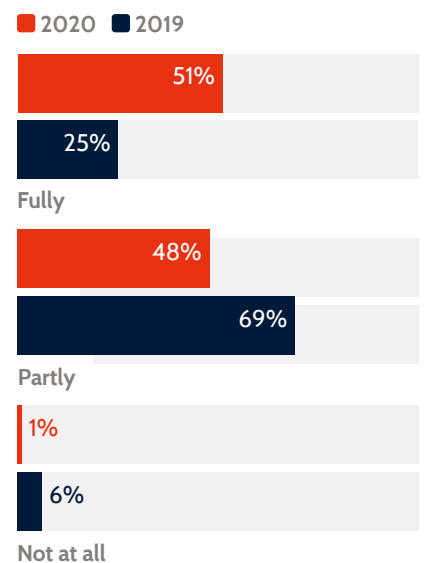
Achieving consistency also relies on staff ‘on the ground’ delivering wellbeing policies and messages as intended. For example:

“Our biggest challenge from a consistency perspective is our dependence on line managers to deliver many of the benefits from the strategy. With over 330 sites across the UK and multiple industries inside one business, we place a high focus on ensuring people across the whole organisation feel the benefits of our approach.”

Alan Millbrow, Head of Wellbeing and Recognition, Three

Figure 1.6

Is your organisation's wellbeing strategy applied consistently across your organisation? (n=309)



Of course, rigid consistency is not always the goal for all employers. Some organisations deliberately seek some local variation, rather than trying to deliver the same policies and practices across all their locations. For example:

“Our locations are spread out and local initiatives vary depending on the appetite for them in each location. Our national approach is consistent but we have a devolved model – we issue guidance in the main and only have a few ‘must do’ instructions. Therefore, while we have a national approach to wellbeing that is accessible to anyone, we do not control local regional activities.”

Project Officer, charity sector

Mental health continues to be employers’ number one wellbeing priority

After rising to the top of employers’ list of priorities last year, mental health continues to be the number one wellbeing issue being addressed by our sample of employers – 94% of respondents now include it within their overall wellbeing strategy, up from 83% last year.

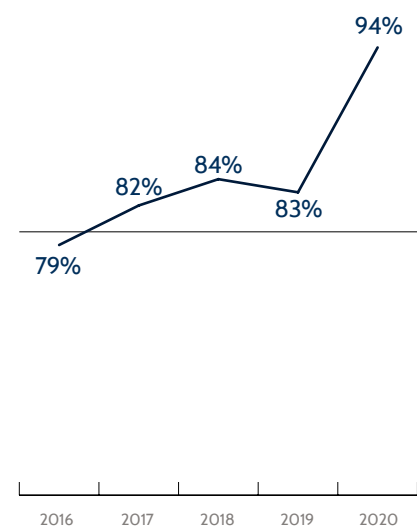
Almost every single area of wellbeing has seen a jump in coverage in this year’s survey (see Figure 1.8). Around nine in 10 (87%) organisations now address their employees’ physical activity, up from 74% in 2019. Worklife balance is now included by four fifths (80%) of respondents, compared with two thirds (68%) a year ago.

Even the areas with the lowest penetration are covered by a decent number of employers. Almost a third (31%) address healthy ageing, almost a quarter (23%) consider neurodiversity and one in seven (15%) include gender dysphoria within their wellbeing strategies.

For the first time this year, we asked respondents if they included the areas of men’s health and women’s wellbeing within their wellbeing strategies. More organisations currently address men’s health (53%) – examples include fertility and suicide awareness – than women’s wellbeing (42%), which includes areas such as fertility and menopause.

Figure 1.7

Organisations addressing the area of mental health within their wellbeing strategy (n=193)

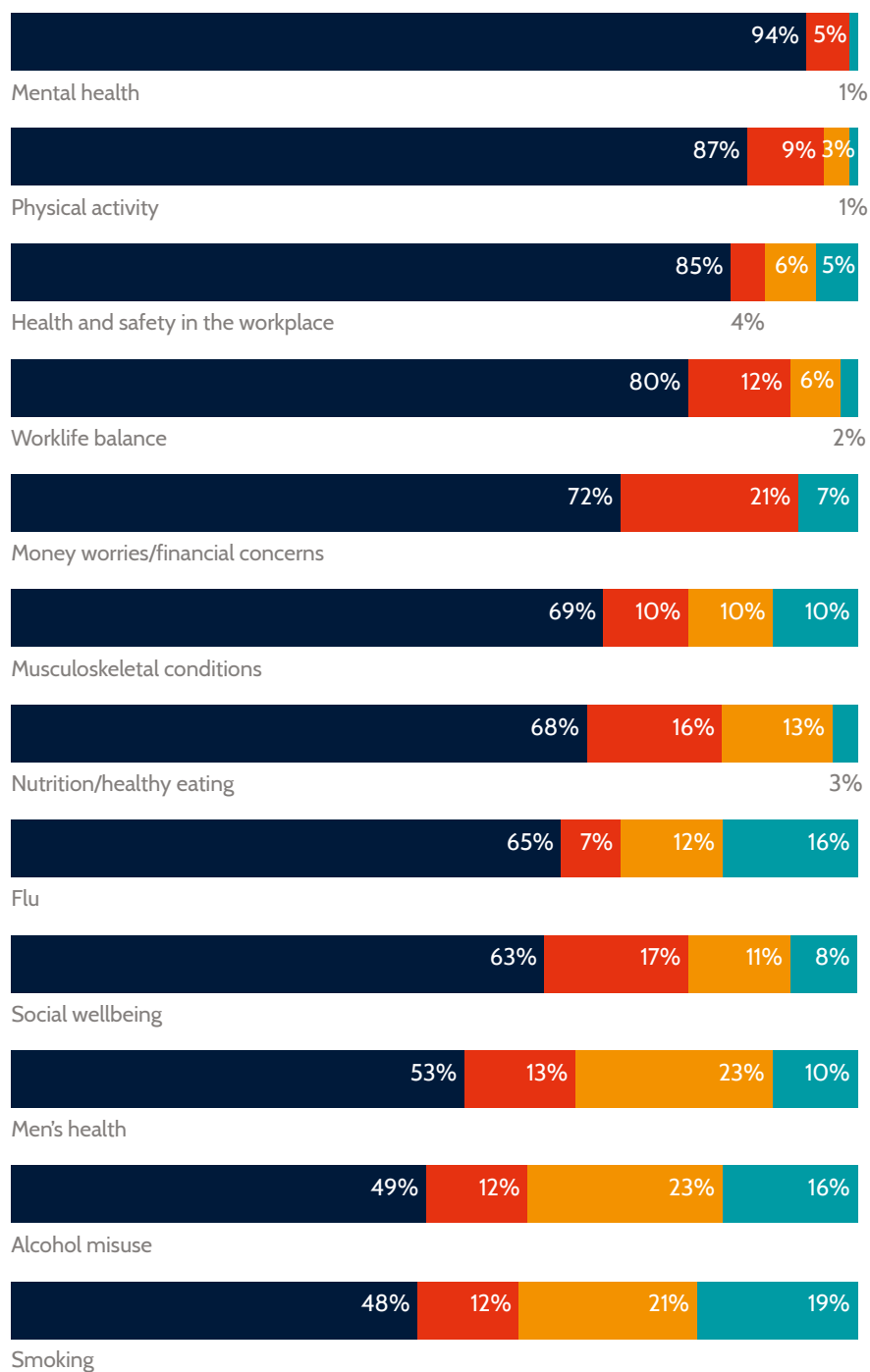


1. WELLBEING STRATEGIES

Figure 1.8

What areas of wellbeing do you currently address within your wellbeing strategy, and which do you plan to add in the future? (n=193)

- Currently included
- Plan to add in 2020
- Plan to add at some point
- No plans to include

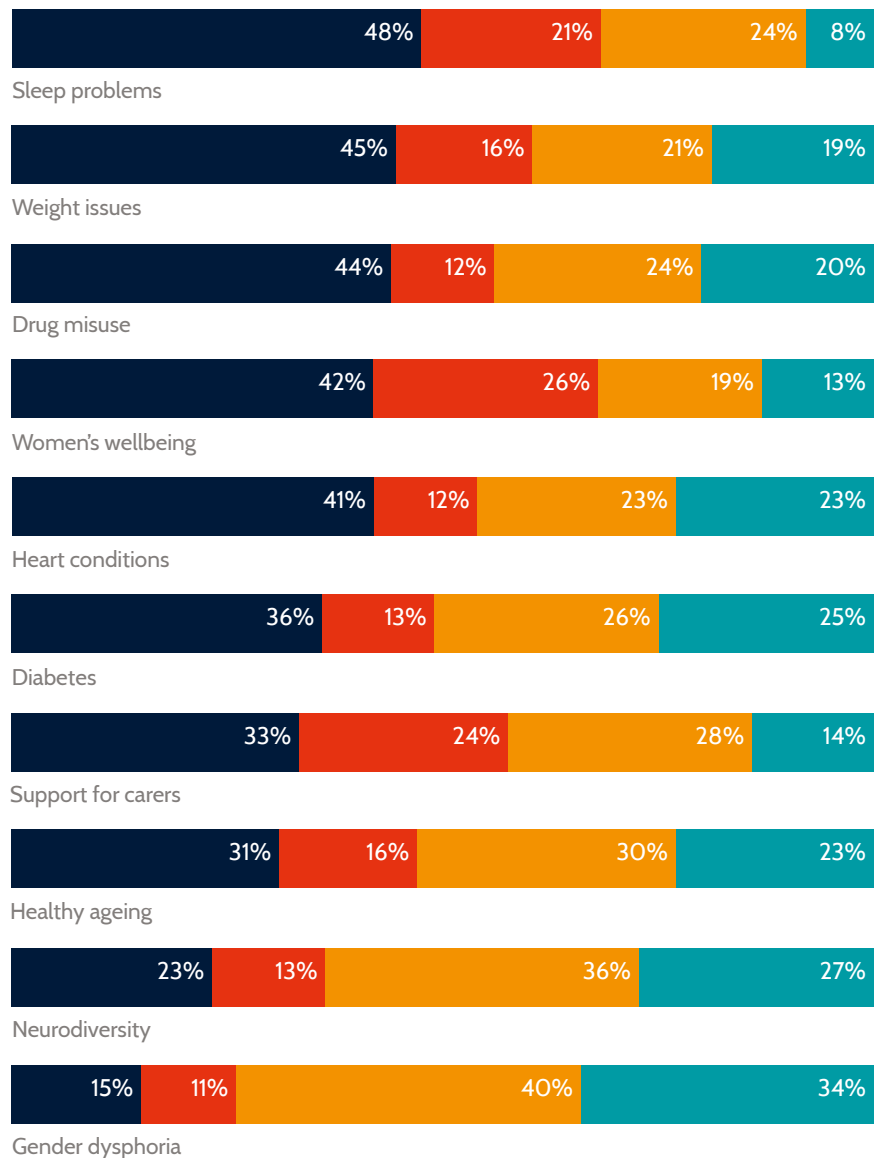


1. WELLBEING STRATEGIES

Figure 1.8 (continued)

- Currently included
- Plan to add in 2020
- Plan to add at some point
- No plans to include

What areas of wellbeing do you currently address within your wellbeing strategy, and which do you plan to add in the future? (n=193)



While women's wellbeing is currently given attention by less than half of employers, this is an area that should see significant growth in future. More than a quarter (26%) plan to start addressing this issue in 2020, while a further fifth (19%) tell us they plan to incorporate this area into their wellbeing strategy at some point.

Using flexible working initiatives to help employees get a better worklife balance

PRACTITIONER VIEW

Tina Samson

Reward Program Director,
EMEA & APAC
Molson Coors



“Our employees told us that they wanted us to do more to help balance their time between work and personal lives.”

Molson Coors' culture and wellbeing strategy is based on active listening. We adapt our strategy in response to what employees tell us is important to them. Our employee forum, wellbeing team and mental health champions have a big impact on what we introduce and how we ensure we adapt to the needs of our diverse workforce.

Research shows that people increasingly value working flexibly over some traditional elements of a reward package. While we already considered ourselves to be a relatively flexible employer, we didn't really highlight this as a benefit. Our employees told us that they wanted us to do more to help balance their time between work and personal lives.

We developed our Moments that Matter programme to encourage a better balance and to recognise the 'moments' that mean something to each individual employee. This is part of both our diversity and inclusion (D&I) and wellbeing strategies, to ensure we attract and retain the best talent.

The first two parts of the programme focused on recognising that our people work long hours, so we wanted to help them with balance; and acknowledge that different things are important to different people. We also wanted to ensure that employees' holidays were truly for rest and relaxation, so we introduced summer hours and Life Leave in 2019.

Summer hours gave people the flexibility to work extra hours during the week, saving them up to use as time off either as a half-day every week, or a whole day every fortnight. To encourage inclusivity, we asked employees to share pictures of how they'd spent their summer hours.

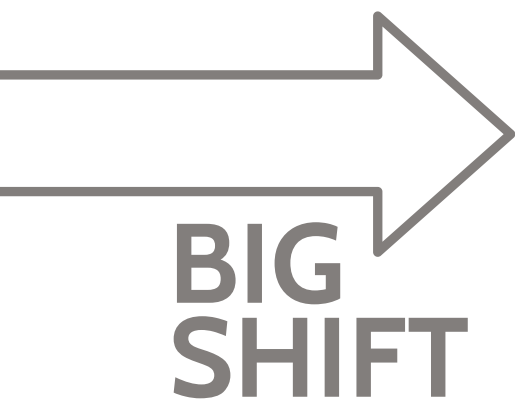
We surveyed employees afterwards asking whether they would like us to run the programme again, and how they had used it. An overwhelming number of staff valued this benefit and voted to run it again next year.

Life Leave gives employees up to two weeks' paid leave a year, in addition to their holiday entitlement, for significant moments in their life or to meet short-term demands, such as urgent childcare that might normally have been covered by taking annual leave. We haven't put in any hard and fast rules on how this leave can be used, it is left to the discretion of line managers. They know best what matters to their people.

We have also created a parent and carers' group to help listen to their challenges and understand how we can best support them. Our plans remain fluid and we will develop the programme further to include other areas of our D&I strategy.

Our approach to flexibility and our embedded wellbeing strategy helped us to adapt quickly to transition a large number of employees to home working during early 2020. The support and tools we have in place, from our mental health pathway to our long-standing EAP service, our mental health app and network of mental health champions, have ensured we have been able to respond quickly to employees' needs.

Having wellbeing embedded into our culture means that it's now naturally the first thing we consider in our plans, and a natural part of our conversations.



45%

Proportion of employers planning to introduce women's wellbeing services in 2020 and beyond.

A total of 42% of organisations say they cover women's wellbeing under their health strategies. With 26% saying they plan to introduce these services this year this could lead to 68% coverage in 2020 alone.

Key growth areas in 2020 include women's wellbeing and support for carers

The top five growth areas in wellbeing provision for this year are predicted to be:



1. Women's wellbeing



2. Support for carers



3. Money worries/
financial concerns



4. Sleep problems



5. Social wellbeing

It is encouraging to see that a quarter of employers (26%) plan to address women's wellbeing in 2020 as part of their overall strategy, adding to the 42% that already have initiatives in place.

In recent years, there has been huge emphasis on ensuring the workplace is a level playing field for both sexes, in terms of pay and opportunity. The way women's wellbeing (for example, menopause, dealing with miscarriage, period pain) is managed at work is a key factor in supporting women to perform at their best. A 2019 survey from Salary Finance⁶ showed that on average British women took 1.8 days off work in 2018 due to period pain or period-related symptoms. On the other hand, they attended work for 6.7 days on average despite struggling with such pain or symptoms.

6. Women's wellbeing at work, Salary Finance, April 2019. Available at: <https://www.salaryfinance.com/uk/blog/womens-wellbeing-at-work/>

Meanwhile, women over the age of 50 are the fastest growing group in the workforce. A survey from the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD)⁷ revealed that three out of five working women between the ages of 45 and 55 experiencing menopause symptoms admit it has a negative impact on them at work. Nearly two thirds said it reduced concentration levels.

With many employers and their line managers uninformed about the symptoms and physical effects of the menopause – and how they can best support women workers – business and employer organisations are responding by offering help and guidance.

Advice is available from Acas at acas.org.uk/menopause and the CIPD has launched a series of resources and guides available at cipd.co.uk/knowledge/culture/well-being/menopause.

Another notable predicted growth area for 2020 is financial wellbeing. This has become an area of significant interest in recent years as a growing research base has shown the negative impact money worries can have on employee health and performance at work.

Salary Finance's survey, *The Employer's Guide to Financial Wellbeing 2019-20*, highlighted that 36% of employees are worried about money, with damaging consequences for individuals and organisations. The report found anxiety around money is linked to sleeplessness and poor mental health as well as reduced focus at work. Given the scale of this issue, it is no surprise that a fifth of our respondents are looking to provide financial wellbeing support for their employees in 2020. A number of new suppliers of financial products and advice for employees have also entered the market in recent years, giving employers more options when it comes to how they wish to address this area.

Amid a steady rise in the number of organisations addressing the mental health of their employees it makes sense that social wellbeing has also been marked out as a particular area of growth for 2020. Social wellbeing at work is the extent to which employees feel a sense of belonging and social inclusion. Those connections and friendships have an important part to play in promoting good mental health, according to the charity the Mental Health Foundation, so employers are right not to overlook this issue. Even in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, which accelerated a switch to remote working and took away face-to-face interaction, some employers have found innovative ways to continue to forge social ties – see our case study on page 28.

7. Majority of working women experiencing the menopause say it has a negative impact on them at work, CIPD, March 2019. Available at: <https://www.cipd.co.uk/about/media/press/menopause-at-work>

Emotional wellbeing plays a key role in creating healthy workforces

PRACTITIONER VIEW

Julie Cridland

Health and Wellbeing Lead
(Employee Experience)
Aster Group



“Ensuring our people feel connected and well is a huge part of our culture.”

Two years ago, we made the decision to focus our attention and resources in one key area – mental health. We signed the Time to Change pledge, created an action plan that focused on tackling the stigma still associated with mental health and started training our own people as Mental Health First Aiders (MHFAs).

In just two years we had trained more than 130 MHFAs.

That sparked a positive organisational conversation that led to breaking down barriers and our people starting to realise there is no shame in having a conversation about mental health.

What's really helped drive our plan is the huge amount of support and investment we've received from our Executive Board (EB) and leaders, with two EB members and a number of our leaders trained as MHFAs.

We expanded our training and awareness programme to include stress and anxiety, self-compassion and resilience sessions run by Dorset MIND. We also started delivering breakfast sessions on mental health for our frontline teams and training days for our leaders.

In January this year, we took wellbeing on tour across all our offices to launch our new wellbeing offer. Under this, we have broadened mental health to include social wellbeing under the banner 'Emotional Wellbeing' and introduced two new strands: 'Physical Wellbeing' and 'Financial Wellbeing'.

The importance of building social ties should not be underestimated and can be a major factor in how well we feel emotionally. Ensuring our people feel connected and well is a huge part of our culture, so we actively look for opportunities to help facilitate this through initiatives like our 10K step challenges, charity fundraising activities, meet-and-eats and volunteering days.

Although the health and wellbeing of our people has always been a priority for us, the current Covid-19 pandemic has seen us ramp up our work on this.

We realised that with the majority of our people working from home and some employees on furlough, it was crucial to try and maintain a sense of togetherness.

We quickly created a "Keeping well and feeling connected" programme, switching classroom-based mental health training to virtual sessions, live streaming mindfulness sessions and hosting fun virtual quizzes, not just for our employees but their families too.

We've generated new digital wellbeing channels to encourage our teams to continue to socialise, collaborate and feel connected. From a digital book club and a gardeners' channel to a sleep hub, the channels have been well received. We also launched a parent zone on our intranet to support those balancing caring commitments at home with workload, and we worked with Dorset MIND to host webinars on looking after young children during the pandemic and dealing with anxiety during this time.

