

Event Overview: Attending the National Health and Wellbeing Conference

Introduction and background

On the 8th October 2019 I was grateful to be representing HEE working across the North West at 'The National Workplace Health and Wellbeing Conference' aimed at outlining the latest insights currently being used by public and private sector companies, to support employers in developing high quality health and wellbeing strategies.

Thoughts/ reflections of the day

Although my passion for social sciences and current role working with psychological professions and population health had given me a basic background knowledge on physical and mental wellbeing. I was fascinated to hear about the breadth of publicly accessible guidance documents available, and relieved to hear the continuous theme of open and collaborative working across sectors.



Below I have summarised the main contributors to poor mental health and wellbeing, that stood out to me the most:

1. Poor financial wellbeing was one of the recurring themes of the day. Dhiren Master at [‘Salary Finance’](#) outlined ‘that less than 13% of employees felt comfortable discussing financial situations’, which often led to absenteeism, issues with presenteeism and quality of work, and the need to increase “financial fitness” to avoid employees relying on payday loan companies to help with financial strain. Hackney Council was outlined as having adopted the ‘Salary Finance’ model of salary linked loans with competitive repayment rates, showing highly beneficial results.
2. On a similar note, Clare Perkins from [Public Health England \(PHE\)](#) outlined that lack of access to safe and affordable housing and access to services is a huge driver in mental health and wellbeing.
3. [Department of Work and Pensions’ \(DWP\)](#) Tabitha Jay outlined issues faced by individuals with disabilities or those who have taken longer than 12 months on sick leave, when trying to re-join the workforce as there is a ‘lack of preventative culture’ which the government is trying to address through “Improving Lives: The Future of Work, Health and Disability” which aims to get 1 million disabled people in work by 2027.
4. Furthering the relation of absenteeism and work-related stress, [Health and Safety Executive’s \(HSE\)](#) Rob Vondy outlined in the Labour Force Survey that stress, depression and anxiety account for 57% of lost working days, and that a strong management framework is key to both identifying the problem and having a framework to use to come to a resolution.

Useful links/ resources

HSE’s Rob Vondy outlined that HSE inspectors can step in to do an investigation of a business if a health and wellbeing grievance is not resolved within ‘reasonable time’ by employers

[Talking Work](#) – provides centralised resources

[ACAS Framework](#) for a positive mental wellbeing model

[Disability Confidence Scheme](#)

RAND’s [Promising Practices for Health and Wellbeing at Work](#)

[Every Mind Matters Campaign](#)

[Go Home Healthy](#)

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