

# WORKPLACE HEALTH A FOCUS ON STRESS AT WORK

A BULLETIN FOR EMPLOYERS TO SUPPORT WORKPLACE HEALTH AND WELLBEING



## WORKPLACE HEALTH CAMPAIGNS

### Stress Awareness Month



April is recognized as National Stress Awareness Month to bring attention to the negative impact of stress. Managing stress is an essential component of a healthy lifestyle. Knowing how to manage stress can improve mental and physical well-being as well as minimize exacerbation of health-related issues.



### On Your Feet Day



Physical activity is a recognised remedy to managing stress. Get your workplace and co-workers to take part in On Your Feet Britain® – the national **activity** awareness day when **2 MILLION desk-based workers** across Britain participate in a variety of fun and simple activities to **#SitLess** and **#MoveMore** at work.

Taking place on **Thursday 25 April 2024**, On Your Feet Britain is a **FREE** and **FUN** way to reboot and energize your workplace habits.



If you would like to register for The Healthy Workplace Standards **click here**.

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.

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. A best practice framework and award scheme
- Free training and workshops on a range of health and wellbeing topics
- A range of information and resources covering all aspects of workplace health

Please email the Workplace Health Team at [public.health@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:public.health@milton-keynes.gov.uk)



Did you know around 51% of long term sick leave is due to stress depression and anxiety? In a recent study one in 5 UK workers reported feeling unable to manage stress and pressure in the workplace (Mental Health UK 2023).

Stress is the body's physical and emotional response to difficult situations. At work stress can arise from:-

- Workload/volume of work and poor work life balance
- Insufficient information or managerial support
- Workplace relationships or bullying
- Coping with change and lack of autonomy
- Poor working conditions
- Feeling unable to speak up about concerns

### Signs of stress in individuals:-

- Poor concentration and irritability or poor decision making
- Anxiety, low mood and tearfulness
- Tiredness or stomach aches

### Organisational signs of stress:-

- Increased workplace disputes or complaints
- Higher staff turnover
- Increase sickness absence
- Decrease performance
- Increase in accidents and incidents

### How can you support your employees?

- Be proactive about stress management, focusing on prevention and early intervention
- Employers have a legal duty to protect workers from stress at work by doing a risk assessment and acting on it. This will help you to understand the causes and impact of work related stress on your workforce
- Tackle work related stress using the Management Standards approach
- Enable employees to communicate openly, and encourage them to raise concerns eg, in 1 to 1's, team meetings etc
- Take time to notice individual staff members to prevent work related stress
- Offer support to individuals including using a wellness action plan, adjusting workload, signposting to support services, including any internal employee assistance programmes (EAP).
- Raise awareness through training, campaigns and the provision of information
- Develop a mental health and wellbeing policy that is inclusive of stress

### Further information and support services

- Talking Therapies Milton Keynes and Talking Therapies Bedfordshire are a FREE, confidential NHS service providing psychological treatment for stress depression and anxiety to employees, as well as FREE mental health webinars for workplaces. Please see the Workplace Health and Wellbeing Service Offer.
- The Bedfordshire Recovery College offers FREE courses and workshops for employees who are using or have used ELFT mental health services.
- The Milton Keynes Recovery and Wellbeing College offers FREE courses and workshops for all MK residents and employees.
- Samaritans are available 24 hours a day to provide confidential emotional support for people who are experiencing feelings of distress, despair or suicidal thoughts. Tel:08457 90 90 90 (24 hours a day).
- Maximus supports employees with mental health concerns at work. Please see our Workplace Health and Wellbeing Service Offer Brochure for further details.

Our webpages contain a range of resources and services on managing stress.



Public Health:  
Working together to improve the health  
and wellbeing of our communities