We have worked with our MHFAs to roll out our Furlough Buddy Programme, which provides weekly wellbeing calls to furloughed employees until we are able to welcome them back to work.

Our commitment to our people's emotional and physical wellbeing is only strengthening, and we look forward to launching our financial wellbeing programme over the next 12 months.

2. Leadership and Culture

Empowering action to create healthy and positive work environments



Empowering action to create healthy and positive work environments

Wellbeing strategies enjoy endorsement from the very highest level of the organisation – the boardroom. But with businesses experiencing highly perilous times, the pressure is on for employers to translate that support into effective action to better manage their identified key risks of mental health and stressful working environments.

Employee wellbeing continues to retain top level support

Just over two thirds (69%) of respondents report that their boards support employee wellbeing strategies, similar to the findings from last year and 2018 when we first included this question. There is a gradual rise in the share of organisations where senior management is actively driving the wellbeing agenda – 12% this year compared with 9% last year and 8% in 2018.

Every indicator suggests that senior management now recognises the importance of employee wellbeing and is prepared to support this agenda either financially or by providing the specialist personnel required. Most boards have now bought in to the evidence that higher levels of engagement and job satisfaction among employees will lead to better performance and improvements to the bottom line.

Furthermore, senior managers are also starting to pay attention to the sustainability and responsible investment agenda, which places emphasis on companies' environmental, social and governance practices (ESG) as well as their financial performance. Being able to demonstrate concern for employees' wellbeing gives progressive employers a way to stand out from the crowd while also providing value for shareholders.

Employee mental health is the number one concern for boardrooms

Mental health is by far and away the board's biggest wellbeing concern – more than two thirds (67%) of respondents believe this is senior management's highest priority when it comes to employee wellbeing, with almost a quarter (22%) ranking it in second place (see Figure 2.2).

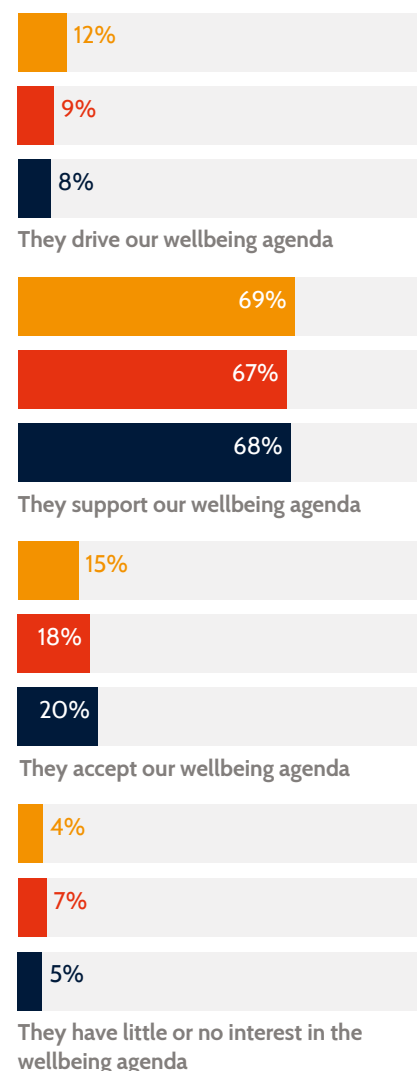
Almost a quarter (23%) put physical health above all other wellbeing concerns and around one in 20 (6%) cite financial wellbeing as the number one priority. Social wellbeing comes in fourth, with one in 33 respondents ranking it as the board's biggest concern.

The data here provides further evidence that mental health has become the central pillar of employee wellbeing at most organisations and that senior management is helping to drive this agenda. Two-and-a-half years on from the publication of the seminal report, *Thriving at work: The Stevenson/Farmer review of mental health and employers*, it appears its overarching message – that employers can and should act quickly to prevent people having to leave work with mental health problems – is getting through to organisations' top decision makers.

Figure 2.1

How committed is your board to supporting employee wellbeing at your organisation? (for 2020 n=299)

2020 2019 2018



Supporting staff in a personal way to enhance social wellbeing

PRACTITIONER VIEW

Yvonne Slater

Group Pensions and Benefits Manager
MS Amlin

“The personal aspect of work has become much more important as a result of lockdown.”

Like many office-based companies, the Covid-19 pandemic meant that MS Amlin had to change its employees' ways of working at incredible speed in March 2020.

The crisis has inevitably had an impact on our wellbeing benefits – we had been in the process of reviewing our wellbeing strategy more broadly before the crisis started. The most immediate effect was building up a surplus in our healthcare trust during the months of lockdown. We are still waiting to see if we experience a spike in use once health facilities are fully open again.

A major priority for us has been the social wellbeing of our staff. With colleagues based at home rather than in our offices, we've been very conscious of the need to keep in touch, recreate social networks and ensure we look after employees' mental health.

As a business, we use the social networking tool Yammer, which gives us a way to continue to engage our social networks, as well as a platform where our CEO can post blogs and talk about how the business is responding. It also opens up a channel for people to be able to tell us how they are coping and discuss any concerns.

We introduced weekly 'huddles' using video conferencing during lockdown to help us understand at team level how people are coping and feeling.

The personal aspect of work has become much more important as a result of lockdown. While some employees were in shared households with outside space, others were in a flat on their own which meant they were very isolated. We had to look closely at the impact of that on an individual and think about how we as an employer can support people, no matter what their personal circumstances.

The volume of work our staff are doing is also an important consideration. Early in the pandemic, we saw an increase in the amount of time people were working. We really want to make sure that colleagues still take time off to relax and recharge, particularly given the intense period of work they have been through.

We had introduced a holiday purchase scheme for the first time just before the crisis started. We've had to carefully consider our policy on refunds – deciding whether to give a refund is a philosophical debate as much as a financial one.

It will still be some time before we can identify all the long-term effects of Covid-19 on our working practices.

We've had feedback from some employees saying that they are finding the lack of a commute a major benefit, but it's also important that we think about how to keep social wellbeing and personal connections front of mind if staff are not office-based. That might involve using tools such as Yammer to simply ask, "how are you?" without there being a work purpose behind it. The last few months have made us realise the importance of just checking in with colleagues.

However, the findings also signal that leaders see mental health as posing the biggest risk for their organisation, a position that hasn't changed since 2018, despite growing numbers of organisations including mental health in their wellbeing schemes. In its latest *Health and Well-being at Work* survey,⁸ the CIPD warns that many workplaces still need a "more systematic approach to preventing and managing psychological risk."

This may be the case and is backed, in part, by our own results reported in Chapter 3 looking at whether mental health strategies are having any effect in reshaping workplace cultures (see page 41). For example, employers that have implemented a mental health strategy say their approach is changing company culture for the better. This is less the case when it comes to organisations without a formal strategy in place.

Senior managers' concern around employee mental health will remain acute during 2020 and beyond, as the psychological fallout of Covid-19 is keenly felt. There will be many factors contributing this, not least the effect of lockdown periods, which according to *The Lancet*⁹ can cause psychological stress and symptoms including low mood, poor concentration, anxiety, emotional exhaustion and post-traumatic stress symptoms. Mental health will be a greater risk for organisations with employees working on the 'front line' who have had to interact with, manage or treat patients with Covid-19.

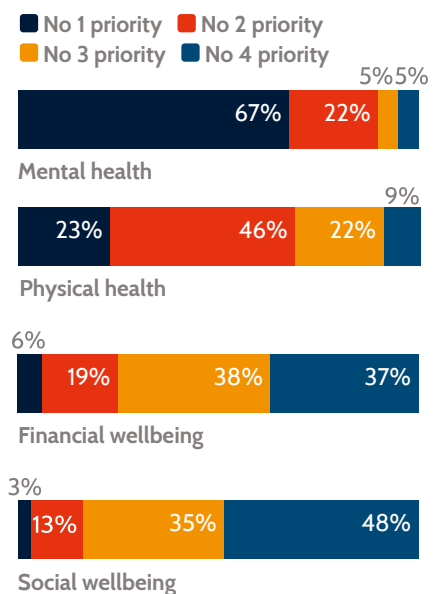
Meanwhile, physical health also remains a key priority – and rightly so. Again, the CIPD's *Health and Well-being at Work* survey¹⁰ found that musculoskeletal injuries (for example, neck strains or back pain) and acute medical conditions (stroke, heart attack and cancer) are both commonly in employers' top three causes of long-term absence. Musculoskeletal injuries are also cited in the top three causes of short-term absence by more than half of employers. In fact, according to the Health and Safety Executive,¹¹ work-related musculoskeletal disorders account for 29% of all working days lost due to work-related ill-health.

So, it is important not to lose sight of the big impact that physical ailments also have on the workforce.

When it comes to financial wellbeing and social wellbeing, it's not that surprising they are generally ranked as lower priority by boards and senior managers when compared with such core areas as mental and physical health. It doesn't mean these two issues are being overlooked, far from it. Our results on page 26 show that both financial wellbeing and social wellbeing are among the top five growth areas for 2020. Leading employers will be joining the dots, fully cognisant that both these issues feed in to – and play a part in – the mental health agenda.

Figure 2.2

Which areas of employee wellbeing are your board most concerned about? (1=highest priority) (n=289)



8. *Health and Well-being at Work*, CIPD, March 2020. Available at <https://www.cipd.co.uk/knowledge/culture/well-being/health-well-being-work>

9. Brooks SK et al. (2020) *The psychological impact of quarantine and how to reduce it: rapid review of the evidence*. The Lancet. Available at: <https://bit.ly/2MVPE3j>

10. *Health and Well-being at Work*, CIPD, March 2020. Available at <https://www.cipd.co.uk/knowledge/culture/well-being/health-well-being-work>

11. *Work related musculoskeletal disorder statistics (WRMSDs) in Great Britain, 2019*, Health and Safety Executive, October 2019. Available at <https://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/causdis/msd.pdf>

A new approach to health and wellbeing in a Covid-19 world

PRACTITIONER VIEW

Dr Steve Iley

Chief Medical Officer
Jaguar Land Rover



“The pandemic hasn’t changed our fundamental view of employee health and wellbeing. But it has reinforced that it is everyone’s responsibility.”

Health and wellbeing are embedded in Jaguar Land Rover’s culture, and we have a well-established ‘mind, body, life’ approach.

But Covid-19 has affected employees’ health and our wellbeing practices throughout our global network of factories. We have used an evidence-based approach to learn from experience and applied the learnings as the pandemic moved round the world.

In May 2020, we reopened our Solihull factory in the UK and built our first Range Rover under socially-distanced conditions. We took a ‘day in the life’ approach to employees’ health and wellbeing, thinking about what would be in their minds coming back to work, from arriving on-site and during their time at work to when they went home.

Before returning to work, both Jaguar Land Rover and the employee signed a charter to commit to a new way of working in the Covid-19 environment. We assessed all of our workers to see if they were vulnerable, and to understand other needs, such as childcare. Then we could agree if it was appropriate for an employee to return to work.

On every worker’s first day back, they were welcomed in the car park by their senior manager, who explained what would happen during the day and talked through changes in the factory. Being met by someone that employees know and trust is really important.

We also defined processes such as hand-washing and temperature-checking and offered every employee a reusable face visor, which we also produce and deliver to key workers across the UK. If needed, we could also carry out employer-referred testing with the NHS.

Good communication has been vital. We take a multi-modal approach, combining emails, videos, podcasts and face-to-face briefings. However, two of our most effective means of sharing information are our ‘Your JLR’ app, and wellbeing website. These are open source, so anyone, including non-JLR employees, can access them.

The pandemic hasn’t changed our fundamental view on employee health and wellbeing. But it has shown that it is everyone’s responsibility, and also reinforced our CEO’s vision of Jaguar Land Rover as being one family. The UK team supported its colleagues in China with video messages in January, and vice versa when the pandemic reached the UK.

Covid-19 has accelerated our development of digital wellbeing. Health surveillance and checks can now be carried out remotely, for example, rather than face-to-face. It has also changed some of the information that employees share with us, as well as the types of health surveillance that we carry out. For example, people would have had no reason to tell us about certain medical conditions in the past because it wasn’t relevant to their job. Now, that same information might be essential to ensure that we can protect them.

A pandemic was a known risk for us but planning only takes you so far. You have to evolve as the situation changes. We will watch, evolve and learn increasingly efficient processes for the future, monitoring metrics locally and globally. That will inform any changes we make for the longer term.

Employers say high pressure environments and organisational change remain the biggest workforce risks when it comes to health

More than two thirds (69%) of respondents are concerned about the impact of a high pressure or high intensity working environment on the wellbeing of their employees, echoing findings from both last year (73%) and 2018 (73%).

Well over half (57%) of employers are also worried about the potential impact of organisational change, such as expansion, restructures and merger and acquisition activity, which is a significant increase compared with last year when only 17% indicated this was a concern.

Staffing levels also now appear in the top three most common workforce risks, with just under half (43%) citing it as a worry. Again, this is a leap up from last year when understaffing was cited as a business concern by 22% of respondents.

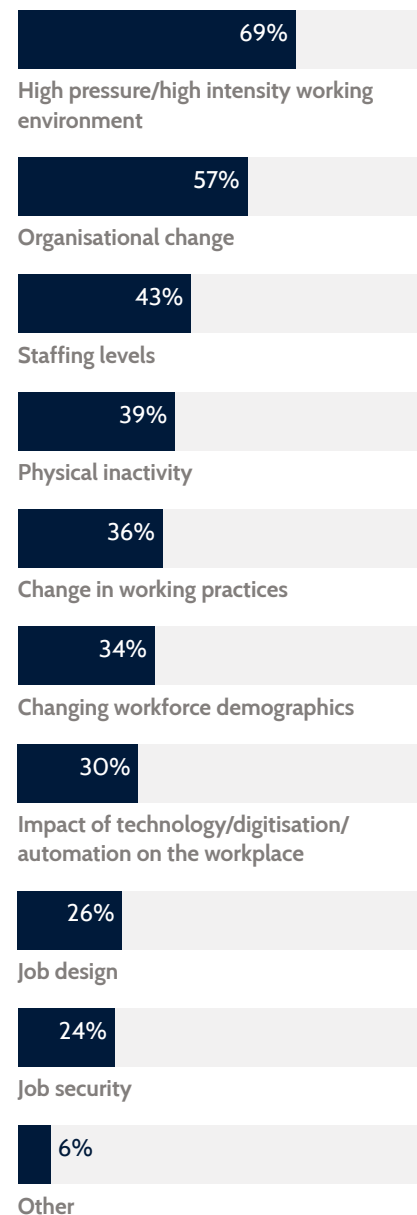
This year, for the first time since 2018, physical inactivity has been pushed down from its position of being the second highest business risk. Nevertheless, 39% of organisations still consider it to be a cause for concern.

The results here chime with the overarching theme of employers' increasing concern about the mental health of their employees. Given that stress and anxiety flourish when workers are faced with highly pressured environments, it is no surprise that employers consider it a major risk. And stressful working conditions are quite prevalent among UK employers.

One in four UK workers report working under intense and stressful conditions and around 12% report feeling "under excessive pressure", says a CIPD study published last year. *The UK Working Lives*¹² report, which measures the quality of jobs along seven dimensions, found that when it comes to health and wellbeing at work, the UK sits 16th in the survey's list of 25 comparator countries. This suggests that employers in this country could radically improve the quality of their employees' jobs by paying more attention to how their design affects physical and mental wellbeing.

Figure 2.3

Thinking about employee wellbeing in your organisation, what are the main business or workforce risks that are causing you concern? (n=303)



12. *UK Working Lives*, CIPD, 2019. Available at: <https://www.cipd.co.uk/knowledge/work/trends/uk-working-lives>



BIG SHIFT

235%

The rise in the share of employers that say organisational change is a big business risk when it comes to employee wellbeing.

For 2020, 57% said this was the case, compared with only 17% in 2019, a steep increase of 235%.

95%

The percentage increase of employers that cite staffing levels as a major workforce risk in terms of their health.

Last year, 22% of respondents said understaffing was a worry compared with 43% this year. This represents a rise of 95%.

The fact that organisational change and staff levels were cited as much greater threats to employee health in this year's survey is entirely predictable. Economic upheaval and turbulence brought about by factors such as Brexit meant many businesses faced highly challenging times throughout 2019.

Recruitment became a struggle due to a combination of skills shortages, low unemployment and EU workers leaving the UK as a result of Brexit, undoubtedly placing pressure on staffing levels. In addition, some organisations will have restructured or even relocated to protect themselves as much as possible from Brexit-related economic headwinds.

Both these factors are associated with poorer wellbeing. Organisational change, for example, can trigger anxiety, reduced morale, heavier workloads and subsequently burnout, according to Stanford University.¹³

Unfortunately, the outlook for this year looks worse. The pressure points cited by employers have already been – and will continue to be – exacerbated by the effects of Covid-19.

Boardrooms, as well as middle and line managers, will have to be very mindful of the strain placed on staff during this current period of uncertainty. It is they that can empower their organisations to nurture work behaviours that promote health and wellbeing in a purposeful way.

13. Organizational Change and Stress, Stanford University. Available at: <https://cardinalatwork.stanford.edu/faculty-staff-help-center/resources/work-related/organizational-change-stress>

Domestic abuse – how can employers offer support?

EXPERT VIEW

Louise Aston

Wellbeing Director
Business in the Community (BITC)



“The most vulnerable need to be safeguarded and supported now more than ever.”

Around the world, as cities went into lockdown to stop the spread of coronavirus, the huge effort to save lives put vulnerable people more at risk.

An estimated 1.6 million women and 786,000 men experienced domestic abuse in England and Wales in the year ending March 2019, according to the Office for National Statistics.

Fears are growing in the UK that the stay-at-home coronavirus guidelines may leave domestic abuse victims feeling especially isolated, vulnerable and exposed. Lockdown is a perpetrator's paradise.

By the end of May, the charity Refuge, which runs the National Domestic Abuse helpline, had experienced a weekly average 66% increase in calls for help since the start of lockdown in mid-March. By early April, more than 25 organisations helping domestic violence victims had reported an increase in their caseload since the start of the pandemic. Clearly, the most vulnerable need to be safeguarded and supported now more than ever.

Recognising the risk, the government launched a new public awareness campaign, called #YouAreNotAlone, highlighting that if anyone is at danger of, or experiencing, domestic abuse, they are still able to leave and seek refuge.

However, employers also play an important role in supporting victims of domestic abuse. The help is especially vital right now when visibility within the employment setting may be undermined because of the shift to remote working during the pandemic. Employers should prioritise staying in contact with staff and ensure activities that support colleague relationships beyond engagement on particular projects continue, for example, manager one-to-ones.

Other actions employers can take are outlined in a Domestic Abuse Toolkit, put together by BITC and Public Health England. These include:

1. **Acknowledge:** Use the toolkit to help understand the issues and acknowledge it is every employer's responsibility to support victims of domestic abuse. Promote the fact the government is allowing domestic abuse victims to leave home to seek help.
2. **Respond:** If a manager suspects that an employee is experiencing domestic abuse, they should facilitate a conversation to discuss the issue on a general level and identify and implement appropriate support. Some examples of questions and prompts that could be used to open a conversation are:
 - How are you doing at the moment?
 - Your wellbeing is important to me and I've noticed that you seem distracted/upset at the moment – are you ok?
 - Is everything all right at home?
 - You don't have to tell me anything, but please know that I would like to support you if and when you feel ready.
 - What support do you think might help? What would you like to happen? How?
3. **Refer:** Inform all your employees that help is available and remind them that police response and support services remain available. Signpost employees to organisations that can help employees affected by the issue. A full list of supportive organisations can be accessed at BITC's COVID-19: Domestic Abuse Toolkit for Employers at bitc.org.uk/toolkit/covid-19-domestic-abusesupporting-employees/

BITC's Domestic Abuse toolkit is also available at bitc.org.uk/toolkit/domestic-abuse-toolkit/

3. Mental Health

Catalyst for shifting mindset and encouraging an open culture



Catalyst for shifting mindset and encouraging an open culture

More than half of employers now have a dedicated mental health strategy. There's evidence that this focus on mental health is having a profound effect, and playing a part in remodelling company culture for the better. However, the stigma attached to mental health persists in a minority of organisations, particularly those without a managed approach to mental health.

