

CIPD



som
Supporting occupational health
and wellbeing professionals

Professional Framework for Workplace Wellbeing



What one word would you use to describe the wellbeing activity in your organisation?

ROI of investment in wellbeing?

29% of organisations expect their wellbeing budget to increase in next 12 months
(CIPD, 2025)

75% of organisations are taking action to improve employee health and wellbeing
(CIPD, 2025)

74% of organisations state senior leaders prioritise wellbeing
(CIPD, 2025)

Average return of £4.70 for every £1 invested in employee mental health and wellbeing initiatives
(Deloitte, 2024).

1.9 million workers suffering from work related ill health
(HSE, 2024)

Average sickness absence rose to 9.4 days per employee per year
(CIPD, 2025)

63% of employees reported at least one symptom of burnout
(Deloitte, 2024)

Despite increasing resources in organisations, demands and work stress continues to increase
(Jain et al, 2022).

The complexity of health and wellbeing professions



“Part of the problem in the wellbeing space is the assumption that anyone can do it...and that means they can kind of dismiss us”

Research participant

Our research aims

We set out to develop a professional framework for wellbeing professionals.
Our aims were to:



Map wellbeing roles across disciplines such as Occupational Health, Health & Safety, HR



Define progression pathways for development and career progression



Support employers and institutions to identify strengths and training needs

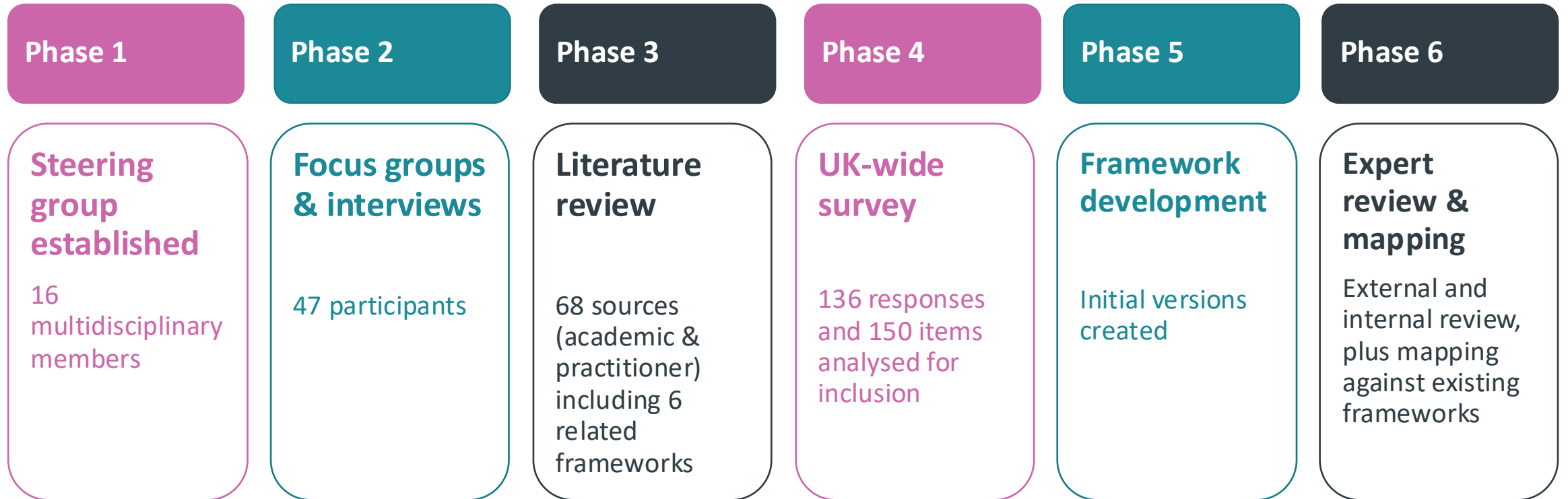


Support recruitment and retention of wellbeing talent



Increase visibility and recognition of wellbeing professionals

Our research process



Key findings



Desire for consistency

A clear appetite for shared standards, role clarity, and progression pathways



Lack of shared knowledge base

Despite broad agreement on the skills required



Variation in practice

Across background, seniority, team size and organisational maturity

Levels

Three levels were developed from the five original survey levels, based on data patterns and differences.

