Work and mental well-being
AHEAD Conference

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&
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Staff engagement and well-being: The wider picture

1. Health and Safety Authority (Ireland) Work Positive Project
2. The (UK) Foresight review of “Mental Capital”
3. The UK government’s Health, Work and Well-being initiative - Dame Carol Black’s review
4. The National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE, UK) guidelines on mental well-being at work
5. National Economic and Social Forum (NESF, Ireland) report on Mental health at work
Common themes

- Work is good for people
- Positive mental well-being brings benefits for organisations and individuals
- A strategic approach is required
- Key workplace factors influence psychological well-being
- Management behaviour is important
Common themes

• Work is good for people

• Positive mental well-being brings benefits for organisations and individuals
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The beneficial effect of work on people’s lives

- Money and material well-being
- Social identity and status
- Structure and purpose
- Sense of personal achievement
- Social contacts and support

90% of people with mental health problems wish to work
Common themes

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• Key workplace factors influence psychological well-being
Psychological well-being

- higher cardiovascular risk
- higher weight and waist-hip ratios
- higher HbA1c (marker for diabetes)
- lower HDL “good” cholesterol
- poorer neuro-endocrine regulation
- higher salivary cortisol throughout the day
- poorer immune function
- higher inflammatory markers (IL-6)
- poorer sleep - longer duration REM - less body movement

*Ryff, Singer and Love,*
*Philosophical Transactions of Royal Society of London, 2004*
Psychological well-being (PWB)

Cohen et al., Psychosomatic Medicine, 2003
## Costs to employers of mental ill health

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Costs per average employee</th>
<th>Total costs to UK economy</th>
<th>% of total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Absenteeism</td>
<td>£335</td>
<td>£8.4 billion</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presenteeism</td>
<td>£605</td>
<td>£15.1 billion</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee turnover</td>
<td>£95</td>
<td>£2.4 billion</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>£1,035</td>
<td>£25.9 billion</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Organisational-level impact

Some studies:

- **Donald et al., (2005)** – almost a quarter (23%) of variance in employee productivity (sample of 16,000 UK employees) is explained by:
  - Psychological well-being
  - Perceived commitment of organisation to employee
  - Resources and communications

- **Cropanzano and Wright (1999)** Five year longitudinal study of psychological well-being and performance. Strong correlation between well-being and work performance

- **Harter, Schmidt and Keyes (2003)** Nearly 8,000 separate business units in 36 companies engagement/well-being correlated with business unit performance (sickness-absence, customer satisfaction, productivity, employee turnover, etc…)

- **Boorman review (2009)** Health & well-being related to: MRSA, Patient satisfaction, Agency spend
Positive psychological well-being – behavioural impact

People higher on psychological well-being
  • Show greater flexibility and originality
  • Respond better to unfavourable feedback
  • Make more positive judgements about others
  • Show higher levels of “Engagement”

• Are likely to live longer … be sick less often … and have happier work and home life
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When it goes wrong

- Mentally or physically ill
- Present but at risk
- Short-term
- Long-term
- Permanently out of work

Unhealthy organisational practices
A (non)strategic approach

Occupational health
Counselling
Fast track treatment etc...

Mentally or physically ill
Health and Safety
Risk assessment
Training etc...

Present but at risk

Engaged and well

HR
Talent management
Selection processes
Leadership & Management development etc...
A strategic approach

Occupational health

Mentally or physically ill
Present but at risk

Health and Safety

Engaged and well

HR
When it goes right

Engaged and well

Mentally or physically ill
Present but at risk

Short-term
When it goes right

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Engaged and well

Promotion and prevention

Protection

Restoration/intervention
Restoration/intervention

- Pre-employment health checks and disclosure
- Traditional rehabilitation
- Individual placement & support
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Workplace psychological well-being whose problem?
Pressure, stress and Performance
Managing psychological well-being at work