Dedicated mental health strategies are more common at organisations that have implemented a wellbeing strategy

Just over half (55%) of our respondents have a strategy in place specifically for managing their employees' mental health and wellbeing, up from less than half (46%) in 2019 and just 16% in 2018.

This headline figure hides an important distinction between employers with an overall wellbeing strategy and those without. Looking at these groups, more than three quarters (77%) of organisations with a wellbeing strategy also have a mental health strategy in place, compared with just a fifth (20%) of those without a wellbeing strategy.

However, a huge portion of those employers without a wellbeing scheme or mental health strategy – 75% – plan to introduce a more managed approach to address psychological health in the next three years.

Last year's survey showed an astronomical 191% growth in dedicated mental health strategies. This year's data demonstrates that mental health provision among employers continues to climb. Overall, 98% of organisations either already have a mental health strategy in place or plan to introduce one within the next three years.

98%

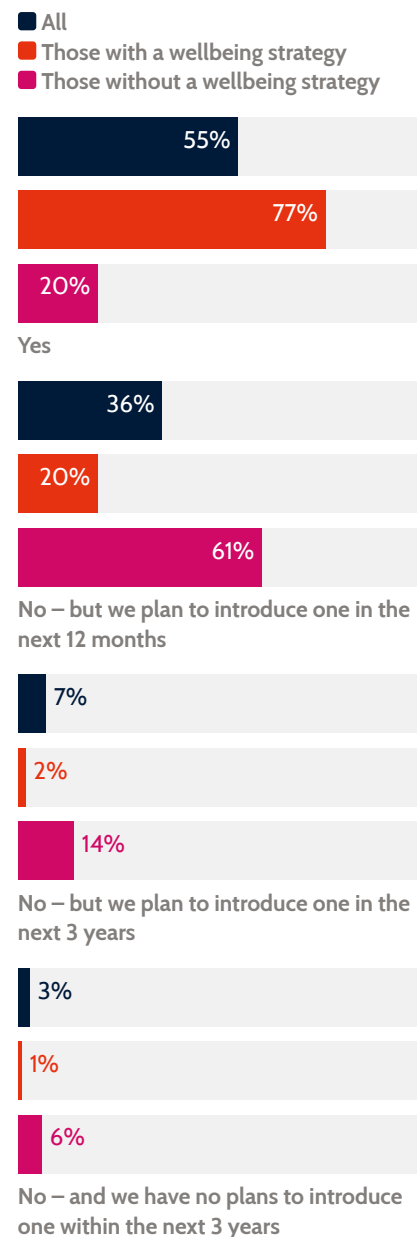
The percentage of employers that have a dedicated mental health scheme already in place or that plan to introduce one in the medium term.

Looking at the short term, just over a third of all employers say they plan to introduce a mental health strategy in the next 12 months.

The fallout of the Covid-19 pandemic and the toll it will take on psychological health may mean that that number actually rises throughout 2020.

Figure 3.1

Do you have a strategy in place specifically for managing employee mental health and wellbeing? (n=263)



Most employers believe the mental health support they provide is changing culture – but for an eighth it remains a stigmatised issue

Four fifths (79%) of respondents believe they treat discrimination on mental health grounds the same way they treat discrimination on the grounds of race, gender, age or sexual orientation (see Figure 3.2). A slightly higher percentage (82%) believes that their HR policies and procedures support employees' mental health. And almost two thirds of respondents (63%) believe that their approach to mental health is changing their company culture.

However, around one in eight – 13% – of employers do not believe that their employees and managers are able to discuss mental health problems or seek support without fear of ridicule or stigma.

When it comes to fostering a culture of good mental health, the majority of respondents are demonstrating positive attitudes and making progress in embedding more open cultures. A total of 61% of employers say their senior managers lead by example in promoting mental wellbeing, a finding that is consistent with our statistic showing that 67% of boards prioritise the issue (see page 30).

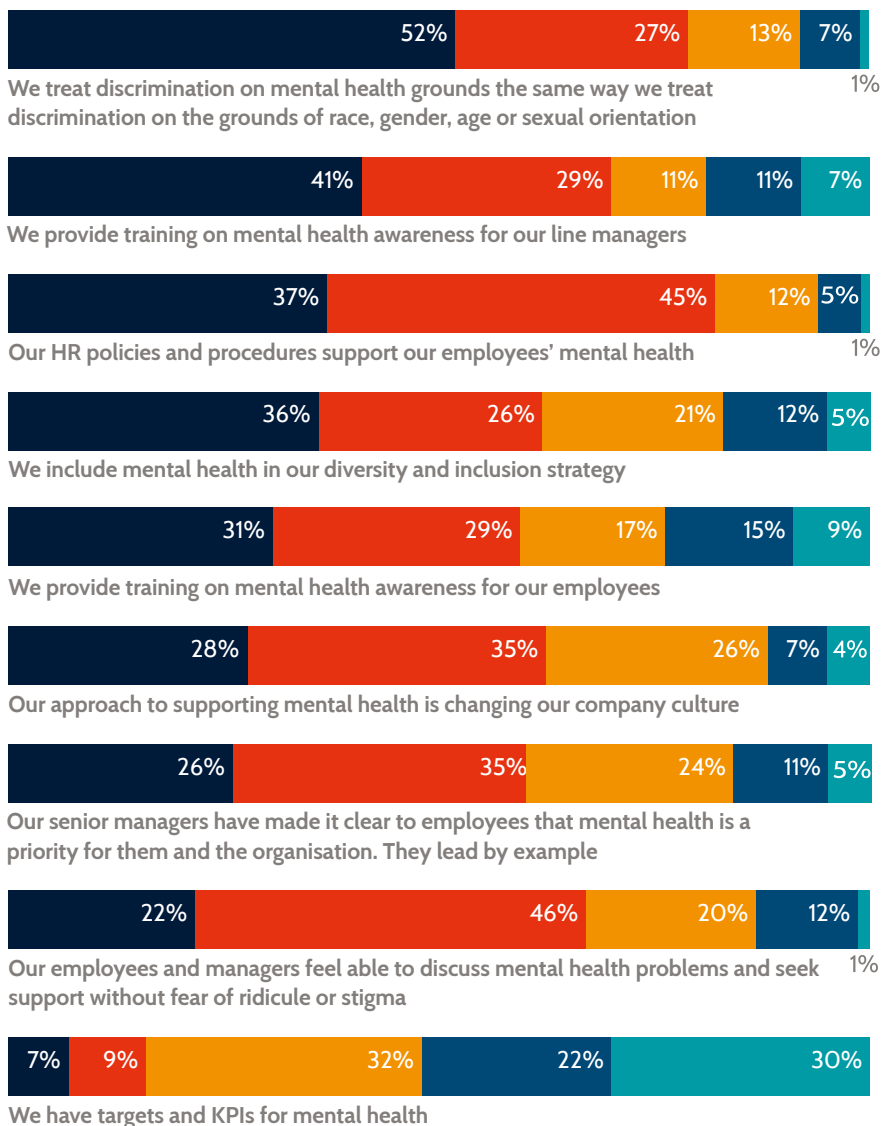
However, with around an eighth of respondents saying that staff and managers still feel unable to discuss mental health problems in the workplace (a further fifth seem undecided as to how it would be received), it's clear there are still hurdles to overcome when it comes to persuading organisations there is no shame around discussing and seeking support for mental health problems.

3. MENTAL HEALTH

Figure 3.2

Thinking about the culture of your workplace and mental health and wellbeing, do you agree with the following statements? (n=118)

■ Strongly agree
 ■ Slightly agree
 ■ Neither agree nor disagree
 ■ Slightly disagree
 ■ Strongly disagree



Stark divide between organisations with a mental health strategy in place and those without

Breaking down the above findings to compare outcomes between those employers with a mental health strategy in place and those without is revealing. A huge 94% of employers that have implemented a mental health strategy say their approach is changing company culture for the better. This compares with 67% of organisations without a formal strategy in place (see Figure 3.3).

In fact, employers with a managed approach to mental health lead the way in all the steps and measures for promoting wellbeing we asked about, including senior managers leading by example, or treating discrimination on mental health grounds in the same way as discrimination on the grounds of race, gender, age or sexual orientation.

One significant finding is the rise in the percentage of respondents providing mental health awareness training for employees, compared with last year.

Where there is a strategy in place, 89% offer mental health awareness training for staff, a rise from 72% last year. Where there is no strategy, 49% of employers provide that training for employees. This compares with 40% last year.

The gap in terms of a mentally healthy culture between those employers with a dedicated strategy to improve it and those without, mirrors our findings from 2019. It underlines that a strategic rather than a tick-box approach to addressing psychological wellbeing is key in bringing about meaningful and lasting change to workplace culture.

High profile campaigns around mental health (examples include Time to Change or the Mental Health at Work site launched by Mind and The Royal Foundation) together with recommendations for employers made in the well-publicised *Thriving at work* report have certainly accelerated progress in this area.

However, 2019 and the start of 2020 has been a period of unparalleled uncertainty and anxiety for employers and employees, first as a result of having to deal with the Brexit process, then having to battle Covid-19.

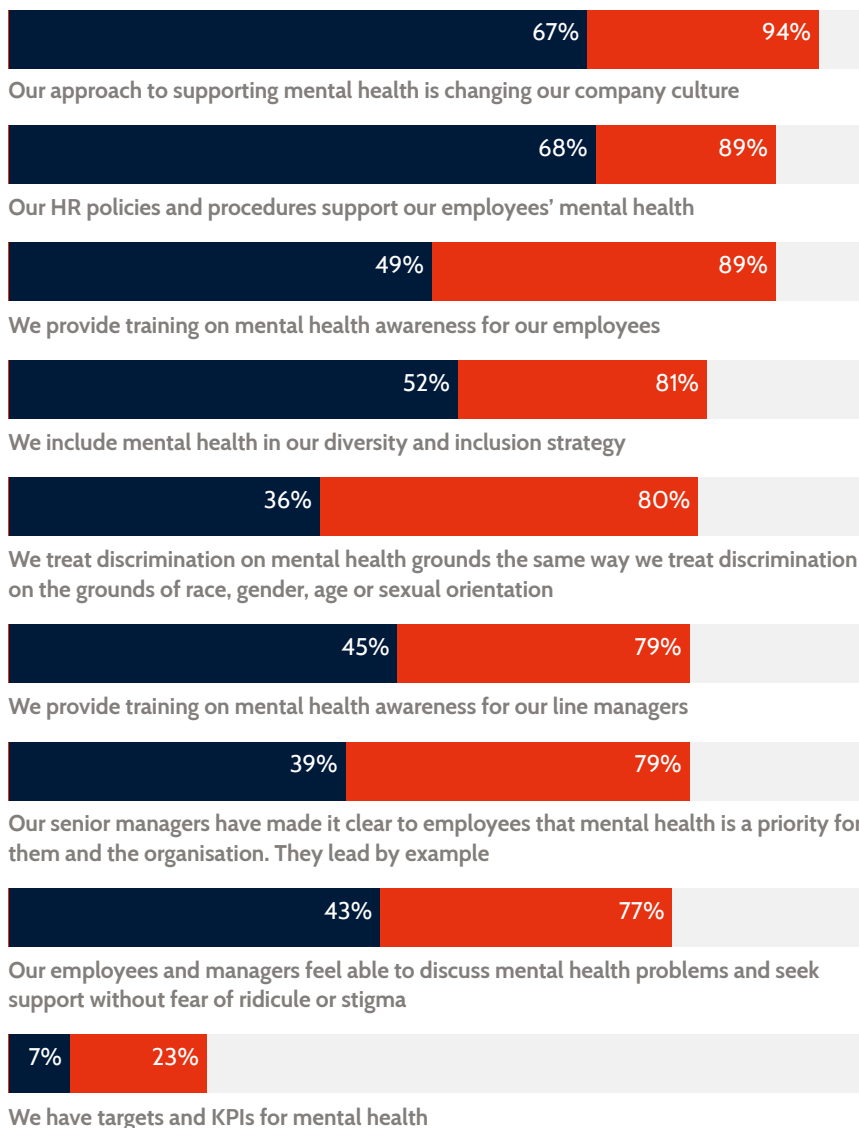
Many more employers will be spurred into building up a more robust and joined-up approach to employee mental health in the coming months.

3. MENTAL HEALTH

Figure 3.3

Thinking about the culture of your workplace and mental health and wellbeing, do you 'strongly' or 'slightly' agree with the following statements? (Mental health strategy vs. no mental health strategy) (n=263)

■ No mental health strategy ■ Mental health strategy



Public reporting on employee mental health remains low

Just over one in 20 (6%) respondents currently report publicly on their employees' mental health, although a further one in six (17%) tell us they are planning to introduce mental health reporting in the near future. The remaining three quarters (77%) of our sample have no plans to start issuing mental health reports.

These figures have not altered significantly since 2019, when 4% of respondents said they reported publicly on employee mental health and 16% said they had plans to introduce such measures. It indicates that good intentions have not become a reality. It may be that while employers remain committed to the cause they are unsure how to approach this.

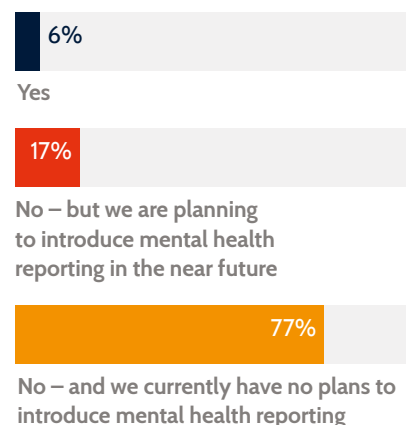
To try to encourage more openness and transparency around this issue, the government published a framework¹⁴ in 2018 to support employers reporting voluntarily on mental health and wellbeing in the workplace. The two-page guide was put together following consultation with large employers and third sector organisations and it suggests various information that employers could consider publishing within their annual reports, including:

- employee take-up of mental health support offered by the organisation
- the training offered to employees related to mental health
- the percentage of individuals within the organisation that are comfortable disclosing mental health
- a narrative to explain the organisation's activities in relation to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of employees; and
- the output of staff surveys that provide measures of employee wellbeing.

However, the framework has not had much of an impact – indeed, just a third (32%) of our respondents told us they were even aware of this government initiative.

Figure 3.4

Does your board report publicly on your employees' mental health? (n=258)



14. Voluntary reporting on disability, mental health and wellbeing: A framework to support employers to voluntarily report on disability, mental health and wellbeing in the workplace, DWP and DHSC, November 2018. Available at: <https://bit.ly/3f8Jcln>

Upsurge in mental health training for line managers

This year has seen a hike in the percentage of respondents that offer mental health training for line managers. Three fifths (61%) now provide this form of training, an increase on 48% in 2019 and 34% in 2018.

Line manager training is still much more common at organisations with a dedicated mental health strategy in place. More than three quarters (77%) of employers with a mental health strategy provide it, compared with less than half (41%) of those without.

Among the latter group, however, training has seen a sharp increase. Last year, less than a quarter (24%) offered line manager training.

**BIG
SHIFT**

79%

The rise since 2018 in the share of employers offering line managers training in mental health issues.

A total of 34% of employers offered such training in 2018. This has risen to 61% this year, representing an increase of 79%.

71%

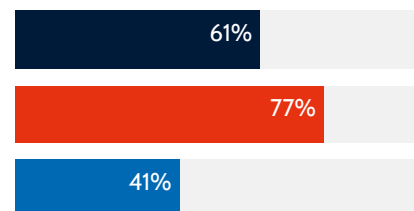
The upturn in the past 12 months in the percentage of organisations without a mental health strategy offering line manager training.

Last year 24% offered line managers support in mental health awareness. That has risen to 41% this year, equating to a boost of 71%.

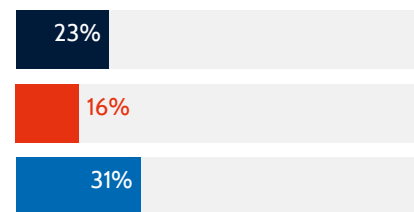
Figure 3.5

Do you provide mental health training for line managers? (n=261)

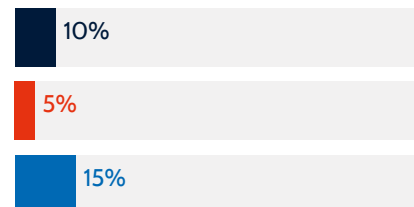
■ All ■ Mental health strategy
■ No mental health strategy



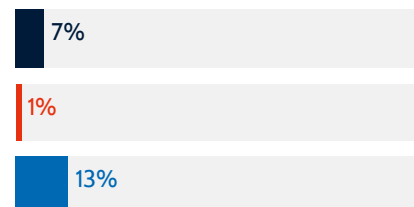
Yes



No – but we plan to introduce this in the next 12 months



No – but we plan to introduce this in the next 3 years



No – and we have no plans to introduce this within the next 3 years

3. MENTAL HEALTH

Line managers are often best placed to identify possible mental health issues among team members. So, it makes sense to ensure they receive training in how to spot the symptoms of mental ill-health and how to support employees who are having problems. It is encouraging to see the steady growth of this training over the last three years – if this current trend continues, it may not be long before mental health training becomes part and parcel of general management training.

Training line managers is not the only way to ensure employees receive the mental health support they need, however. Many organisations are now training staff at all levels of their business to become mental health first aiders. Mental Health First Aid England, a social enterprise launched by the Department of Health in 2007, trained more than 140,000 people in 2018/19,¹⁵ the most ever in a single year. Its role is to empower people to notice the signs of mental ill-health, break down barriers, listen in a non-judgemental way and signpost people to the support they need to aid their recovery.

The programme has become widespread, embraced by many large corporations including the BBC, Rolls-Royce and Goldman Sachs.

But it's not without criticism. Concerns have been raised that it may be being used in too perfunctory a way without it addressing mental health issues more strategically. Others say that there's too much pressure on mental health first aiders and that support needs to be offered from more than just a single base (see Expert View, page 46).

Leading employers will be making sure the interventions they put in place to support mental health best fit their own particular needs.

15. Impact Report 2018-19, MHFA England. Available at: <https://mhfaengland.org/mhfa-centre/research-and-evaluation/social-impact-report-2019/>

Support mental health first aiders with a good working culture and the right infrastructure

EXPERT VIEW

Sally Wilson

Senior Research Fellow
Institute for Employment Studies



“Campaigns need to give employers a better understanding of mental health interventions, so they can make informed choices about MHFA.”

Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) is almost unmatched in its popularity as a recent workplace wellbeing intervention. MHFA England has worked with more than 20,000 employers since 2011.

With employers under increased pressure to tackle mental health, it's easy to see the appeal of a resource that can be put in place by investing in two days' staff training. The 'first aid' aspect resonates with a drive towards 'parity of esteem' (an aim to give mental health equal footing with physical health), which is enshrined in the NHS constitution, but also increasingly used in a workplace context to equate mental health with physical safety.

The presence of a designated employee who is suitably trained gives mental health visibility and encourages help-seeking, and the benefits can be palpable. It is undeniable that many people who would otherwise struggle in silence can benefit from having someone to talk to. But there are potential risks if MHFA is implemented without attention to organisational context. It is not a substitute for effective people management or organisation-wide cultural change.