Level 1

Entry-level advisor or practitioner

Level 2

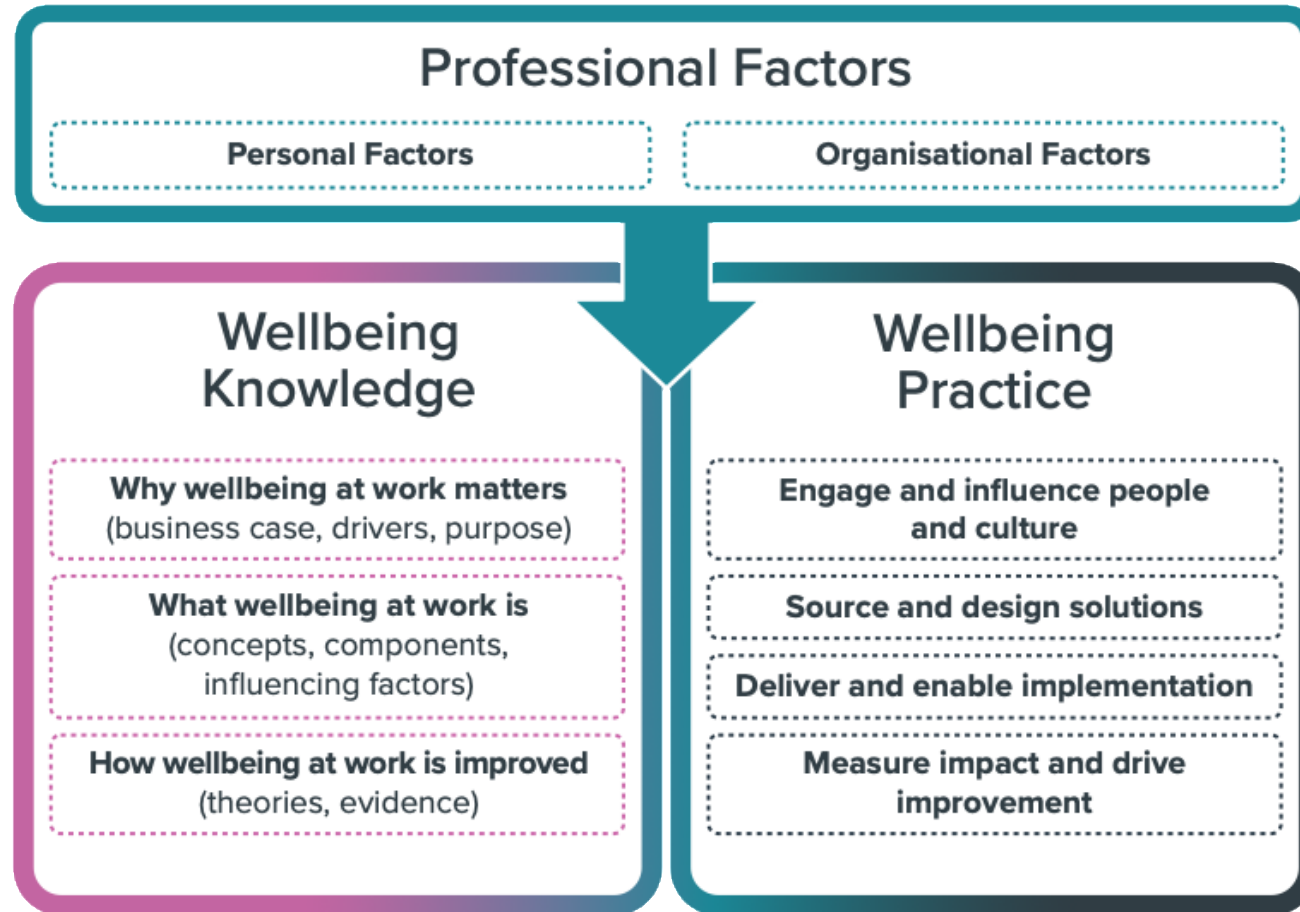
Senior Practitioner, Manager, Lead, or Specialist

Level 3

Head of or Strategic Lead

Professional Framework for Workplace Wellbeing

An integrated, multi-disciplinary framework
for evidence-based wellbeing practice



Professional Factors

Personal Factors

- Ethical Practice
- Commitment to Learning and Growth
- Empathy
- Collaboration
- Influence
- Creativity
- Critical Thinking
- Passion for Wellbeing
- Boundary Management

Organisational Factors

- Financial Management
- Management of Data
- Technological Fluency
- Organisational Skills
- Contextual Knowledge
- Evidence-based Decision Making

Wellbeing Knowledge

Why wellbeing at work matters
(business case, drivers, purpose)

What wellbeing at work is
(concepts, components, influencing factors)

