

**Subject line: Universal Access to Occupational Health**

Dear **(insert MP's name)**,

I hope this email finds you well. As one of your constituents and a **(insert job title)** I am writing to you about a growing concern, particularly considering the COVID-19 crisis.

50% of the UK population do not have access to occupational health (OH) services, putting return to work at risk.

There is a strong economic case to implement access to OH for all employers. OH services are key in supporting employees back to work and keeping them in work safely during these challenging times. Small and medium enterprises and the self-employed will need support to ensure there is a safe work environment, with a focus on mentally healthy workplaces. Early research shows that many returning to work during the COVID-19 crisis will return with depleted mental health. OH services have been proven to enable those on sick leave due to mental health problems to return to work successfully. Preventative measures in place through the application of occupational hygiene is also critical.

There is an opportunity now to positively influence the health and wellbeing of the working population and the prosperity of the nation. By investing in OH, the government can support employers to safeguard their workforce and manage risks.

I urge you to please write to the secretary of state for health and social care, the Rt Hon Matt Hancock, and ask him to publish a white paper with the DWP, building on the *Health is everyone's business consultation* at <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/health-is-everyones-business-proposals-to-reduce-ill-health-related-job-loss> e.g.

- Health Education England and its equivalents in the devolved administrations invest in training of OH professionals such as occupational medicine trainees and OH nurses
- There should be investment in expert OH advice in government, the establishment of an OH national data set and UKRI investment in a research Centre for Health and Work to translate evidence into policy
- Tax incentives by the Treasury so employers can invest in OH
- Access to OH for GPs
- A National Clinical Director for Work and Health to lead this work.

With thanks and I look forward to hearing from you.

Best wishes,

**(Insert name, Post code)**