As a wellbeing researcher, I have been surprised how many employers cite high numbers of people attending MHFA training and those approaching their mental health first aider as a mark of 'success'. Anecdotally, it is less common to hear of employers who have been motivated by high MHFA uptake to buy in specialist occupational health support or train their senior staff to have a more supportive management style. As such there is a danger that MHFA sometimes 'crowds out' investment in more evidence-based support. This is symptomatic of wider misunderstanding of what a good workplace wellbeing strategy should look like.

Some industry figures also think that provision of MHFA in the workplace is a legal requirement. This is unambiguously not the case – employers should feel able to consider other approaches they may feel have a better fit with their workplace, such as improved management of stress and workload.

An important consideration is how to support mental health first aiders (MHFAs) themselves, a concern raised by both the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health and the Health and Safety Executive. MHFAs may see people who disclose traumatic experiences leaving them feeling distressed, anxious and helpless. This raises serious supervision and clinical governance concerns. Large businesses with multiple trainees can provide the kind of support networks MHFA says first-aiders can benefit from, but this can be challenging for SMEs.

A recent interesting development is that employee assistance programme providers have started offering support to MHFAs. This appears to be an untested model but could be a helpful way of providing clinical governance to protect MHFA volunteers.

A lot more evidence is needed about the pros and cons of MHFA and it is good to see more research already underway. Going forward, campaigns need to give employers a better understanding of mental health interventions, so they can make informed choices about MHFA. It would also help organisations appreciate the complementary roles of other types of support and professional expertise.

A third of employers do not track absences related to mental health

This year, we asked respondents what percentage of their sickness absence was related to mental health. More than a third (36%) of employers told us they did not know because they do not track this. Among those that do maintain metrics around this, the median percentage of sickness absence related to mental health ranged from 10% to 19%.

While the sensitivity around wellbeing – and mental wellbeing in particular – makes it understandable that some employers may choose not to document the reason behind employee absences, it is good practice to monitor this. It makes it easier to target interventions on the issues that are having the biggest impact on the workforce. It also provides data against which to measure the success of particular initiatives.

Unfortunately, the stigma still attached to mental health in some organisations means that this data may not be 100% accurate.

Having said that, the latest figures from the Office for National Statistics¹⁶ reveal that in 2018, mental health conditions accounted for 12.4% of sickness absence, equating to 17.5 million lost working days. This indicates that our own finding that the median percentage of sickness absence related to mental health is between 10% and 19% is not wide of the mark.

Work-related stress is number one cause of mental wellbeing problems

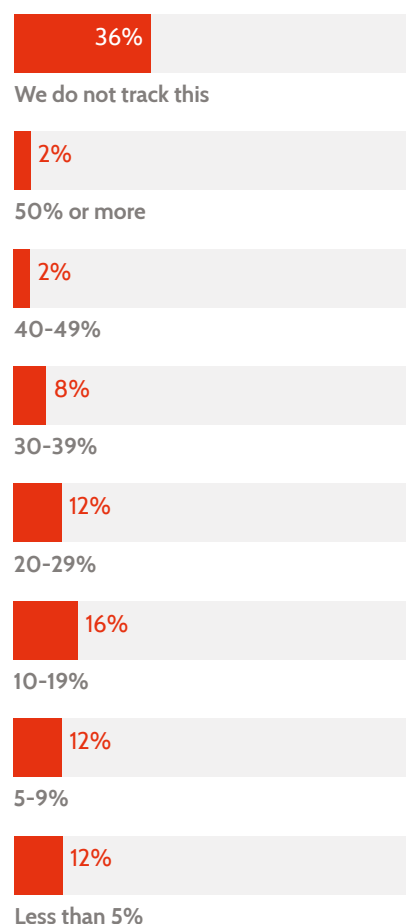
More than three quarters (78%) of respondents told us that work-related stress caused by deadlines, high workloads and understaffing was behind some of the mental wellbeing problems at their organisations (see Figure 3.7).

More than two thirds (71%) cited day-to-day personal problems, such as caring responsibilities and relationships, as a cause. In addition, three fifths (61%) reported that major life events, such as bereavement or divorce, were contributing to problems with employee mental health.

It is worth noting that many of our respondents told us that due to issues of confidentiality they did not know the precise reasons behind employees' mental health problems – in many cases these were educated guesses.

Figure 3.6

What percentage of sickness absence at your organisation is related to mental health? (n=251)



16. Sickness Absence in the UK labour market: 2018, ONS, November 2019. Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/labourproductivity/articles/sicknessabsenceinthelabourmarket/2018>

Mental health support at Just Eat comes into its own during the Covid-19 crisis

Practitioner View

Jane Gibbon

Group HR Director
Just Eat



Hannah Millard

Global Culture & Inclusion Partner
Just Eat



Our mental health provision was developed, initially, in response to data from a diversity and inclusion survey that revealed that employees didn't feel they could be open about their mental health wellbeing at work.

The findings, collected 18 months ago, were a real eye opener for us especially since our ethos is that people should feel able to be their authentic selves at work. We were keen to help employees be able to take positive steps to look after their mental health.

Our ultimate aim was to tackle this issue globally – Just Eat is a tech company with 4,000 employees working across 13 different markets worldwide – but wanted to test interventions with one section of the business first.

So, in 2018 we offered a mental health coaching service (provided by Sanctus) to staff in our Bristol office, which was rolled out across the UK within a few months.

The service, which offers one hour individual coaching/counselling sessions for staff during which they can talk about any issues, be they work-related or personal, proved popular. At the UK launch, the 288 sessions offered for the first three-month period were booked up within an hour. Feedback showed that 98 per cent of the people who participated in these sessions found the mental health coaching session valuable.

This spurred us on to expand our mental health wellbeing access worldwide and for that we partnered with Unmind. Its mental health app offers tools and training for employees on subjects ranging from sleep to stress and productivity and is available to all our staff around the world for free.

At this point something very powerful happened – our senior leaders started talking about mental health. Our CEO spoke about it at a conference and he

also mentions it in his weekly video updates. The messages are focused on reminding people about the resources they could access, but also encouraging an open culture and dialogue.

As the UK went into lockdown during the Covid-19 crisis, he also talked about the impact it was having on his own mental health, demonstrating his own vulnerability to staff. This has given the mental health agenda added momentum.

The work we have done so far in this space has prepared us well for the current pandemic, when mental wellbeing has become so much a central focus. There has been a big increase in the use of the Unmind app, with the most popular topic being how to deal with the stresses and anxieties of Covid-19 and the most widely used tool being on sleep.

Our mental health resources portfolio combined with our strong communication have been received well by our employees. Feedback has been really positive.

We had made huge progress in this area even before Covid-19 hit. Last September, when we repeated our diversity and inclusion survey we doubled our scores on the question 'Just Eat has an open culture in discussing mental health and wellbeing'.

This isn't the end of the road. Going forward, as our organisation changes and adapts to a 'new normal' in response to Covid-19, we will need to continue to review the resources we provide to ensure we are supporting our employees in the most effective way we can.

3. MENTAL HEALTH

Nevertheless, their responses provide a useful guide as to where the stress hotspots lie. That work-related factors such as workload and understaffing are identified by respondents as the leading causes of mental ill-health is unsurprising given the findings already explored in Figure 2.3 (page 34).

In its most chronic form unmanaged workplace stress results in burnout, reclassified by the World Health Organization (WHO)¹⁷ last year as a legitimate “occupational syndrome” that can carry health repercussions. WHO says it is characterised by feelings of exhaustion, mental detachment from one’s job, and reduced professional efficacy.

Mental wellbeing strategies (and overall wellbeing strategies) that ignore this work-related risk factor, as well as others such as workplace bullying or a high pressure culture (also cited by respondents as being causes of mental ill-health), will have limited success.

WHO¹⁸ also suggests that mental health interventions should address problems regardless of cause, which is critical given our research shows that personal issues play a big role in contributing to mental ill-health.

Employer assistance programmes (EAPs), many of which offer counselling services, may prove invaluable here.

Overall, these findings serve to illustrate the wide variety of factors that have a bearing on mental health. And they strongly validate the point that mental health support cannot be an isolated activity, it has to link in with the wider wellbeing agenda and be underpinned by policies and workplace practices that promote a positive environment, effective people management and good job design.

Figure 3.7

What are the main issues causing mental wellbeing problems at your organisation? (n=246)



17. Burn-out an “occupational phenomenon”: International Classification of Diseases, World Health Organization, May 2019. Available at https://www.who.int/mental_health/evidence/burn-out/en/

18. Mental health in the workplace Information Sheet, WHO, May 2019. Available at: https://www.who.int/mental_health/in_the_workplace/en/

Now is the time to prioritise mental health

EXPERT VIEW

Paul Farmer

Chief Executive Officer
Mind



“The scale of the challenge we face to improve mental health in the workplace cannot be underestimated but, overall, we are heading in the right direction.”

Covid-19 presents one of the most challenging times for our mental wellbeing as a nation, and for employers. It is absolutely vital we do all we can to look after our staff when we are all facing uncertainty.

During these unprecedented times, we can take some comfort that workplaces have made real progress in recent years in improving mental health, so we have a strong foundation to build upon.

In 2017, *Thriving at work: The Stevenson/Farmer review of mental health and employers* was published. This review, commissioned by the prime minister and led by Lord Dennis Stevenson and me, set out to identify how employers can better support all employees, including those with poor mental health or wellbeing, to remain in and thrive at work.

The report found that 300,000 people who experience long-term mental health problems lose their job every year – with updated figures from Deloitte highlighting the cost to employers rising to up to £45 billion per year. Included within the recommendations of the report were six ‘core mental health standards’. These include implementing a mental health at work plan, developing mental health awareness, encouraging conversations about mental health, improving working conditions, promoting effective people management and monitoring employee mental health and wellbeing. The report acted as a clear call to action and since then we have seen hundreds of employers begin to build a culture of openness. However, there remain areas we still need to see urgently prioritised.

As part of the *Thriving at work* review, we recommended that a Leadership Council be set up by government to maintain the momentum built up by the review. This launched in January 2019 with representatives from 25 organisations, large and small. These senior business leaders

developed the Mental Health at Work Commitment, a framework detailing six streamlined standards for developing a comprehensive approach to managing mental health. The framework sets out the importance of leadership at all levels within an organisation – in daily interactions through line management, but especially the importance of senior leadership.

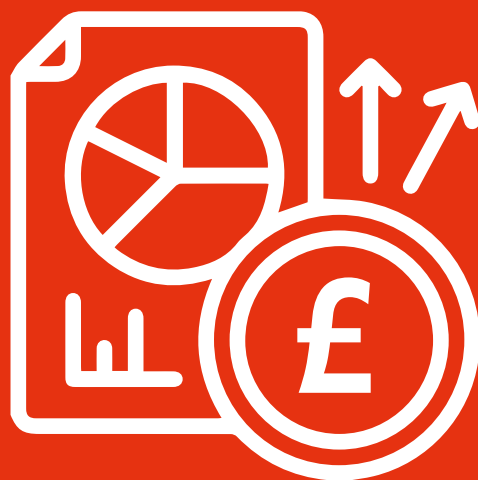
The scale of the challenge we face to improve mental health in the workplace cannot be underestimated but, overall, we are heading in the right direction. Employers have made great strides, in the past few years, indicating a commitment to creating mentally healthy workplace cultures. We want to reach a point where all workplaces recognise the value of recruiting and nurturing a diverse workforce of talented employees, including those whose mental health may have prevented them from working previously.

Our response to our employees in the wake of the coronavirus outbreak has been impressive. That over a million people have downloaded Mind’s information on how to look after mental health during the pandemic is a sure sign we are all thinking more about our mental health. But the biggest test is yet to come.

We have all had to explore new ways of working, communicating and staying connected. As we reflect on that which no longer suits our world of work, now is the time to interrogate the work we do to support employee mental health in our workplaces (and at home) and commit to a different way of working, going forward.

4. Wellbeing Spend and Initiatives

Widening the scope of services on offer



Widening the scope of services on offer

Average spending on wellbeing is unchanged this year though employers without a wellbeing strategy are starting to invest more. EAPs dominate wellbeing programmes and are likely to be increasingly relied upon throughout 2020 in response to the pandemic. However, employers are broadening their provision with menopause support and financial education predicted to see a jump over the next 12 months.

Wellbeing strategy is having less of an impact on wellbeing spend

Just over half (51%) of our respondents told us they have a dedicated wellbeing budget. When asked how much they spend annually on wellbeing initiatives for their employees, a third (33%) told us they do not know. Of those that do know, a quarter (25%) spend nothing on wellbeing initiatives each year. At the other extreme, a fifth (20%) told us they have an annual wellbeing spend of upwards of £300 per employee.

Median spending by all respondents ranged from £1 to £25 per employee. This year, for the first time, there is no difference in the median spend between respondents with a joined-up wellbeing strategy and those without. Last year, median spend per employee among employers with a wellbeing strategy was between £26 and £50 a year.

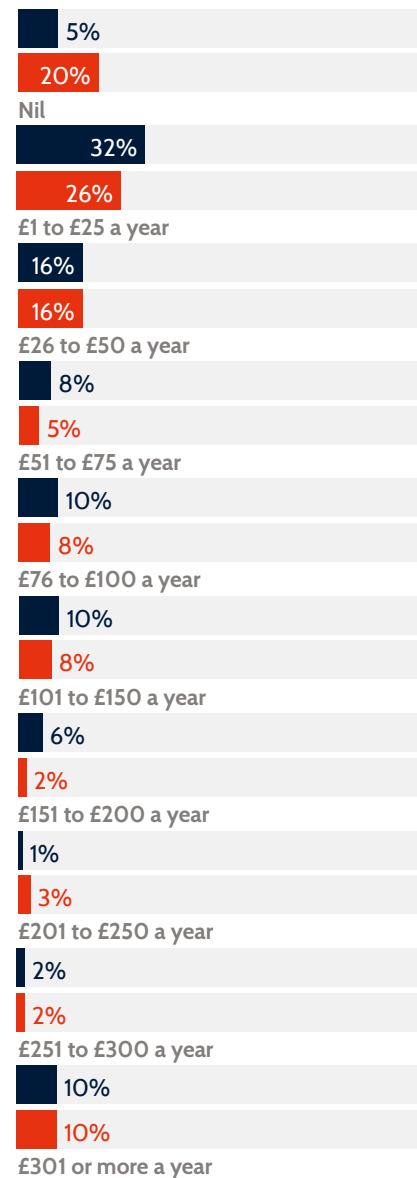
The convergence in median wellbeing spending between these two groups can mainly be attributed to an overall increase in spending by those without a joined-up wellbeing strategy. This year has seen a sharp fall in the percentage of those respondents that pay nothing towards wellbeing initiatives each year (2020: 20% versus 2019: 27%) combined with a large increase in those spending £76 or more (2020: 33% versus 2019: 15%).

Given the large sums involved in wellbeing, it is surprising to see so many employers with no knowledge of how much they are spending in this area. Without this information, it is impossible to know what return on investment is being achieved – and it may also prove difficult to secure further funding for wellbeing initiatives.

Figure 4.1

How much does your organisation spend annually on wellbeing initiatives in the UK per employee? (respondents with a wellbeing strategy vs respondents without a wellbeing strategy) (n=161)

■ Strategy ■ No strategy



HR holds the wellbeing purse strings

This year, we asked respondents which department had overall responsibility for their wellbeing spend. For over half of organisations (52%), the HR department has the final sign-off on the wellbeing budget, while at a quarter (25%) this decision rests with the finance department. Where neither HR nor finance are involved, responsibility tends to be taken by the CEO, board or senior leadership team. Very few respondents give responsibility for the wellbeing budget to dedicated occupational health or corporate risk departments.

In many organisations, operational responsibility for employee wellbeing policy and practice falls to HR, so it makes sense that it should also be given oversight and control on wellbeing spend. The finance department, by contrast, is typically best placed to put wellbeing spend in its overall context. However, it is one step removed from operational decisions, so will need to work with HR or any dedicated wellbeing leads to negotiate funding levels.

It is not surprising to see the occupational health (OH) department sidelined when it comes to spending decisions. Very few employers have their own in-house OH function, and where they do it tends to be focused on delivering services rather than on financial matters.

EAPs continue to headline the majority of wellbeing packages

For the fifth year running, the employee assistance programme (EAP) is the most popular wellbeing initiative with almost universal penetration: they are offered by more than nine in 10 (93%) of our respondents (see Figure 4.3). Also popularly offered are cycle to work schemes (85%), occupational sick pay schemes (85%), discounted or free gym membership (80%) and counselling (79%).

By contrast, there is very little appetite among our respondents for providing genetics testing for their employees (2%), while menstrual support (4%) and wearable devices (7%) are also quite rare.

Since we carried out our first wellbeing research in 2016, EAPs have been a mainstay of the wellbeing packages provided by our respondents. They have almost become a given, sitting alongside pension schemes and annual leave as core elements of employers' overall reward packages.

Figure 4.2

Which function has the final sign off on your wellbeing budget (n=129)



4. WELLBEING SPEND AND INITIATIVES

Figure 4.3

Which of the following wellbeing programmes and initiatives do you currently offer? (n=244)



The anonymous data generated by an EAP can provide a useful gauge of the overall health of the workforce and help to flag up any areas of concern. As one respondent told us:

“A benefit of our EAP is the management information that is provided, which gives us insight across our sector. This management information can also give an insight into potential problems in the workforce, for example, with high levels of work-related stress, bullying or low morale. Armed with this knowledge, we can make changes or adapt a health and wellbeing programme to prevent issues from escalating.”

Hanna Prince, Health and Attendance Advisor, Derby City Council

EAPs provide a wide range of services but telephone counselling and support for grief and family issues are the most common

Part of the appeal of EAPs is that they provide a wealth of different services for employees ‘under one roof’. However, not all EAPs are created equal – the services they provide vary and sometimes employers are required to pay extra to access certain elements.

This year we asked our respondents to provide more detail on the exact services their programmes provide for employees (see Figure 4.4). Nearly all EAPs offer telephone counselling as standard (97%), while support during times of grief or loss is also a staple (95%). Online counselling is provided as standard in the vast majority of schemes (87%), and face-to-face counselling in over three quarters (76%) of schemes. Support for adoption is the least common service among our sample, but still included as standard at just over half (56%) of EAPs.

The EAP has almost become synonymous with telephone advice and support, so it’s no surprise that telephone counselling is the most common service provided to employers. At the same time, our research shows there is a large range of services on offer and that EAPs go way beyond addressing only emotional wellbeing.

It is worthwhile for every employer to take the time to review their particular EAP package and ensure it has all the elements they require – it’s important that organisations are not spending on services that their employees are not using. By the same token, taking a free EAP service that doesn’t adequately meet employee needs is also ineffective.

Some respondents would welcome more help from their EAP provider, in terms of communicating its benefit to employees and providing a more informed, innovative and tailored service.

“This year we have moved to an embedded service with our income protection insurance, so it is free. Personally, I’d like to see EAPs be more joined up with businesses rather than be a remote support service. They could help better identify what their data is showing and help us with strategies to implement change. But this will cost, and I am not sure either the provider or the organisation is willing to pay more for this service.”

Chris Carter, Head of Reward, NTT DATA UK

“EAP means nothing to most people and a change of name might help. We would welcome more ideas on communicating the benefit, as well as cheaper and quicker access to face-to-face counselling.”