How wellbeing at work is improved
(theories, evidence)

- The impact of work on health
- Strategic business case for wellbeing
- Return and value on investment

- Defining wellbeing and ill health
- Determinants of wellbeing
- Evidence and theory
- Enabling Good work
- Effective interventions
- Context and Compliance

- Strategy and Governance
- Prevention and Promotion
- Development
- Research literacy and translation
- Support
- Implementation
- Evaluation

Wellbeing Practice

Engage and influence people and culture

Source and design solutions

Deliver and enable implementation

Measure impact and drive improvement

- Stakeholder engagement and collaboration
 - Inclusive and ethical practice
 - Communicating with impact
 - Influence and Advocacy
-

- Identifying needs and priorities
 - Making informed and strategic decisions
 - Designing interventions
-

- Preventative interventions
 - Capability-building interventions
 - Support interventions
 - Health promotion interventions
-

- Analysing data
- Evaluating Interventions
- Presenting Insights and Impact

In which of these areas do you have most confidence in your knowledge and skills?

In which of these areas do you have less confidence in your knowledge and skills?

CIPD

The Profession Map

The Profession Map sets the international benchmark for the people profession. It is a make better, do more, live better, platform at your core, drive change to your organisation and progress to your career. No matter who you are in the profession, whether you're a CIPD member or not, the Profession Map is relevant to you.

The Profession Map includes seven relevant to all people professionals (purpose and values, Core knowledge and Care behaviours), and optional areas dependent upon your role (Specialist knowledge).

Core knowledge

- People practice
- Culture and behaviour
- Business acumen
- Evidence based practice
- Technology and people
- Change

Care behaviours

- Ethical practice
- Professional judgement and integrity
- Working practices
- Passion for learning
- Commercial skills
- Passion for inclusion
- Insights focused
- Intellectual decision-making

Specialist knowledge

- Employee experience
- Employee relations
- Equality, diversity and inclusion
- Learning and development
- Reward
- People analytics
- Organisation development and design
- Resourcing
- Talent management
- Wellbeing

peopleprofession.cipd.org

CIPD

The logo for the Workplace Wellbeing Profession Map™ is located in the top right corner. It features a stylized tree icon with roots and branches, with the text 'SUPER' in a large, bold, sans-serif font and 'WELL' in a smaller font below it. To the right of the tree is a small circular emblem containing a stylized figure. Below the tree, the text 'Workplace Wellbeing Profession Map™' is written in a smaller, sans-serif font. The main title 'Workplace Wellbeing Profession Map™' is prominently displayed in the upper left quadrant in a large, bold, white sans-serif font. Below the title, the subtitle 'Professional standards for workplace health and wellbeing' is written in a smaller, white sans-serif font. The background of the top half is a solid dark purple. The bottom half of the image is a photograph showing a close-up of a person's hand placing a small, light-colored chess piece (a king) on top of a pyramid made of wooden blocks. Several other chess pieces are scattered on the surface in the foreground. The background of the photograph is blurred, showing what appears to be a window with natural light. At the bottom of the image, there is a dark purple banner with the text 'Copyright © SuperWellness. All rights reserved.' in a small, white sans-serif font.

The Leadership Qualities Framework

For Adult Social Care

The National Skills Academy
SOCIAL CARE

Leadership starts with me

DH Department of Health

VOLUNTARY CODE OF PRACTICE FOR WORKPLACE WELLBEING PRACTITIONERS

As a professional workplace wellbeing practitioner, you should demonstrate commitment to the following outcomes in your professional practice:

Professional values and attributes

- Develop your own judgement of what works and does not work in workplace wellbeing
- Challenge your practice, values and beliefs
- Inspire, motivate and raise aspirations of stakeholders through your enthusiasm, energy and passion for advancing workplace wellbeing
- Be creative and innovative in selecting and adapting wellbeing strategies to help organisations and individuals
- Value and promote social and cultural diversity, equality of opportunity and inclusion
- Build positive and collaborative relationships with all colleagues and other parties engaged in workplace wellbeing activities

Professional knowledge and understanding

- Develop deep and critically informed knowledge and understanding in workplace wellbeing theory and practice
- Maintain up-to-date knowledge of your vocational area of workplace wellbeing
- Engage in a continuous cycle of empirical and practical research to develop evidence-based practice
- Understand the currency of local laws and regulations and assess their impact on the wellbeing and treatment of people
- Monitor and critically evaluate and assess its impact on workplace wellbeing
- Manage and promote a positive workplace learning context and behaviours; and ensure that you contribute to your professional workplace wellbeing role and responsibilities.

