



Mind's Workplace Wellbeing Index 2017/18

Key insights



Contents

Foreword	3
Introduction	5
Executive summary	6
2017/18 Index participants	8
Index key areas	11
⌚ Culture and engagement	11
⌚ Wellbeing initiatives	15
⌚ Knowledge and skills	19
⌚ People management	22
⌚ Support	26
Conclusion	30
Ways to improve mental health in the workplace	31
Appendix	32

Foreword

An insight into mental health at work

We know that the workplace can provide an opportunity to promote wellbeing and support people to build resilience, develop social networks and social capital¹. So it's not surprising that employers are starting to look more closely at the crucial role they play in their employees' lives. A key part of this is the mental health of staff.

Launching our Workplace Wellbeing Index in 2016 marked a significant achievement for Mind in our mission to support a million people to have good mental health at work by 2021.

In year two we have seen the momentum continue to build as our 30 trailblazing organisations in 2016/17 more than doubled to 74 in 2017/18, with 60 per cent from year one choosing to get involved again. Overall, 43,892 staff shared their views in the staff survey – three times the number in year one.

We're beginning to see an evolution in how employers view mental health with organisations putting in place proactive initiatives to support employee wellbeing. This transformation has seen workplace wellbeing increasingly rise up the agenda and become a strategic priority in organisations across the UK. The shift has given employers the

motivation to start looking at the mental health of their staff from a different perspective.

Not only has mental health gained more recognition across workplaces. It's also started to get traction in government.

In January 2017 the Prime Minister commissioned an independent review into how employers can better support the mental health of every employee, including people with mental health problems or poor wellbeing. It didn't just focus on keeping people in work, but suggested how they could thrive. The *Thriving at Work* report was led by Lord Dennis Stevenson and Mind CEO Paul Farmer CBE.

¹ No Health Without Mental Health. (2011). [online] London: HM Government. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/no-health-without-mental-health-a-cross-government-outcomes-strategy> [Accessed 22 Aug. 2018].

The report draws on the accounts of over 200 employers, people with mental health problems and leading experts in mental health and work. It sets out core principles and standards that all employers should commit to. *Thriving at Work* also highlights examples of employers who are taking positive and innovative steps to support the mental health of their employees.

The reviewers call on all employers, regardless of size or industry, to adopt six mental health core standards that lay the basic foundations for an approach to workplace mental health. These cover mental health at work plans, mental health awareness for employees, line management responsibilities and routine monitoring of staff mental health and wellbeing.

Large employers and the public sector are expected to go even further, demonstrating best practice through external reporting and giving leaders specific responsibility for wellbeing. Part of the reviewers' vision is that in 10 years' time employees will have "good

work", which contributes positively to their mental health, our society and our economy.

Despite the progress we've made, there's still a long way to go. This year's Index results show that we continue to see disconnect between what organisations are doing to support their employees' mental health and the support staff feel they're getting. It's important that organisations put in place a comprehensive strategy to help employees stay well at work, to tackle the causes of work-related mental health problems and to support employees who are experiencing a mental health problem.

Our results also highlight that mental health is still not considered equivalent to physical health. For example, employees are more likely to go to work when they're experiencing poor mental health than with poor physical health. There's clearly still work to be done to achieve our goal of making mental health part of mainstream business and ensuring it's a priority for all employers.

You might be an organisation just beginning to take action on mental health. Or you could already be demonstrating your ongoing commitment and accountability by getting involved in our Index.

But wherever you are on your journey I encourage you to see this as a learning process and a long-term commitment to a better way of working. Not only for individual employees, but for the success and productivity of your business as a whole.

This drive so far has been wonderful to see. The level of interest in mental health has soared and the challenge now is to ensure that increased awareness is well directed and engagement is turned into action. We applaud all of the organisations who have taken part in this year's Index and look forward to welcoming more in the years to come.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'EMMA MAMO'.

Emma Mamo,
Head of Workplace Wellbeing

Introduction

The true cost of poor mental health

In the eight years we've campaigned for mentally healthy workplaces, we've seen more employers recognise the moral and business case for improving workplace wellbeing and supporting employee mental health. As part of our 2016-2021 *Building on Change* strategy, we want to support a million people to have good mental health at work.

Stress and poor mental health costs UK businesses between £33billion and £42billion a year through reduced productivity, high turnover and sickness absence. This is equivalent to £1,205-£1,550 for every employee in the UK workforce.²

As the demand for support from employers rises, our dedicated Workplace Wellbeing team advises employers on how they can effectively support employees experiencing stress or mental health problems. Supporting staff helps boost the wellbeing of the whole workforce.

Our Workplace Wellbeing Index

Through our work with employers, we are building a movement for change in mental health at work. A key part of this is our Workplace Wellbeing Index.

Our Workplace Wellbeing Index is designed to celebrate the good work employers are doing to promote and support positive mental health. It provides key recommendations on the specific areas where there is room to improve. It helps organisations find out where they are doing well and where they can improve their approach to mental health in the workplace.

Participating in the Index is a learning process and a long-term commitment to a better way of working. Not only for individuals, but for the success and productivity of your organisation as a whole.

² Farmer, P. and Stevenson, D. (2017). Thriving at Work: A review of mental health and employers. HM Government

Executive summary

Our 2017/18 findings build on year one to show how the workplace continues to have a significant impact on our mental health. While many people are happy in work, mental health problems such as stress, anxiety and depression are still common. People are also more likely to go to work when they are experiencing poor mental health than when they are experiencing poor physical health.