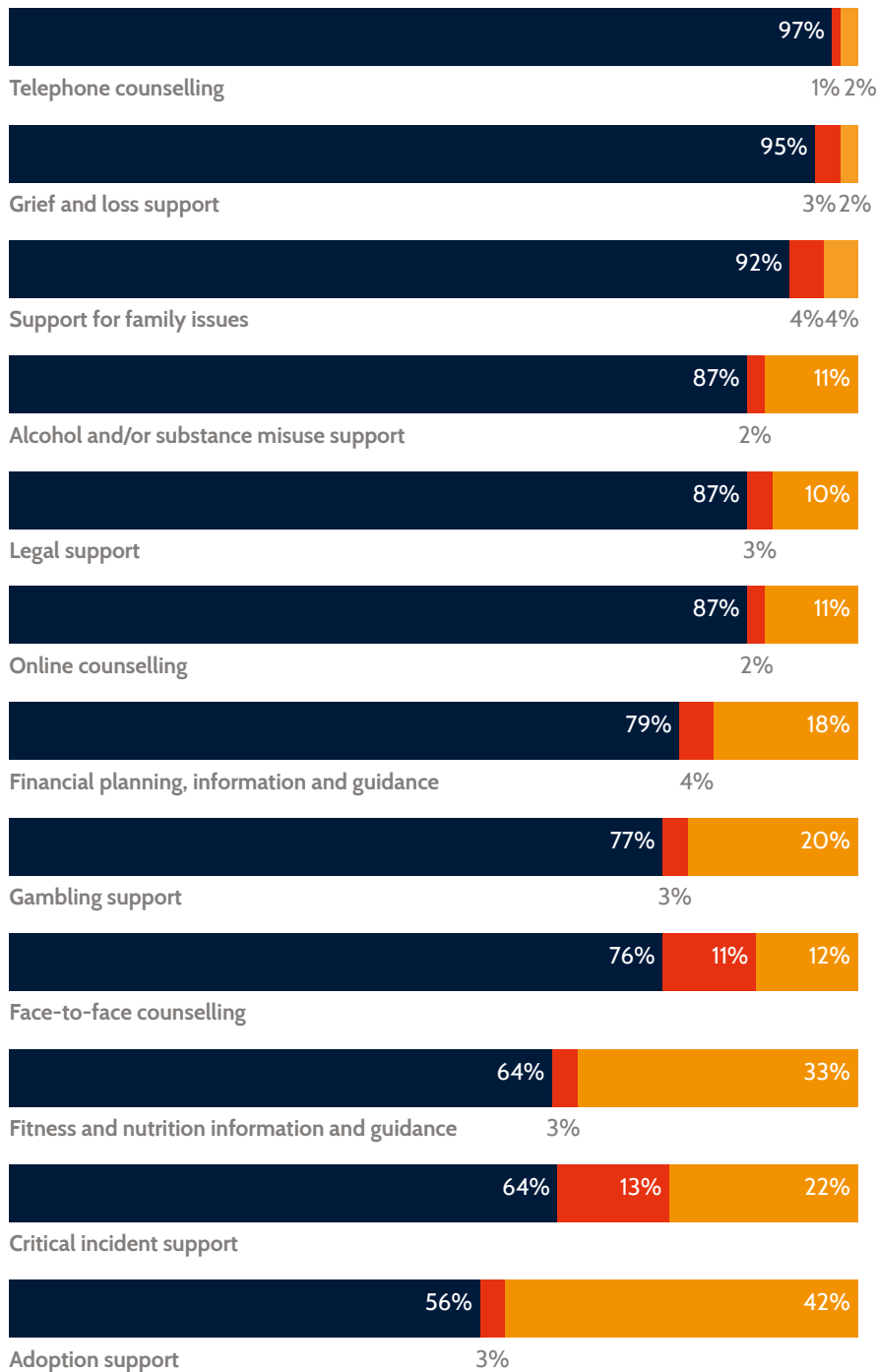
Debbie Fennell, Senior Benefits Manager, DHL Supply Chain

4. WELLBEING SPEND AND INITIATIVES

Figure 4.4

Which of these services does your EAP provide for your employees? (n=227)

■ Provided to us as standard
■ Provided to us as a paid-for extra
■ Not provided



The value of occupational health provision in supporting wellbeing at work

EXPERT VIEW

Nick Pahl

CEO
Society of Occupational Medicine



“There is a clear role for occupational health providers to engage in line manager training.”

Occupational health (OH) is a multi-disciplinary approach to maintaining the wellbeing of those in a workplace.

It involves preventing and removing ill-health and developing solutions to keep staff with health issues at work. OH professionals provide independent advice on staff unable to work due to long-term or short-term health problems, and on organisation-wide steps to reduce sickness absence. This includes:

- Assessing fitness to work regarding ill-health capability dismissal or ill-health retirement
- Advising on compliance under the Equality Act 2010 and on reasonable adjustments required
- Carrying out pre-employment or pre-placement health assessments
- Developing health and wellbeing related strategy and policies and providing health advice to employees.

OH organises successful return to work activity, protecting vulnerable employees from workplace hazards. It can assist organisations in keeping employees safe at all stages of their working life. Effective OH is analytical, cathartic and therapeutic.

We recently produced a report, *The Value of Occupational Health to Workplace Wellbeing*, which examined how OH practitioners and providers can add value to workplace wellbeing initiatives. OH practitioners cannot deliver change by themselves. Instead, they build the capacity to deliver change through proactive and preventive approaches that can entail making changes to job design or working practices. For example, there is a clear role for OH providers to engage in line manager training around return to work processes, making workplace adjustments in a fair and equitable manner and supporting workers with health conditions or caring responsibilities.

This is key since a worker's relationship with their line manager is perhaps the most important relationship in the workplace. Research has indicated that supportive relationships between workers and their line managers are associated with better health and wellbeing outcomes, including sustainable return to work following sickness absence due to common mental health problems. Line managers also have a major influence on how work is performed, clarifying role expectations, delegating authority to make decisions and role modelling appropriate behaviours – thus potentially affecting job quality and social relations at work.

Research also shows that job quality influences health and wellbeing outcomes. Job quality includes areas such as terms of employment, pay and benefits, health and safety (relating to minimising risks for physical and psychological health and safety), the nature of work, voice and representation and worklife balance.

Workplace health promotion programmes targeted at changing health behaviours (eg. alcohol consumption, smoking, exercise and diet) are familiar to OH practitioners. They understand that such programmes should also be aimed at bringing about a shift in organisational cultures. Where a workplace environment is created in which communication concerning health and wellbeing is better received by workers, it can facilitate the introduction of a range of other initiatives targeted at improving health and wellbeing.

- Help is available for employers at som.org.uk
- The report mentioned is at som.org.uk/value-occupational-health-workplace-wellbeing-register-your-free-copy

Median spend on EAPs is between £26 and £50 per employee per year

A third (33%) of respondents told us they did not know how much they spend on their EAP. Among those that did know, median spend was between £26 and £50 per employee per year. Around one in 10 (11%) spend nothing, while almost a third (30%) spend between £1 and £25 a year per employee. A further 10% spend upwards of £300 annually per employee on their EAP.

Wide variation in spending is likely to reflect the variety of EAP products on the market. Some are included as a free benefit to employers when taking out private medical insurance or other similar products. Other schemes offer basic packages that can be upgraded with paid for 'extras', such as face-to-face counselling and critical incident support.

Covid-19 update

A quarter of employers are set to increase spending on EAPs amid the pandemic



Spending on EAPs has been earmarked as a priority for businesses as they step up ways to offer additional emotional or practical support for employees through a period of worry and change.

REBA's snapshot survey, *Impact of the coronavirus crisis on pay, bonuses and employee benefits*,¹⁹ carried out at the start of April, showed that 25% of organisations will increase spending on their EAP and 74% intend to retain their current spend on this benefit.

The ringfencing of wellbeing provision amid a time of financial turmoil indicates how indispensable such services have become for businesses. They now recognise employee health is paramount to organisational success.

Figure 4.5

How much does your organisation spend on your EAP per employee? (n=161)



19. *Impact of the coronavirus crisis on pay, bonuses and employee benefits*, Second snapshot survey, REBA, 31 March to 6 April 2020.

Empowering line managers with quality data is key to improving employee health and wellbeing

EXPERT VIEW

Dr Steven Boorman

Director of Employee Health
Empactis



“Managers need tools and information at their fingertips to offer appropriate input and engage the right support services as early as possible.”

Good line management plays a fundamental role in supporting staff health and wellbeing. Unfortunately, the reverse is just as true.

Poor line management interventions don't just leave employees unsupported, but may have a negative impact. I have heard first hand from many employees, via several independent reviews, that they can easily feel frustrated and upset if they feel their manager doesn't care about their health or wellbeing. I have learnt that giving managers simple tools to enable them to act positively and in a timely fashion can dramatically improve the levels of support they give. However, many managers struggle to know when to act, as well as what to do. This is when good data can make all the difference.

Too many organisations rely on information in HR systems that is incomplete, inaccurate and doesn't give a true picture of need. Sickness absence information is often poorly collected, and rarely used in ways to help managers understand what they can do to offer better and more timely help for their staff. Good data helps managers spot the need and opportunity to help employees earlier, and evidence shows that early action is more effective. Absence is often a warning sign that help is required but to know that, absences must be recorded quickly and accurately. Early support can make a huge difference around certain types of absence – for example, providing physiotherapy advice for those with acute musculoskeletal problems.

Managers need tools and information at their fingertips to offer appropriate input and engage the right support services as early as possible. That could involve passing relevant information on to employees so they are aware of the help available, or bringing in other assistance or occupational health

providers. However, most HR software systems were not designed to help them do this, let alone do it in real time. A faster response can demonstrate to an employee that their organisation (and their manager) cares. Any delay matters – it risks employees becoming disengaged, or compounding health issues.

Ensuring return to work procedures, such as return to work interviews, are carried out in a timely manner is just as vital. Our work at Empactis has shown that when organisations respond quickly when an illness occurs – as well as afterwards – it can pay dividends. Supporting managers in being able to discuss and offer simple work adjustments as early as possible after illness can hasten recovery, reduce future repeated absences and reduce the likelihood of long-term functional loss. All these are costly to both the affected individual and their employer.

Today, there is huge potential to power positive change and achieve new insights with digital technology. Technology can be used to improve both line management capability and capacity. Specialist software can help identify situations in which early support can be beneficial. It can provide simple advice to line managers detailing not just what to do and how best to deliver it, but also the rationale behind doing so to help build understanding.

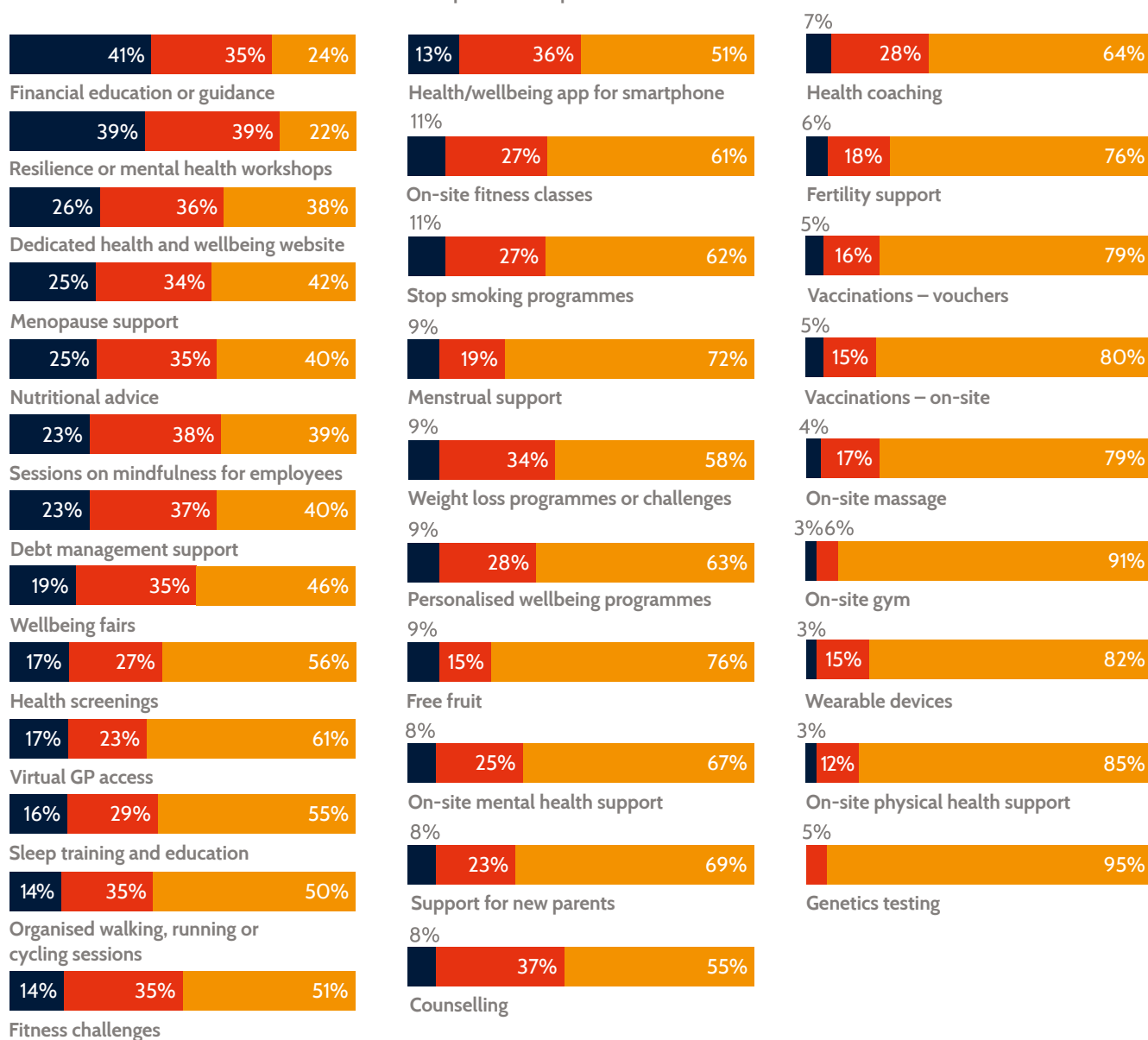
Technology innovation is essential to improve health and wellbeing management. It will enable us to understand the real picture, help improve the management of staff health and capture and analyse the outcomes to ensure that all the support we offer is effective.

4. WELLBEING SPEND AND INITIATIVES

Figure 4.6

Which of the following wellbeing programmes and initiatives do you plan to add in 2020 or at a later date?
(benefits where n<50 excluded)

■ Will introduce in 2020 ■ Will introduce at some point ■ No plans to introduce



Provision for financial education, mental health workshops and menopause support set to jump in 2020

This year we wanted to explore which specific wellbeing initiatives are on the radar for 2020 and beyond (this is not a repeat of findings in Figure 1.8 where we asked about employers' future plans in terms of wellbeing areas as opposed to particular services).

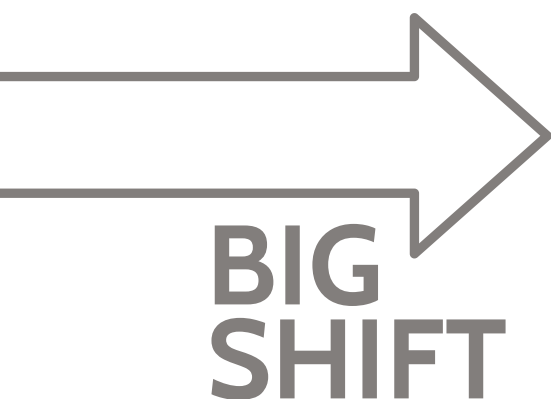
It appears that initiatives linked to finances and mental health are going to see the greatest growth (see Figure 4.6). For example, two fifths (41%) said they were going to introduce financial education this year and another 35% at some point in the next few years. Introduction of debt management support is also being planned by 23% of organisations this year and 37% beyond that.

Meanwhile, 39% told us their aim was to introduce resilience or mental health workshops this year and another 39% said they would at a later point.

The planned addition of menopause support is also noteworthy, with a quarter (25%) aiming to introduce this service in 2020 and a further third (34%) at a later date.

These figures corroborate our general findings that employers are paying increased attention to the areas of financial wellbeing and mental health.

Meanwhile, we have already noted that women's wellbeing is predicted to be a key growth area for 2020 and it seems menopause support will form a major part of that. Interestingly, willingness to roll out menstrual support is much less widespread and only 4% of employers currently provide it (see Figure 4.3).



59%

Growth in menopause support offered by organisations in 2020 and beyond.

A quarter (25%) of employers said they are introducing this service later in 2020 and a further third (34%) at some other point.

Why employers should talk about the menopause

A handful of employers such as Volkswagen Financial Services (as highlighted in REBA's *Employee Wellbeing Research 2019*), Aviva and Sainsbury's have been leading the way in providing support for women experiencing menopause symptoms.

Largely, it's been an ignored area, however. A UK government research report released in 2017²⁰ pointed out that "the menopause is not well understood or provided for in workplace cultures, policies and training."

Critically, it added, managers' and colleagues' attitudes matter – a lack of understanding and knowledge can indicate "widespread gendered ageism in organisations", which creates a number of challenges for working women in addition to coping with symptoms.

The business case for offering support on menopause is clear. From a legal perspective, menopause is covered under the Equality Act 2010 and there have been a growing number of menopause-related tribunals (the latest of which was *A vs Bonmarche Ltd (2019)*).

Perhaps more worrying for employers than the legal risk though, is evidence showing that this health issue can impede worker performance.²¹ For some women going through the menopause, it can lead to lower productivity and reduced job satisfaction. Some women leave their jobs or reduce their hours due to symptoms, which can be costly in terms of recruitment.

How can employers better support women experiencing the menopause? They can:

- Provide training so colleagues have a clear understanding of the difficulties of menopause, and so that negative stereotypes can be challenged
- Implement sickness absence policies that accommodate women suffering menopause-related symptoms
- Create support groups
- Offer flexible working
- Look at making (some very simple) adjustments to the physical work environment, such as providing quiet rest areas and clean, comfortable toilet facilities.

20. *Menopause transition: effects on women's economic participation*, Government Equalities Office, 2017. Available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/menopause-transition-effects-on-womens-economic-participation>

21. Ibid.

How HSBC UK is putting the menopause on its wellbeing agenda – through conversation and practical changes

PRACTITIONER VIEW

Alison Shemwell

People Support Manager
HSBC UK



“In addition to our work on changing culture, HSBC has focused on making practical changes to the working environment.”

Globally, more than 50 per cent of HSBC's workforce are women and nearly one in three is of menopausal age (typically 44 to 55).

The menopause affects women and their families, often at the peak of their careers. But it's rare they can talk openly in the workplace about symptoms. Some female colleagues may decide to pause or end their careers during menopause given the significant symptoms they may experience.

Driven by a commitment to make HSBC UK an inclusive environment where everyone can be at their best, we've taken steps to build awareness and understanding on the menopause across the organisation. We have also made some practical changes to improve the working environment for women experiencing menopausal symptoms.

Last year, HSBC UK held its first talk on the menopause during our Well-being Month, with both male and female senior managers sharing their experiences of their menopause 'journey' (both from an individual and work perspective).

With more than 500 colleagues joining the conversation in the room and via webcast from around the country, and many more tuning in for the replay, we knew we had tapped into something important.

Building on that, we've now trained 12 menopause advocates around the UK – people passionate about raising awareness of the challenges it can cause in the workplace and wanting to bring about change.

The role of the advocates is to improve understanding and offer support to other staff. For example, an employee might need advice on how to approach their line manager if they are struggling, or a line manager might require some tips on how best they can help a team member.

In addition to our work on changing culture, HSBC has also focused its attention on making some practical changes to the working environment for women coping with menopause symptoms.

We've recently launched an updated uniform with a different blend of material and a choice of more relaxed fits. We've also made simple changes to the process around uniform supply to make it easier for women who found their body shape had changed as a result of the menopause to request a new size.

Another example of a relatively simple but impactful change we've made has been simplifying our policy on desk fans.

Whereas a colleague may have needed a manager's approval before, they can now order a fan themselves through our procurement services portal. Our new policy covers all staff but we especially promote it to women approaching and within the menopause age.

We've also taken steps to train our occupational health team so it is more knowledgeable about the menopause and can be more helpful should a member of staff seek advice via our helpline. We have produced a factsheet that is now available on our global intranet and have reviewed all our HR policies.