Professional Skills

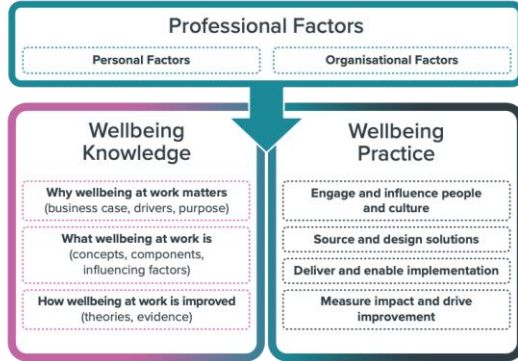
- Develop your expertise and practical skills to ensure the best health and wellbeing outcomes for your organisation;
- Plan and deliver effective workplace wellbeing programmes in line with the World Health Organization's (WHO) framework model and other national directions, where applicable;
- Champion the following WHO Key to Healthy Workplace through key activities, such as:

- Key 1: Leadership commitment and engagement
- Key 2: Involve workers and their representatives
- Key 3: Business ethics and legitimacy
- Key 4: Use a systematic, comprehensive process to ensure effectiveness and continual improvement
- Key 5: Sustainability and integration

The cover features a dark blue background. At the top, logos for NHS, Health Innovation London, Health Innovation East, Health Innovation West, and UCL Partners are displayed. The title "Developing Health and Wellbeing Leads" is prominently shown in white. Below it, a subtitle reads "Supporting and upskilling those who lead in health and wellbeing services to improve staff welfare and retention". On the right side, there is a circular graphic containing a stylized heart shape with the letters "NHS" inside it, set against a patterned background.

NHS Developing Health and Wellbeing Leads

How the framework compares



Covers both knowledge and practice

Unlike existing frameworks, this one brings together what people need to know **and** what they need to do.

Applies across professional backgrounds

It is designed for multidisciplinary wellbeing practice, rather than a single professional route.

Reflects different levels of seniority

The framework recognises progression from entry-level practice to strategic leadership.

Includes personal and organisational factors

It recognises that practice is shaped by both individual capability and organisational context.

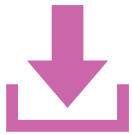
*“Professionalism, Progression, Confidence which
leads to Credibility”*

Steering Group member

How might you use the framework?

- For your own development – as reflection or for CPD planning
- As a manager to support development conversations
- In teams to understand the different skills and knowledge across your organization
- In organisations to use in assessment and selection or in development discussions

Next steps



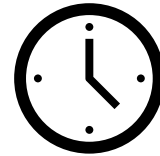
Download the report

Access the full framework and research report



Complete the self-assessment

Receive an individual profiling and development report



Book a coaching session

Sign up for a 1-hour career conversation with a senior Affinity team member



Explore upcoming training

Modular learning opportunities across 3 levels, launching summer 2026

What would you like to see happen next with the framework?



Thank you

For more information about Affinity Health at Work:

Connect on LinkedIn

www.affinityhealthatwork.com

hello@affinityhealthatwork.com

For more information on the framework:

<https://www.affinityhealthatwork.com/professional-framework-for-workp>



Any questions?

Our sincere thanks go to our partners, the Research Consortium and our Steering Group for their time, participation and support through this work.



Becky Thoseby –
Ministry of Justice



Duncan Spencer –
Institution of
Occupational Safety
and Health (IOSH)



Hannah Pearsall –
Hays



Assistant Professor
Jonathan Houdmont –
University of
Nottingham



Nikki Kirbell – Rolls-
Royce



Stuart Mace –
Construction Health
and Wellbeing Ltd



Dr Rachel Lewis –
Affinity Health at
Work



Jonathan Gawthrop –
OCS (Formerly at
EMCOR)



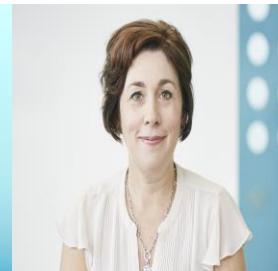
Kris Ambler –
British Association for
Counselling and
Psychotherapy (BACP)



Heather Beach –
Healthy Work
Company



Matt Smeed –
Working Well
Community



Rachel Suff –
Chartered Institute of
Personnel and
Development (CIPD)



Professor Neil
Greenberg – Society
of Occupational
Medicine



Dr Nupur Yogarajah -
NHS



Ryan Hopkins –
JAAQ



Phoebe Smith