- Feel Good Zone
- Peak Performance
- Switched Off
- Stressed Out
Organisational outcomes
- Productivity
- Low Sickness absence
- Low Turnover
- Attractive to recruits
- User/patient satisfaction

Individual outcomes
- Productivity & satisfaction
- Good citizenship
- Health & well-being

Key factors that influence psychological well-being?
- Psychological well-being (& Employee engagement)
Pressure & stress: Types of pressure

- **Hindrance pressures**
  - Role ambiguity
  - Work Relationships
  - Job insecurity

- **Challenge pressures**
  - Workload
  - Time pressure
  - Job scope
  - Responsibility
## The ASSET Model

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hindrance pressures</th>
<th>Challenge pressures</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Resources &amp; Communication</td>
<td>• Hard goals (achievable, specific)</td>
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<td>• Control and autonomy</td>
<td>• Pay &amp; benefits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Work relationships</td>
<td>• Well-managed change</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Work life balance</td>
<td>• High workload</td>
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<td>• Work overload</td>
<td>• Increased responsibility &amp; control</td>
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<td>• Job security</td>
<td></td>
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Workplace factors and well-being

- Demands
- Control
- Relationships
- Change
- Role
- Support

- Resources & Communication
- Control and autonomy
- Work relationships
- Work life balance
- Work overload
- Job security
- Pay and benefits

- Demands
- Control
- Support
- Change
- Role
- Reward & contribution
## Pressure

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<th>Type of Pressure</th>
<th>Strain</th>
<th>Job satisfaction</th>
<th>Commitment</th>
<th>Turnover</th>
<th>Withdrawal</th>
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# Pressure

Podsakoff et al., Jour Appl Psych, 2007

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<td>0.29</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
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Management behaviour

The role of management

• Managers capable of leading for performance AND well-being
• A workforce high on engagement AND well-being
The role of line managers

• Strengthen the role of line managers in the organisation by promoting and developing appropriate management styles and skills.

• Increase understanding of how management style and practices can help to promote the mental wellbeing of employees and keep their stress to a minimum.

• Ensure that managers are able to identify and respond to employees’ emotional concerns, and symptoms of mental health problems.

“We are particularly concerned at the high levels of psychological and mental health problems that NHS staff suffer from, not least because … management attitudes and practices may contribute to this”

NHS Health and Well-being Review, Interim Report
Management & leadership

• Quality of relationship with manager predicts employee turnover (Griffeth et al., 2000 – meta-analysis)

• Management/leadership behaviour related to:
  Burnout
  Health complaints
  Psychiatric disturbance

  “…supervisor behaviour can affect employee well-being … those seeking to create healthier workplaces should not neglect supervision.” (Gilbreath and Benson, 2004)
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- Management behaviour is important … but people can be helped to help themselves
Personal resilience

- Staying focused/bouncing back under adversity
- Sustaining the well-being reservoir
The Reservoir of Well-Being

- Conflicting goals
- Too much travel
- Unreasonable demands
- Working with difficult people
Building personal resilience

- Self awareness - “Inbuilt” personality
- Understanding workplace pressures
- Dealing effectively with workplace pressures
Sustaining high performance in challenging situations

- Enhancing self-awareness
- Generating positive emotions
- Build coping strategies
- Building mental toughness through tough experiences (but with suitable respite)
- Maintaining clear Sense of Purpose (Moral Compass)
- Using positive attributional (explanatory) style to deal with success and failure
- Spotting “thinking errors”, e.g.
  - Mind-reading
  - Magnification or minimisation
  - All-or-nothing thinking
- Physical exercise!
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Key workplace factors
- Sense of purpose
- Resources & Communication
- Control and autonomy
- Work Relationships
- Work Life Balance
- Work Overload
- Psychological well-being (& Employee engagement)
A strategic approach

- Mentally or physically ill
- Present but at risk

Occupational health

Engaged and well

HR

Health and Safety