While we are proud of the steps we have taken, we know there is more work to do. From new online and in-person training for managers to colleague sessions where all attendees can speak up and discuss experiences of menopause at work, we're continuing on our journey to be a top menopause-friendly employer.

Technology has a role to play – but wearables have not caught on

The percentages of employers offering virtual GP access and health/wellbeing apps for smartphones have both increased since our first survey in 2016.

Last year's findings saw a particularly steep jump in both these areas but this year the pace of growth has slowed a little. When it comes to virtual GP services, more than a third (36%) of respondents say they offer this, a rise on last year's 32%. In 2018, this figure stood at just 21%.

Meanwhile, just under a third (30%) provide a dedicated health/wellbeing app, a figure unchanged from last year.

By contrast, wearable devices have proved to be unpopular among employers. They reached a peak in 2017, when around one in seven (14%) organisations offered some kind of fitness tracker for staff. However, over the past three years, the share of respondents offering these devices has halved and the decline looks set to continue, with just 3% of employers planning to introduce them at some point in 2020.

The appeal of virtual or online GPs is obvious – it is in the clear interest of employers to help workers who are ill or injured to see a doctor as quickly and easily as possible, so they can be diagnosed and treated in a timely way. It also removes the need for staff to make appointments during the working day.

Our respondents had many positive comments about virtual GP services. For example:

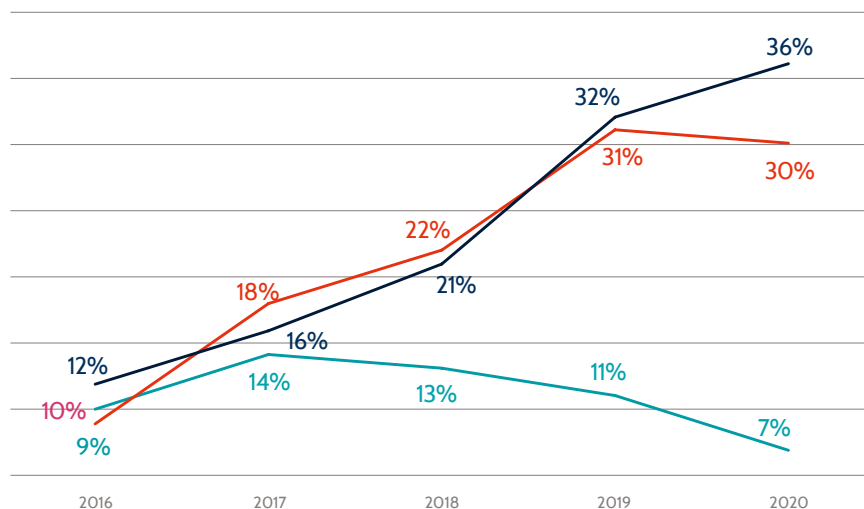
“We see value in virtual GP services for our highly mobile workforce, many of whom work at various client premises or from home. We want to offer anywhere, anytime access to healthcare services and the virtual services are a value add within the primary care setting, particularly if there is a need for fast referral to specialist services.”

Global Wellbeing Senior Manager,
management consultancy firm

Figure 4.7

Do you currently offer virtual GP access, a health/wellbeing app for smartphones or wearable devices for employees? (for 2020 n=244)

■ Virtual GP access ■ Health/wellbeing app for smartphones ■ Wearable devices



Covid-19 update

Virtual GP services given a boost in response to pandemic



More than one in 10 businesses (13%) are to increase spending on provision of virtual GP services and a further 9% will introduce this benefit for the first time in response to the Covid-19 health crisis.

These are findings from REBA's snapshot survey, *Impact of the coronavirus crisis on pay, bonuses and employee benefits*,²² carried out at the start of April.

Indeed, it is more than likely that demand for virtual GP services will see a considerable boost over the next 12 months and may become more mainstream.

Early on in the Covid-19 crisis, the NHS dramatically and speedily scaled up use of virtual consultations as part of measures to combat the virus' spread. The switch could leave a lasting legacy if it leads to growing confidence among GPs and patients in the value of online health services, and a willingness to continually improve how they are delivered.

The downward trend in the use of wearable device technology by employers is interesting to note especially since, a few years back, it was touted as holding great promise for advancing the workplace wellbeing agenda.

And wearable tech is in great demand – just not inside the workplace. Gadgets such as fitness trackers, smart socks or smart glasses are increasingly popular among UK consumers. The number of users²³ is predicted to reach 8.3 million in 2020, up from 6.6 million last year, indicating that wearable tech is becoming very much a part of everyday life.

Cited benefits for workplaces of staff using these gadgets include improved productivity, decreased sickness absence, enhanced health safety and increased organisational efficiency.

However, there are considerable barriers to adoption which clearly haven't been overcome. These include technical implementation (integrating devices with existing systems), cost and being able to interpret and use the aggregated data in a meaningful way. From the employees' perspective, privacy concerns and worries about how their data is being used are also big obstacles.

21. *Impact of the coronavirus crisis on pay, bonuses and employee benefits*, Second snapshot survey, REBA, 31 March to 6 April 2020.

23. Wearables, Statista, December 2019. Available at <https://www.statista.com/outlook/319/156/wearables/united-kingdom?currency=gbp#market-arpu>

Responding to the Covid-19 pandemic by stepping up our wellbeing provision

PRACTITIONER VIEW

Debbie Fennell

Senior Benefits Manager
DHL Supply Chain



“At this time, employees need empathy, kindness and positivity from their leaders, so all our communication and support aim to reflect this.”

DHL Supply Chain employs around 40,000 people in the UK, the majority of whom are working on the frontline delivering essentials such as medical supplies and fuel. During the pandemic, a sizeable proportion are working from home, some have been temporarily redeployed to other roles within the business and others are furloughed.

The pandemic presents different challenges for our colleagues depending on their personal circumstances, and all of these can impact mental health.

These challenges include dealing with isolation and not being able to see family or friends; balancing home and work, for example, managing issues such as home schooling; fear and anxiety around Covid-19 itself and the risk of becoming infected or passing it on; financial worries; and dealing with bereavement.

Long before the outbreak hit the UK, we were already working on a wellbeing programme as one of our 2020 priorities – but with the virus' rapid escalation we swiftly moved from the planning phase into delivery. Ultimately, we will need to review and consider the long-term impact on mental health and what the 'new normal' is. However, we have already identified four key wellbeing priorities. These are:

1. Communicating about existing wellbeing resources and support. These include our employee assistance programme, private medical insurance with Doctor@Hand service (an online GP service), discounted will writing, and more.
2. Implementing and communicating two new, highly relevant wellbeing benefits: a 24/7 GP service for all employees and a mental health app.
3. Offering financial wellbeing support. We provide information about internal benefits and support but also point employees to helpful external links.

4. Supporting our internal communications team in providing regular and honest two-way communication for our colleagues. At this time, employees need empathy, kindness and positivity from their leaders – all our communication and support aim to reflect this. Working together with our internal communications team, we have been issuing a fortnightly briefing pack containing holistic wellbeing information and articles on health issues such as sleeping, exercise and how to maintain physical, emotional, financial and social wellbeing.

Our benefits platform has also become even more of a hub for wellbeing support and trusted resources and is easily accessible from work or home.

Our parent company DPDHL's purpose is 'Connecting People, Improving Lives' and we have really seen this come to life in recent weeks. For example, our internal communication app, where colleagues can share heart-warming stories, has become a great channel for recognising individuals and teams that have gone the extra mile to help each other, the community and the nation. The app also allows us to post regular updates from the management team. What about the future? What will be the long-term impact on colleagues' mental health, or our ways of working? We certainly don't have all the answers yet but we are already thinking about all these issues.

Our regular drumbeat approach to communication will undoubtedly play a key role in supporting our employee wellbeing.

5. Insurance

Value of benefits packages that support healthcare



Value of benefits packages that support healthcare

When it comes to managing risk, private medical insurance continues to be central to most employers' strategies. A key trend to note this year is an improvement in the way employers' insurance offerings and wellbeing plans work together – strengthening the value of both.

Private medical insurance continues to be most widespread

As in all of our previous wellbeing research reports, private medical insurance is again the most popular wellbeing insurance product, offered in one form or another by four fifths (80%) of organisations – although only a quarter (26%) provide employer-paid cover for all their employees (see Figure 5.1).

By contrast, income protection insurance is the most commonly provided 'all-employee' product, with almost a third (32%) providing it to all staff, regardless of grade.

Dental cover is rarely offered as an employer-paid benefit for all (7%) or some (5%) employees. However, it is the most common option on flexible benefits menus (16%) or among the voluntary benefits offered by employers (30%). Self-insured healthcare trusts, more common among larger companies, are used by around a fifth (21%) of respondents.

Private medical insurance continues to be a central component of most employee benefits packages although the expense of these products means that many are only provided as an employer-paid benefit for those at the highest levels of the organisation. However, voluntary and flexible benefits schemes provide useful vehicles for ensuring everyone in the organisation has access to wellbeing support without incurring any additional costs for the employer.

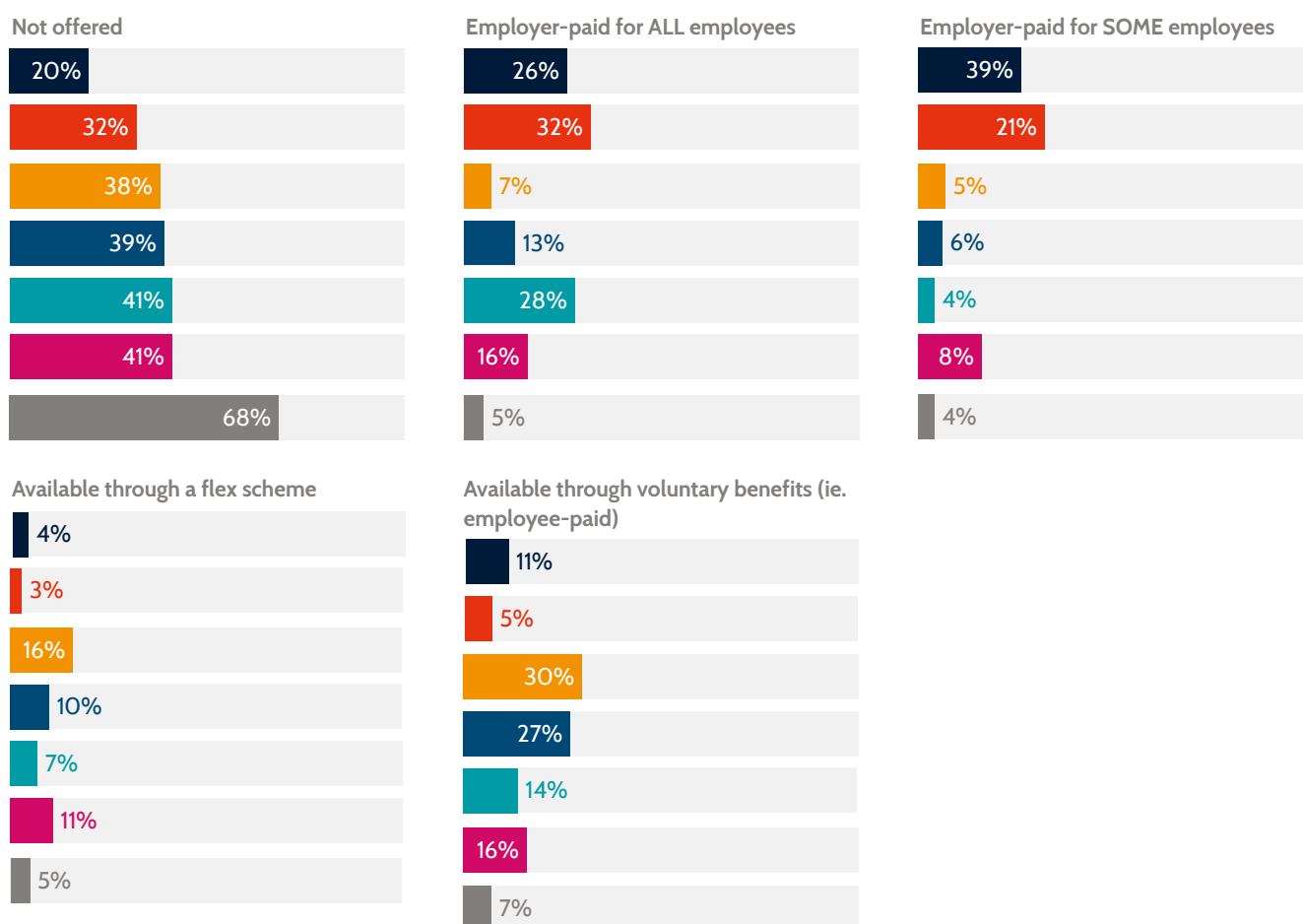
The use of healthcare trusts is fairly high among our sample. This arrangement is an alternative to traditional private medical insurance where employers self-fund their corporate healthcare provision. They are increasingly popular with larger organisations looking for greater flexibility (benefits can be completely tailored to suit their requirements) and cost control.

5. INSURANCE

Figure 5.1

Do you provide your employees with any of the following health and wellbeing insurance products? (n=260)

■ Private medical insurance ■ Income protection insurance ■ Dental cover ■ Healthcare cash plans
 ■ Optical cover ■ Critical illness insurance ■ Self-insured healthcare trust



Covid-19 update**Huge majority of employers safeguarding insurance benefits despite the financial impact of the current health crisis**

How has the pandemic affected cover levels? Benefits spend is holding steady, with 99% of employers saying cover levels for critical illness will remain the same, 91% saying group private medical insurance will stay intact and 98% that group income protection will be unchanged.

The findings are from REBA's snapshot survey, *Impact of the coronavirus crisis on pay, bonuses and employee benefits*,²⁴ carried out at the start of April.

Clearly, organisations are intent on supporting employee wellbeing throughout this crisis and see no value in trying to make savings through reduced cover levels.

The majority of employers are not tailoring wellbeing schemes to address areas where cost claims are highest

This year, we asked respondents which three conditions incurred the highest aggregate cost claims or healthcare trust payments over the last 12 months. Four fifths (80%) cited musculoskeletal conditions among their top three conditions, while seven in 10 (71%) cited cancer. Around half (47%) included mental health conditions in their top three.

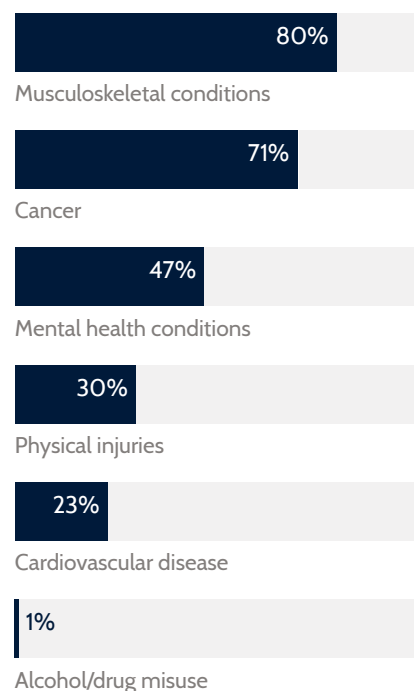
We also asked employers if they had identified their biggest risk factors when it comes to insurance claims and taken action to address them. Just two fifths (41%) told us they had done this. The majority (59%) had not taken any specific actions to address risks associated with higher cost claims.

Musculoskeletal conditions most commonly rank in the top three areas that incur the highest aggregate cost claims. Linking that finding back to the results showing which areas of wellbeing employers currently address is interesting (see Figure 1.8, page 23).

A total of 69% of employers say musculoskeletal conditions are included in their wellbeing strategy, only the sixth most popular area. It's also low on the priority list for 2020, with only 10% of organisations saying they plan to introduce measures to address musculoskeletal conditions this year. We might have expected both these figures to be higher given the costly nature of this area of health.

Figure 5.2

Which three conditions have incurred the highest aggregate cost claims or healthcare trust payments at your organisation in the last 12 months? (n=163)



²⁴ *Impact of the coronavirus crisis on pay, bonuses and employee benefits*, Second snapshot survey, REBA, 31 March to 6 April 2020.

Both private medical insurance costs and income protection insurance costs will generally rise when employers make more frequent and costlier claims. By identifying which conditions are leading to claims most often, employers can tailor their wellbeing strategies and initiatives accordingly and hopefully reduce the number of claims being made. Some of our respondents are doing just this.

For example:

“We work closely with our HR colleagues to understand key service issues and how the wellbeing plan can be utilised or tailored to assist with some of these issues. We use data and insights from our absence reporting system to evaluate any interventions needed, or that are already implemented, so we can reflect on the impact.”

Hanna Prince, Health and Attendance Advisor, Derby City Council

Significantly, leading employers are also starting to recognise that modelling risk around health factors is much more than a cost issue.

Serious conditions such as cancer have a high impact on staff planning and levels of absenteeism, leading to loss of talent and experience. Employers that take a more strategic view and identify this as a human capital management issue are better placed to respond accordingly. In the case of cancer, it could be a holistic workplace policy that offers emotional support, financial support and return to work support, benefiting both the organisation and individual affected.

Wellbeing plans and insurance benefits are working more in tandem

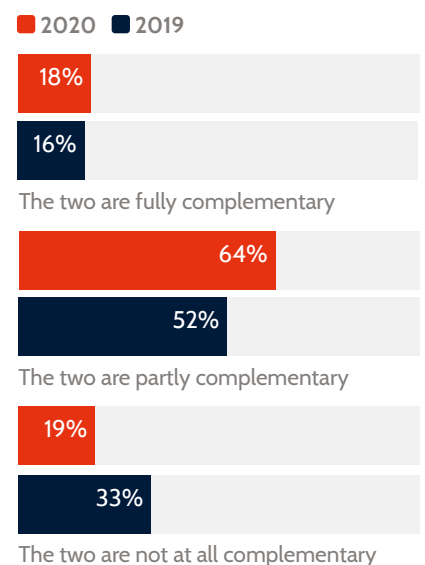
This year has seen some progress in how effectively organisations feel their wellbeing insurance offering works together with their wellbeing plan. Almost one in five (18%) feel the two are fully complementary, up from 16% in 2019. And nearly two thirds (64%) believe they are partly complementary, up from 52% in 2019.

We have defined complementary to mean working in tandem or collaboratively, so the outcome is more joined-up.

The percentage of employers that feel their insurance offering and overall approach to employee wellbeing are not complementary at all has fallen to fewer than one in five (19%), down from 33% in 2019.

Figure 5.3

How well do you feel your insurance offering integrates with your wellbeing support offering (for 2020 n=214)



It is encouraging to see some improvement being made here. A more joined-up approach between insurance products and wellbeing initiatives can enhance the value of both – and many of our respondents are pleased with the results. For example:

“Every year we host a wellbeing supplier partner forum where we bring everyone who supports us together, including our health insurer. This means we are all joined up and supporting the future wellbeing strategy.”

Fiona McAslan, Wellbeing Lead, RBS

Cost and siloed offerings present obstacles to closer integration

A fifth (20%) of respondents say there is no barrier to ensuring their insurance offering and wellbeing offering are more synchronised.

Where employers do face barriers, they include cost (18%), siloed product offerings (16%) and the fact that offerings are managed by different teams (15%).

A significant portion of employers admit there are no barriers to ensuring insurance and wellbeing offerings are better coordinated. Nevertheless, many organisations recognise there is still some work to do in this area. Aside from cost, the other obstacles cited can also, to some extent, be addressed by better communication.

