**Workplace Health February 2024 Bulletin - A focus on Long Term Health Conditions**

A long-term health condition is defined as a condition that cannot at present, be cured but can be controlled by medication and therapies. We have collated guidance and resources to help you support employees with long-term conditions.

**Long term health conditions may include:**

Cancer

Dementia

Diabetes

Mental health

Menopause

Parkinson’s disease

Peri menopause

Respiratory conditions

Musculoskeletal conditions

Epilepsy

Arthritis

COPD

Hypertension

Supporting staff with long-term health conditions helps them to remain in work or return to work. This benefits an organisation in retaining a valuable member of staff, helps with the management of sickness absence and its associated costs.

**How can you support your employees?**

* Register for the [Healthy Workplace Standards](https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing-hub/workplace-health-and-wellbeing-across-milton-keynes-bedford-borough-and-0) to gain an award in inclusive employment.
* Ensure you comply with the [Equality Act 2010](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance) which legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace.
* Provide a safe environment and ensure an inclusive culture by having open conversations, leading by example, challenging stigma and raising awareness.
* Get to know your workforce through consultation and engagement to offer appropriate support.
* Offer reasonable adjustments including provision of equipment, physical changes to the workplace and/or changes to work patterns’.
* Offer flexible working to enable part time, flexible hours, and phased return to work.
* Ensure your policies are inclusive and are supportive of employees with long term health conditions.
* Sign up to the [Disability Confident Scheme](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/disability-confident-campaign) which supports employers to become a disability confident employer.

**Further information and support services**

* Support services include the Individual Placement Service (IPS), Maximus and Talking Therapies. Please see our [Workplace Health and Wellbeing Service Offer Brochure](https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2023-11/Workplace%20Health%20and%20Wellbeing%20MKC%20-%20Nov%202023%20V8%20%28AC%29.pdf) for further details.
* Our [webpages](https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing-hub/workplace-health-and-wellbeing-across-milton-keynes-bedford-borough-and) contain a range of resources and services on managing long term health conditions in the workplace and inclusive employment.

**Workplace health campaigns**

**HIV Testing Week (HIV)** Human Immunodeficiency Virus, is a long term health condition which attacks the immune system - the body's defence against diseases.

HIV Testing Week **5th-11th February 2024** is to encourage people to test for HIV. With early diagnosis and effective treatment, most people with HIV are likely to live a normal lifespan.

To order a FREE test please visit [freetesting.hiv](https://freetesting.hiv/)

If you are HIV positive, you can access free and confidential NHS HIV care and treatment in Bedfordshire or Milton Keynes, depending on where you live.

For further information, please text or call your local clinic: iCaSH Kings Brook, Bedford HIV Nurse on 07912478569 Milton Keynes Blood Borne Virus clinic Nurses on 07770643214.

**Thank you for reading our newsletter**. If you would you like to be added to our mailing list or for more information on:

* [The Healthy Workplace Standards](https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing-hub/workplace-health-and-wellbeing-across-milton-keynes-bedford-borough-and-0). A best practice framework and award scheme
* [Free training and workshops](https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing-hub/workplace-health-and-wellbeing-across-milton-keynes-bedford-borough-and-1) on a range of health and wellbeing topics
* A range of [information and resources](https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing/workplace-health-and-wellbeing-resources-and-services) covering all aspects of workplace health Please email the Workplace Health Team at public.health@milton-keynes.gov.uk

If you would like to register for The Healthy Workplace Standards [click here](https://www.healthyworkplaceaward.org.uk/register/). If you need help to improve the health and wellbeing of your workforce please visit the Healthy Workplace webpages. You will find a range of resources and FREE Workplace Health and Wellbeing Service Offers.