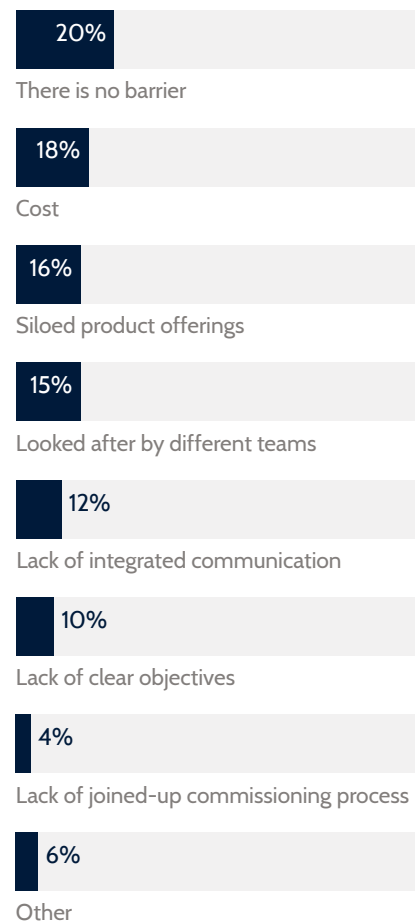
For example:

“It would be great if our insurers and providers came to the table more frequently, not just to discuss claims performance, but also to understand our wellbeing strategy and to work with us to establish meaningful ways they can support us.”

Clare Betts, Senior Manager – Reward & Wellbeing, BGL Group

Figure 5.4

What, if any, is the biggest barrier to greater integration of your insurance offering and wellbeing support offering? (n=192)



6. Measuring Effectiveness & Communication

Assessing wellbeing strategies to ensure they stay fit for purpose



Assessing wellbeing strategies to ensure they stay fit for purpose

More employers than ever are striving to measure the impact of wellbeing programmes on their workforces. Wellbeing reporting is also on the rise. Being able to turn data into actionable insight to keep wellbeing plans relevant and effective is still a challenge for some employers though.

Assessment of wellbeing programmes is more common this year

This year, more than nine in 10 (92%) employers said they use some form of management information to measure the effectiveness of their wellbeing initiatives. This is a huge increase on last year, when fewer than three quarters (74%) of respondents assessed the impact of their plans.

The majority of organisations look at 'proxy' measures to evaluate the impact of their wellbeing initiatives. Almost three quarters consider employee engagement levels (72%) and employee absence rates (70%), for example, while two thirds (66%) look at wellbeing programme participation rates.

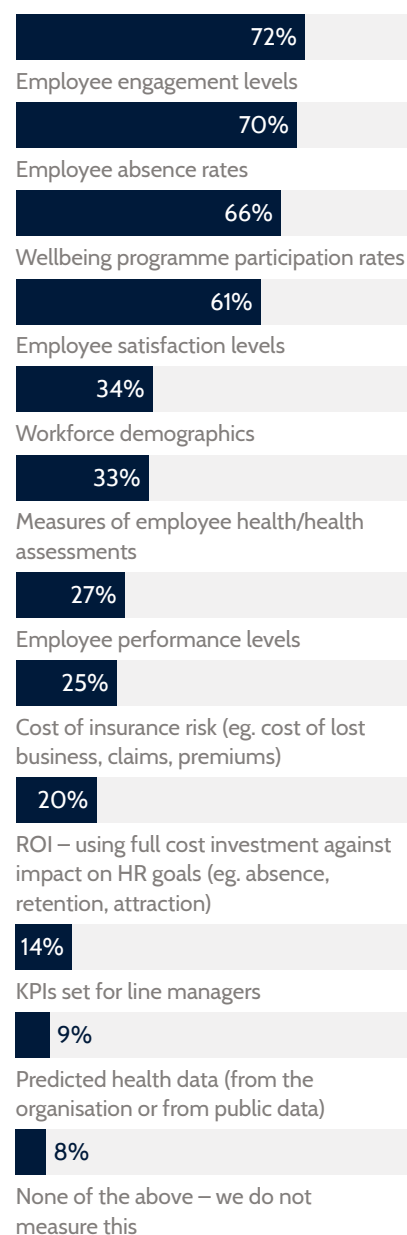
By contrast, a third (33%) of respondents look to take direct measures of employee health. Fewer respondents consider financial measures, with a quarter (25%) using the cost of insurance risk to measure the impact of their wellbeing approach and one in five (20%) calculating the return on their wellbeing investment (ROI) in terms of common HR targets, such as absence and retention rates.

Looking at statistics around engagement levels, participation rates and employee satisfaction can help validate employers' overall approaches to wellbeing and the initiatives they offer. Equally, low participation rates may help inform changes to their programmes.

It can be more difficult to make direct links between wellbeing initiatives and outcomes such as reduced rates of sickness absence or improved levels of staff retention, but these statistics should still be considered when judging the success of any wellbeing programme. And calculating the ROI on wellbeing can also be complex, particularly given the issues of confidentiality and the sensitivity of data in this area. It is therefore encouraging to see a fifth of employers using their data to calculate ROI.

Figure 6.1

What management information do you use to measure the effectiveness of your wellbeing initiatives? (n=276)





Health and safety is the area most often measured to gauge success

As has been the case since 2017 when we started exploring this area, by some distance health and safety is the category most widely measured. Almost three quarters (74%) of respondents have developed metrics in this area (see Figure 6.2). Measurement of other conditions is not as prevalent. There are only two other areas where more than half our sample collect statistics on the outcome of their wellbeing initiatives – musculoskeletal conditions (58%) and flu (53%).

For the third time in a row, measurement of mental health has increased. In 2018, just over a third (36%) of employers collected data on their employees' mental health. This increased to 44% in 2019 and this year almost half (49%) of respondents have metrics in this area.

Looking at how respondents measure the impact of individual areas of wellbeing, it is clear that this remains a discipline in its infancy. It is not surprising to see health and safety leading the way, given employers' legal responsibilities around this.

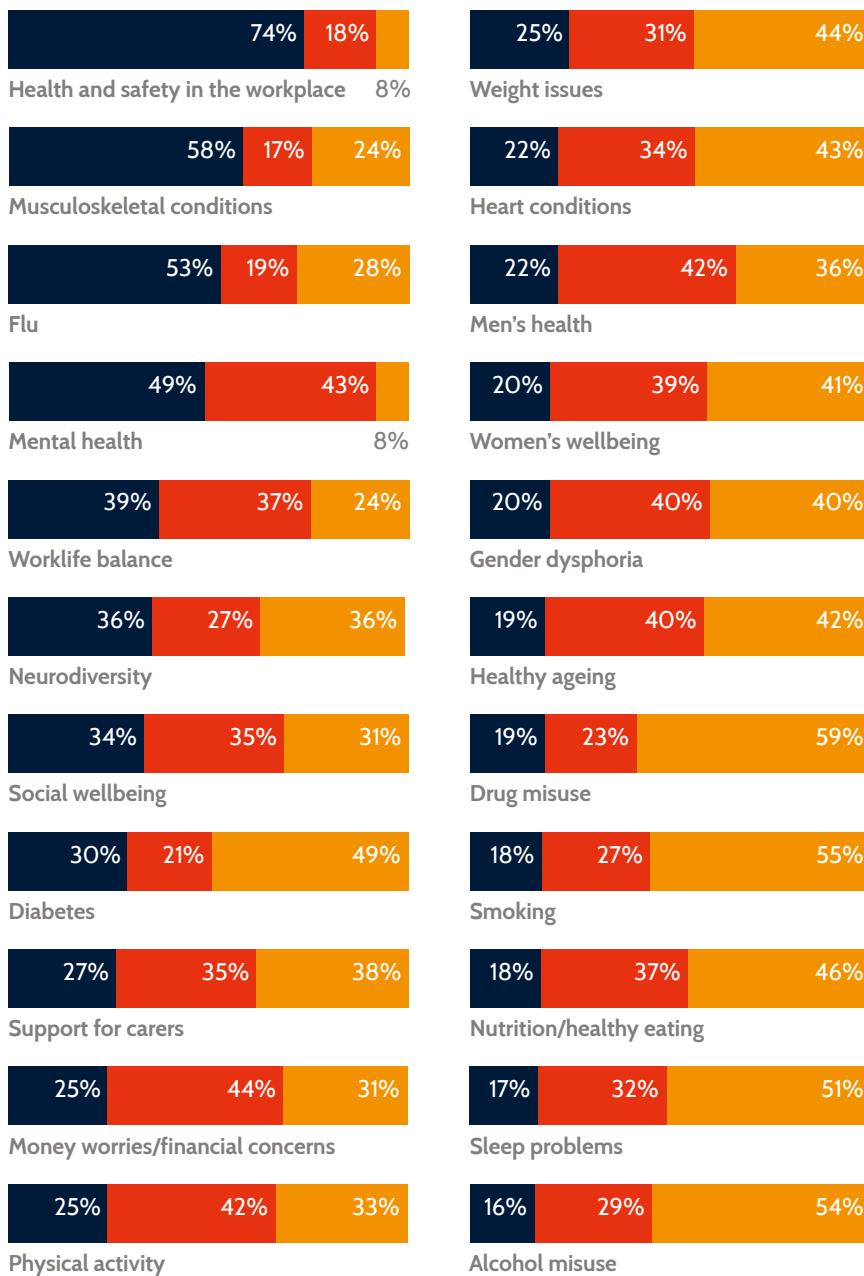
Measurement of other services and initiatives has room to improve but it is encouraging to see some growth in mental health, where stigma and negative perceptions can make accurate data collection difficult.

The statistics showing which of the areas most employers are planning to develop metrics in is striking. Some of these include money worries (44%), men's health (42%) and gender dysphoria (40%). It will be interesting to see how employers develop systems of measurement in these kinds of areas, and how they capture information to gauge improvement or change.

Figure 6.2

Do you measure the success of your wellbeing initiatives in any of these areas?
(n=161)

- Yes – we have metrics in this area
- No – but we are developing/plan to develop metrics
- No – and we have no plans to develop metrics



Preventing mental ill-health in a high-pressured environment

PRACTITIONER VIEW

Ellie Vaughan

Global Head of Reward and Benefits
Herbert Smith Freehills



“We have been developing strategies and resources to help our people manage their mental health and resilience for some time.”

Herbert Smith Freehills is a leading global professional services firm, with over 5,000 employees and partners in 26 locations, including 2,000 lawyers.

It's no secret that mental health and resilience have been high on the agenda for many law firms for a number of years, and that includes for us.

The nature of legal work can contribute to mental ill-health. Across the sector, many lawyers are charged out by the hour, which results in some people in the industry working extremely long hours on very complex work in a high pressured and competitive environment, with their professional success often judged on this. Without support, that can lead to long term mental ill-health in varying degrees.

There aren't many sectors in which you can see a direct link between the resilience of individuals and the resilience of the business. However, professional services is definitely one of them. We have been developing strategies and resources to help our people manage their mental health and resilience for some time. As a result, when the Covid-19 lockdown started, we already had the foundations in place to help staff – but we still had to adapt.

We have been very fortunate that the majority of our people could work from home and we had the systems to support that. However, working from home still brought its challenges. For example, the need to juggle work and responsibilities for dependant care, which can result in very long days, and a range of distractions that can have an impact on individuals' level of focus.

To support staff, we focused on four key areas. The first was around offering flexibility in the way they work. We allowed employees to adapt their working situation to complement their home life as much as possible to make sure they could find time to completely switch off. Handing that control back to employees has been a powerful way to help them to build resilience.

We've signposted all the support on mental health and resilience that is available to our people. We recently implemented a new global employee assistance programme, which has enabled us to provide a more consistent approach to offering mental health support, as well as encompass support for issues related to other areas such as financial wellbeing. Being able to offer proactive support can really help to stop those stresses contributing to mental ill-health.

Herbert Smith Freehills also has mental health champions who can raise awareness of the mental wellbeing support we offer. They are trained to spot signs and symptoms of mental ill-health so that we can direct help to people who need it the most.

In addition, we have focused on education and awareness for managers. With so many staff working from home, line managers are on the front line, so we are proactively supporting them to support their staff, and helping them get back to whatever the new version of normal will look like.

The impact of wellbeing initiatives is generally fairly well understood by employers

Building on the question of evaluation, this year we also asked respondents how well they understand the impact of their wellbeing initiatives on employees. More than half (53%) feel they have a fair understanding, while a quarter (25%) said their understanding is good. Just 5% rated their understanding as excellent.

However, 16% admitted they are struggling to grasp the effects of wellbeing services on their employees.

As noted above, assessing the impact of wellbeing initiatives, outside of the area of health and safety, is difficult.

Still, a large majority – 83% – of our respondents say they have some understanding of how their plans and strategies are working out. Success stories and gains should be well communicated across the organisations to reinforce a wellbeing culture.

For example:

“We have a wellbeing working group and wellbeing champions internationally across our business. We can only fully understand our impact by listening to our employees and encouraging them to tell their stories. They have lots of creative ideas and suggestions and love to be involved in wellbeing decision making. We are also developing a set of metrics to help us assess our wellbeing impact holistically.”

Julia Munday, Global Head of Employee Relations, Alex Mann

Figure 6.3

How well do you feel you understand the impact your wellbeing initiatives are having on the workforce? (n=276)



Data availability and quality issues are hampering efforts to assess health and wellbeing programmes

Almost half (49%) of organisations report that a lack of internal data is a major barrier when it comes to measuring the effectiveness of their wellbeing initiatives, while a further two fifths (43%) said that the data they have is incomplete or of poor quality. Both these issues have been cited as the top barriers to measurement since 2018.

Gathering data is proving to be a challenge. However, aggregated and anonymised data should be available that can inform employers of the overall levels of wellbeing within their organisations. Statistics on absence records, staff turnover rates and health insurance claims could all provide useful benchmarks for measuring wellbeing and comparing progress over time without infringing on individuals' confidentiality.

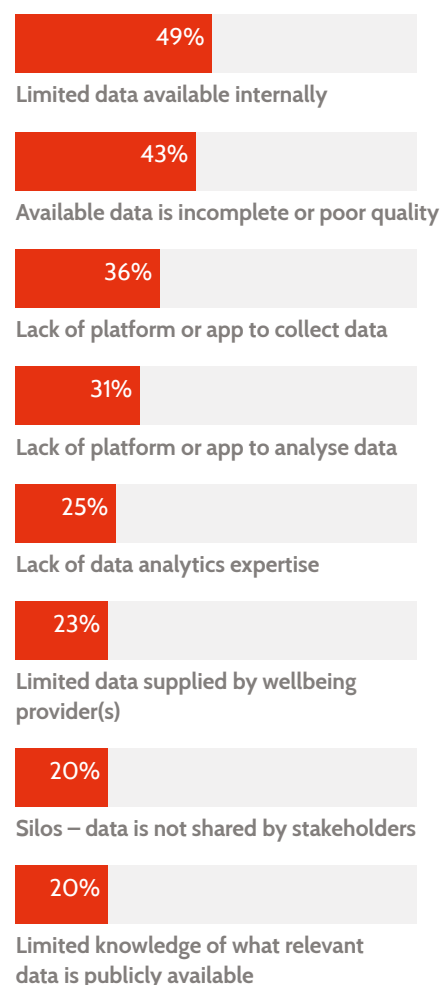
Many of these metrics should be accessible internally. Others may have to be supplied by wellbeing providers or insurers. However, this is another major obstacle – almost a quarter (23%) of our respondents reported having difficulties getting the data they need from their suppliers. This is a problem we have noted in previous years and is showing no signs of improving. Employers need to feel confident about asking their suppliers for the data they need and, by the same token, suppliers need to be able to fulfil these requests.

Even where good data is available, employers can still run into problems when analysing it. Almost a third (31%) of organisations told us they do not have an adequate platform or app with which to analyse their data and a quarter (25%) lack the analytics expertise required to generate meaningful insights from the statistics and figures they have to hand.

These difficulties do not affect every organisation, however, as the next finding highlights.

Figure 6.4

What are the main barriers to measuring the effectiveness of your organisation's wellbeing initiatives? (n=253)



Organisations are generally confident they can interpret and understand wellbeing data

Three fifths (62%) of employers describe themselves as either confident or extremely confident in being able to understand and explain their wellbeing data and the impact it has on HR strategies.

Confidence is lower when considering the impact on wider business strategies but more than half (53%) feel confident or extremely confident on this issue too.

Even with the reasonably high levels of confidence shown by many organisations, it appears that some HR departments and wellbeing specialists are struggling to turn their data into actionable insights, in other words apply data analytics expertise. To overcome these problems, investment from employers will be critical either by hiring data analytics specialists or buying in such a service from an external provider.

As we have seen, gathering and sharing wellbeing data is not easy so, when it is available, it is important to use it well.

Wellbeing reporting by organisations is on the rise

Wellbeing reporting has increased overall this year. In 2019, a third (33%) of employers told us they did not report on wellbeing metrics at all but this year that percentage has dropped to just under a quarter (24%).

Where metrics on wellbeing are reported, it tends to be done internally – more than half (56%) of respondents report to the senior leadership team, just under half (46%) report to the HR function and two fifths (40%) report to the board (see Figure 6.6). Reporting on wellbeing to staff is more unusual – just one in five (21%) organisations share wellbeing data with their employees. And external reporting is rarer still – just one in 10 respondents include wellbeing metrics in their annual report.

The metrics reported most commonly include levels of sickness absence and staff turnover, wellbeing programme participation rates and occupational health referrals.

The increase in wellbeing reporting is a step in the right direction and is further evidence that organisations attach importance to monitoring and supporting the health and wellbeing of their employees. Availability of wellbeing metrics is vital – it can influence decision making in this area, particularly by boards and senior executives that take an evidence-based approach.

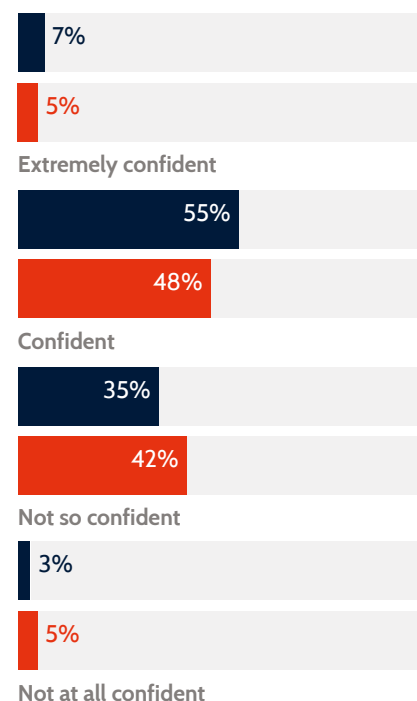
Where wellbeing metrics are not shared or published there is also a risk of strategies losing impact and being sidelined, so it's a critical piece of work employers should continue to develop.

The fact that most wellbeing reporting remains internal is no surprise. Employers have no obligation to report publicly on this issue. Until this kind of reporting is normalised or required by law, this situation is unlikely to change.

Figure 6.5

How confident are you in interpreting and understanding your data on wellbeing and its impact on your HR and business strategies? (n=276)

■ Impact on HR strategies
■ Impact on business strategies



Building our benefits strategy with wellbeing at the centre

PRACTITIONER VIEW

Jeremy Hill

Head of Pensions and Benefits
Standard Chartered Bank



“Wellbeing needs to be at the centre of all that we do.”

The last few months have seen an acceleration of our thinking both about wellbeing and the future of work. In particular, we are bringing forward ideas about embedding wellbeing within our organisation. Rather than being a product that we add on, such as gym membership, we want wellbeing to become a part of the way we think and part of our culture.

That means making sure we have support and buy-in from senior business leaders. We also make use of our various networks within the organisation both at a global level, such as our Diversity & Inclusion council and our integration group that leads on from that, and at local level through champions and communities. Then, we can adopt global wellbeing approaches that reflect our overall thinking and introduce local initiatives that flow from that. So, a gym membership is still relevant, but it is tied to our global strategy and global thinking, which is part of our overall culture.

As we have looked at the future of work generally, and explored different models of working with our partners, we have also examined the relationship between the employer's role and that of the country it operates in.

We've been exploring questions such as whether multinationals should be a driver for strategy, or whether change is about individuals (the rising number of gig workers, for example).

We feel wellbeing is central to all of those situations. So, whether strategy is driven by the individual, the corporate or nation, wellbeing is at the centre. From our perspective, we have taken the view that it doesn't matter what the balance is between contractors and permanent staff, for example, wellbeing needs to be at the centre of all that we do.

From a pensions and benefits perspective, this also means reversing our thinking – considering wellbeing first, then putting benefits and products in place to support wellbeing, rather than simply introducing them for their own reasons.

Covid-19 has prioritised some initiatives that we had already been planning. For example, we had an employee assistance programme operating in most of our markets and were moving to a global approach, but we are now doing that more quickly.

We've also introduced a digital app so that we can provide support for all of our workforce, and not just during acute situations. The app particularly focuses on mental health, which is so important.

Mental wellbeing support is an area of development for us, so we are now exploring how we expand our approach and what we can offer for our global population. However, we are aware that in some markets talking about mental health still has significant stigma attached to it, which needs to be overcome. We think that can be supported effectively by giving people access to personal, independent, anonymised tools so that they can take advantage of the help on offer without having to open up to their people leaders, or to make a declaration that they need support.

Traditional media most often used to communicate about wellbeing activities

The top three media used to communicate wellbeing initiatives remain the same as last year: email (82%), posters and leaflets (71%) and dedicated wellbeing pages on the corporate intranet (60%) (see Figure 6.7).

The use of social media has increased since last year, with almost a third (30%) of respondents now using platforms such as Twitter and their own internal messaging platforms to communicate about wellbeing – up from less than a quarter (24%) a year ago.

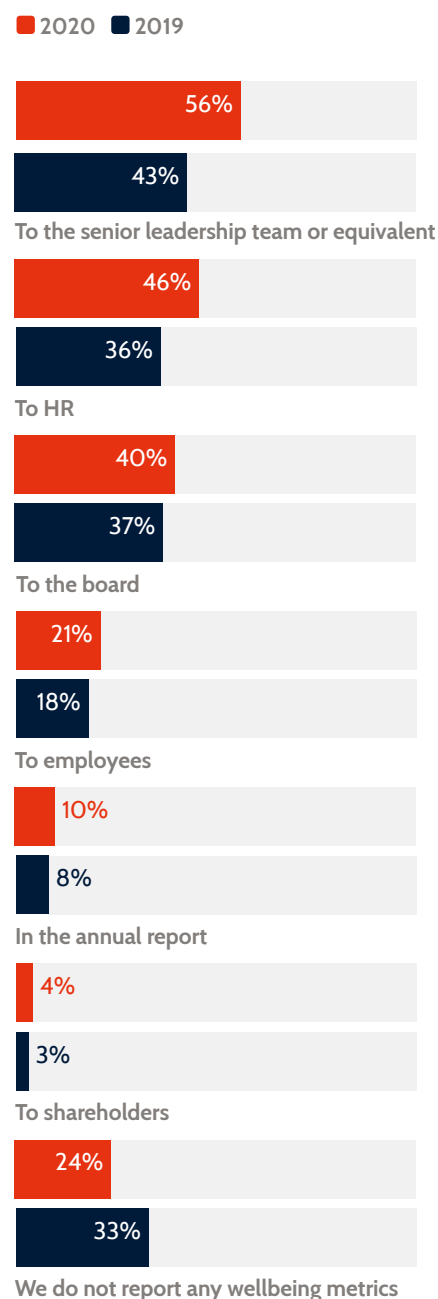
The number of people using social media in their day-to-day lives continues to rise – according to the latest figures on internet usage from the Office for National Statistics,²⁵ 68% of British adults accessed social networking sites in 2019, compared with 45% in 2011 – so it is to be expected that employers should make more use of these channels to communicate with employees about wellbeing.

Despite an uptick last year in the use of less traditional media it has dipped again this year. For example, the use of audio and video messaging has decreased to 11%, compared with 14% last year. Similarly, the use of online or mobile games has gone down to 4%, down from 5% last year.

The use of modern communications technology appears to be stalling when it comes to promoting messages about health and wellbeing. Audio, video and gaming channels can be used creatively to generate engaging messages. They lend themselves to telling powerful and moving personal stories that can be so effective in sharing the benefits of wellbeing and raising awareness around issues such as mental health. However, to do these activities well requires some specialist knowledge and skills and may be more costly. This may explain why their use remains limited.

Figure 6.6

Where do you report your employee wellbeing metrics? (for 2020 n=272)

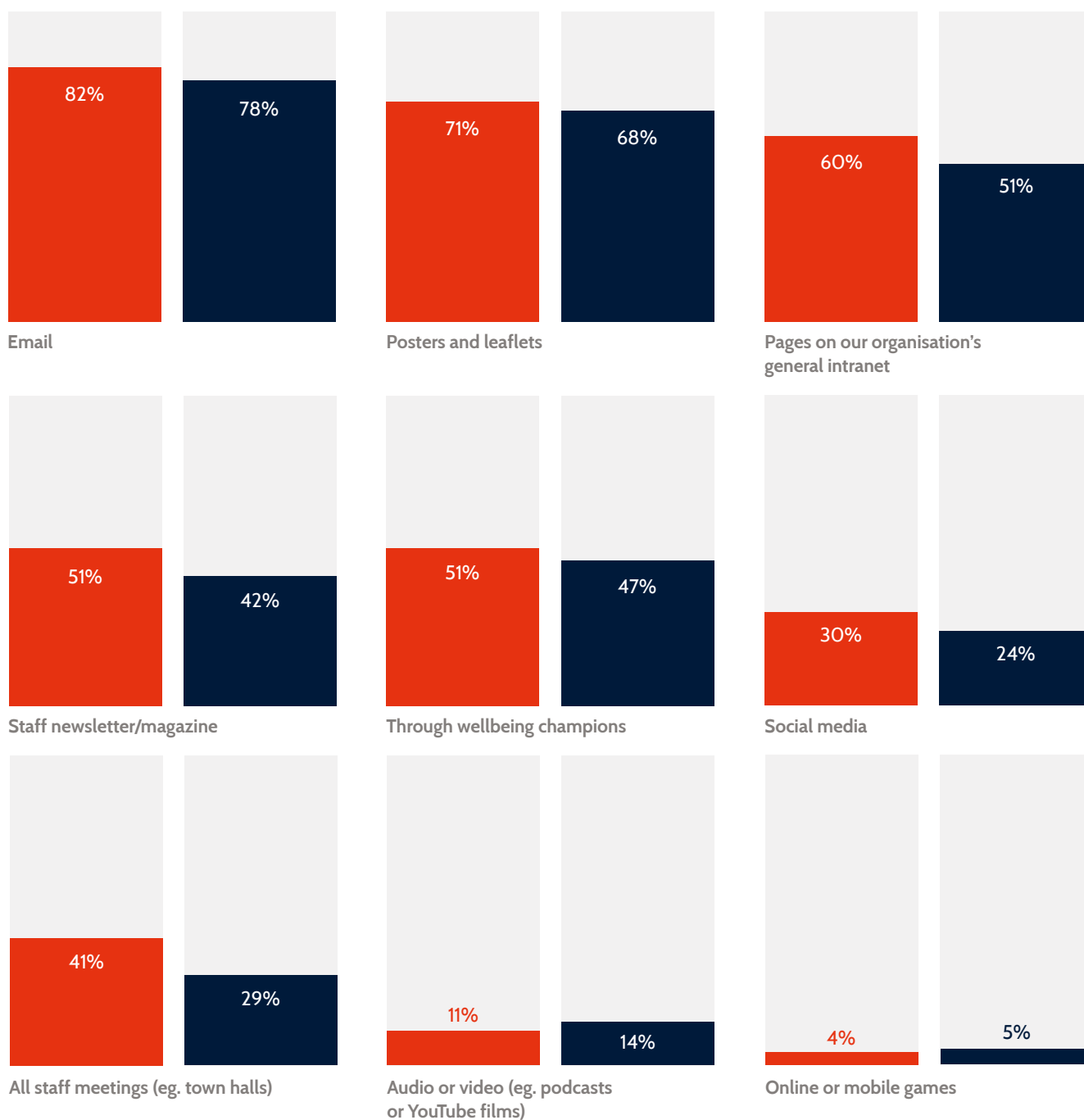


25. Internet access – households and individuals, ONS, Aug 2019. Available at: <https://bit.ly/3dS54RU>

Figure 6.7

How do you communicate your wellbeing initiatives across your organisation? (n=235)

■ 2020 ■ 2019



A majority of employers include wellbeing in their inductions for new starters

More than two thirds (68%) of organisations communicate about wellbeing during the induction process for new starters, a significant rise on last year's figure of 56%.

More than half (55%) include wellbeing in regular business updates and just under half (49%) discuss wellbeing issues at staff meetings.

Last year, only 20% incorporated communication about wellbeing into staff meetings, so this year's figure represents an increase of 145%.

One in five (20%) include wellbeing within employees' learning and development plans and one in 10 (13%) cover wellbeing as part of the performance management process.

Effective communication is the ingredient that can transform wellbeing strategies from written policy into a dynamic journey sparking change in work behaviour and practices. Ensuring that new starters are aware of the overall approach to wellbeing and the initiatives provided is a savvy move on organisations' part. It can be an important step in trying to instil widespread change and can help new employees feel valued from the very start. This sort of messaging is consistent with creating a culture where employee wellbeing is taken seriously and forms a central part of day-to-day work.

Making communication about wellbeing a regular part of updates on business strategy and at staff meetings is also key. It reinforces the view that wellbeing is not a standalone initiative divorced from the drivers that lead to organisational success (profit, productivity or other non-financial outcomes) but is core to both employers and employees achieving their aims and targets.

The idea of setting targets and objectives around wellbeing does not always sit comfortably with employers. However, as more organisations start to move away from annual performance meetings that focus on assessment and ratings towards more regular, informal and wide-ranging conversations, the performance management process could present an opportunity to discuss the subject of wellbeing with individual employees. It can be the ideal time to raise issues about unhealthy practices such as presenteeism and poor worklife balance, for example, or talk through concerns about stress or overload.

Figure 6.8

When do you communicate with employees about your wellbeing initiatives? (n=240)



Appendix

Appendix 1: About the survey

Appendix 2: Full list of respondents

Appendix 3: Who we are



Appendix 1: About the survey

The REBA Employee Wellbeing Survey 2020 was carried out online between 23 December 2019 and 31 January 2020. Responses were received from 309 wellbeing, HR and employee benefits specialists working at organisations of various sizes and across a broad range of industry sectors. Not all of the questions were answered by the whole sample.

Figure 7.1

Respondents by organisation size

1-249	42	13.6%
250-999	89	28.8%
1,000-4,999	122	39.5%
5,000-9,999	22	7.1%
10,000-19,999	17	5.5%
20,000+	17	5.5%
Total	309	100%

Figure 7.2

Respondents by industry sector

Public sector	49	15.9%
Financial services	39	12.6%
Professional services (including legal)	39	12.6%
Technology	32	10.4%
Not for profit	27	8.7%
Engineering and construction	20	6.5%
Retail and wholesale	20	6.5%
Manufacturing and production	18	5.8%
Transport and logistics	12	3.9%
Food and drink	11	3.6%
Health and pharmaceuticals	10	3.2%
Leisure and travel (including hotels and hospitality)	10	3.2%
Media and telecommunications	9	2.9%
Utilities and energy	6	1.9%
Mining, oil and gas	4	1.3%
Education	2	0.6%
Other	1	0.3%
Total	309	100%

Additional findings from REBA's second snapshot survey, *Impact of the coronavirus crisis on pay, bonuses and employee benefits*. This was carried out between 31 March and 6 April 2020 and received 213 responses from REBA members, including employers such as the BBC, BP, Costa Coffee, easyJet, Ikea, Marks & Spencer and Santander.

In total, the businesses that responded to the survey represent around 1.3 million employees, across industry sectors including financial services, technology, retail and engineering. Eight out of 10 (81%) respondents were from the private sector.

Appendix 2: Full list of respondents

AP Moller – Maersk	B Braun Medical	Bunzl Cleaning & Safety
AB Sugar	BCG	Burberry
Aberdeen International Airport	Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner	Cabot Financial (Europe)
ACC Aviation	Benefex	Canada Life UK
ACCO UK	BGL Group	Cancer Research UK
Accord Housing Association	Bibby Financial Services	Capgemini UK
Activate Learning	Bidfood	Capital One (Europe)
Adam Smith International	Birmingham City Council	Capula Investment Management
Addison Lee Group	Birmingham City University	CAYSH
Affinity Trust	Black Swan Data	CDK Global
Airbus	Blackhawk Network Europe	CDL
AirTanker	Blackpool and The Fylde College	Centrica
Akamai Technologies	BlackRock	Cervello
Alexander Mann Solutions	Blue Cross	Charles Stanley & Co
Amadeus IT Services UK	Blue Prism	Charles Taylor
Amey	BMT	Christie's
Anaplan	Bouygues E&S Contracting UK	Chrysaor E&P Services
Angel Trains	Brambles	CIPS
Applus UK	British-American Tobacco (Holdings)	Cisco
APPrendere Srls	British Council	City Plumbing
Arcadis UK	British Standards Institution	Civil Service
Ascential	Britvic Soft Drinks	Colgate-Palmolive
ASOS	Brown-Forman	Colorcon
Avanade	Browne Jacobson LLP	Commerzbank AG
Avis Budget Group	Browns Food Group	Commonwealth War Graves Commission
AWE	Barnet and Southgate College	

Appendix 2: Full list of respondents continued

Computershare	Elysium Healthcare	HE Simm
Connect Group	EMCOR UK	Healthcare at Home
Coventry City Council	Energy Saving Trust	Hermes Parcelnet
CPI	Epping Forest District Council	Hexcel
Crown Agents	Epsom and St Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust	Highland Spring Group
Croydon Council	Equifax	Hilti (Gt Britain)
DAC Beachcroft	EXL Service	Home Office
Debenhams	Expand Executive Search	HomeServe
Defaqto	Experian	HumanRadars
Department for Transport	Expro	Hymans Robertson
Department for Work and Pensions	ExtraCare	idverde
Derby City Council	FCC Environment	IHS Markit
DHL Supply Chain	Finabl	IKEA
Direct Line Group	Financial Conduct Authority	ilke Homes
Direct Wines	Financial Ombudsman Service	Inchcape
Dixons Carphone	FIS	Incisive Business Media
Dogs Trust	Forest Holidays	InterContinental Hotels Group
Domestic & General	Fowler Welch	JDA Software UK
Donnington Grove Vets	FTI Consulting LLP	J Murphy & Sons
Dover Fueling Solutions	Games Workshop	Jaguar Land Rover
Drax Power	Getronics	John Lewis Partnership
easyJet	GFM ClearComms	Johnson Controls
Ecclesiastical Insurance	Guernsey Post	Joseph Rowntree Foundation
Edge Hill University	Hargreaves Lansdown	Just Eat
Edgewell Personal Care	Havas Media Group	JW Marriott Grosvenor House
Electronic Arts		Kent County Council

Appendix 2: Full list of respondents continued

Keoghs	Matalan Retail	Numatic
Kindred Group	McCann Central	Ocado
King's College Hospital NHS FoundationTrust	McDonald's Restaurants	Octavia
Kingfisher	McLaren Automotive	Odgers Berndtson
Knorr-Bremse	Medallia	Ofsted
Korn Ferry	Mediaocean Systems	One Housing Group
Kuehne + Nagel	Merseyrail	Onward Homes
L'Occitane	MicroStrategy	Opus Energy
L'Oreal	Mondelez Philippines	Orange Business Services
L&Q	Morleys Stores Group	Oxera Consulting LLP
Lands' End Europe	MVF	Palletways UK
Leeds Beckett University	N2O	Parkside Hospital (part of Aspen Healthcare)
Leica Geosystems	Nando's UK	Penningtons Manches Cooper LLP
Leidos	National Care Group	Pladis
Lendlease	National Trust	Port of Tyne
Libertat	Natixis	PragmatIC Printing
Liverpool John Moores University	NAVIGO Health and Social Care CIC	Progress Housing Group
Liverpool Victoria Friendly Society	NHS Ayrshire & Arran	Rathbones
Lockheed Martin	NHS Blood and Transplant	RBC
London Borough of Bromley	Nordoff Robbins	RBS
London Borough of Hillingdon	Norland College	Reading Borough Council
London Borough of Southwark	North Bristol NHS Trust	ReAssure
London Stock Exchange Group	Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust	Refinitiv
Low & Bonar	Nottingham City Council	ResMed
lululemon	NTT	Richard Alberto HR Consultancy
LV= General Insurance	NTT DATA	Ricoh UK

Appendix 2: Full list of respondents continued

Ringtons	Superdry	UK Research and Innovation
Rolls-Royce	Taylor Wessing LLP	Unibail-Rodamco-Westfield
Rotork	Teesside University	University of Lincoln
Safran Electrical & Power	Telford Homes	University of the West of Scotland
Sainsbury's	Thales UK	Uppingham School
Sandvik Holdings	The Holly Private Hospital	URW
SAP UK	The Marshall Country Wellness Plan	Value Retail
SATCoL	The Riverside Group	Vaultex UK
Schlumberger	The Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead	Versus Arthritis
Scottish Qualifications Authority	The Scottish Salmon Company	Virgin Media
Secure Trust Bank Group	The Social Element	Volkswagen Financial Services UK
Sensata Technologies	The Walt Disney Company	Walker Morris
Serocor Group	Thesis Asset Management Limited	Webhelp
Severn Trent	Thirteen Housing Group	Wells Fargo
Shell International	Thomas Miller	Wesleyan
Siemens	Thomson Reuters	West Midlands Combined Authority
Skipton Building Society	Three UK	Whitbread
Sky	thyssenkrupp	Whittan Group
Slaughter and May	Tideway	Winchester City Council
Smurfit Kappa	TLT LLP	Withersworldwide
Softcat	Translink	Woodland Trust
Soil Association	Travis Perkins	Worley
Southern Co-op	TRL	Yorkshire Building Society
Square Enix	TUI	Zappar
Standard Chartered Bank	Ubisoft Reflections	Zurich Insurance Company
Sunrise Senior Living	UCB	

Appendix 3: Who we are

About us: Reward & Employee Benefits Association

REBA is the professional networking community for reward and benefits practitioners.

We make members' working lives easier by saving them time, money and effort through sharing experience, ideas, data and insight with each other.

We help members to pursue best practice, increase professionalism in the industry and prepare for upcoming changes. REBA also lobbies government on members' behalf.

What REBA does:

- Runs regular conferences and networking events, both face-to-face and virtually through webinars and online platforms
- Supports the reward and benefits community through its rebalINK peer-to-peer networking platform
- Produces benchmarking research, insight & data reports, and analysis on key reward and benefits themes
- Curates an industry-wide research library of reports, government consultations and best-practice guides
- Creates, curates and distributes online content for the reward and benefits community, including industry insights into best practice, case studies and thought leadership
- Delivers focused content to our membership through daily emails and social media channels
- Supports professional members with supplier shortlisting and research.

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Reward & Employee
Benefits Association

About our sponsor: AXA PPP healthcare

Established in 1940, AXA PPP healthcare is one of the UK's largest, most experienced healthcare companies.

We combine our health and wellbeing expertise with your intimate knowledge of your business to devise and introduce strategies that drive awareness and engage workforces in their health – and crucially, support and intervene when it's most appropriate.

Just like people, businesses need healthy routines. Our programmes encourage a culture of wellbeing that supports employees to live healthy, active lives and bring their best self to work.

We take a holistic 'bio-psycho-social' approach to supporting employee wellbeing by supporting its five key drivers: health, fitness, nutrition, lifestyle and mindset.

We're firm believers that insight guides an ever evolving wellbeing strategy, and we apply the data we capture to show the impact on our clients' workforces and inform the development of their strategies.

For more information please visit:

Website: www.axapphealthcare.co.uk/business/



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