This report shows several areas where employer policy and practice are progressing in terms of mental health awareness and positive behaviours. We also highlight where there is still some way to go. We compare each current employer's approach with staff survey results throughout, providing a holistic view of wellbeing in the workplace.

1. Employees' mental health fluctuates

This fact is nothing new, but it's worth repeating. Sixty-one per cent of employees have generally felt happy at work in the last month, but half have felt anxious on several occasions.

2. Employees don't necessarily tell managers about their mental health problems

Forty-eight per cent of all respondents have experienced poor mental health at their current job but only half of them shared this with their employers.

Sixty-six per cent of respondents have lived experience of a mental health problem at any time.

3. Mental health still has some way to go to have parity with physical health

Sixty per cent of respondents who have lived experience of a mental health problem said they would always go to work when experiencing poor mental health, even if they would benefit from time off. In contrast, 27 per cent would always go to work if they were experiencing poor physical health.

4. When people disclose mental health problems, their lives can improve. This needs to happen for everyone

When employees disclosed a mental health problem, 43 per cent said it led to their situation getting better, while half said it remained the same.

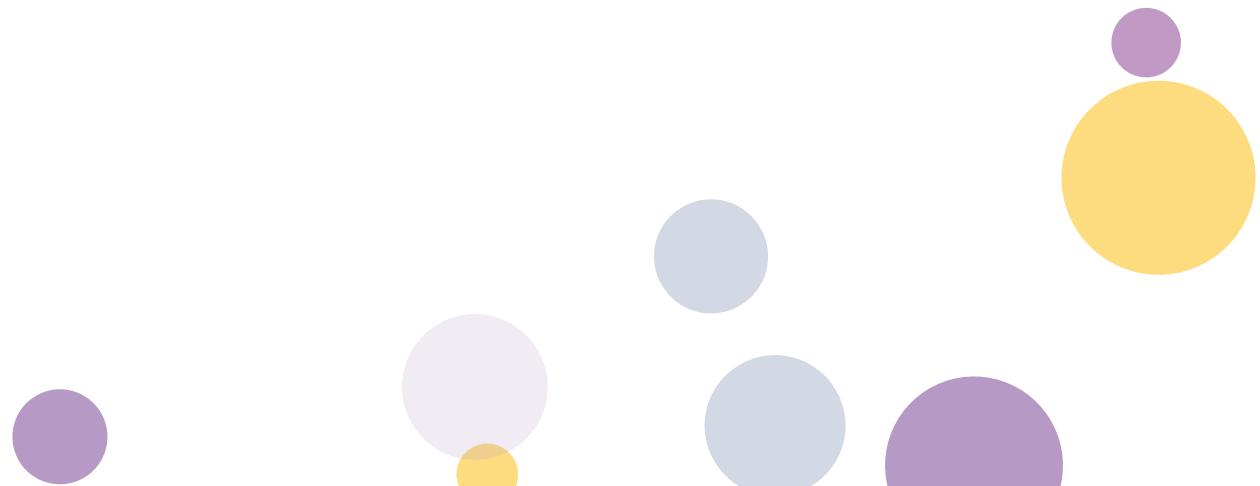
5. Some organisations still don't monitor staff wellbeing and mental health

In total, a quarter of organisations reported that they didn't yet monitor staff wellbeing and mental health. We've seen how wellbeing in the workplace is complex and needs a comprehensive approach that includes ongoing assessment to identify the key areas for concern and targeted improvements. Different things can affect people in different ways. For example, a little pressure can be motivating for some people, and cause anxiety in others.

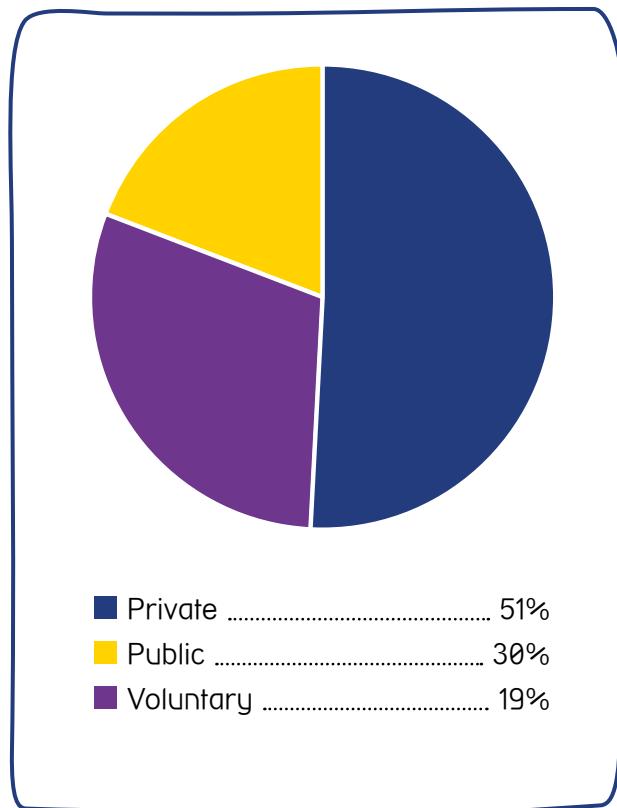
2017/18 Index participants

Seventy-four organisations took part in the 2017/18 Index.

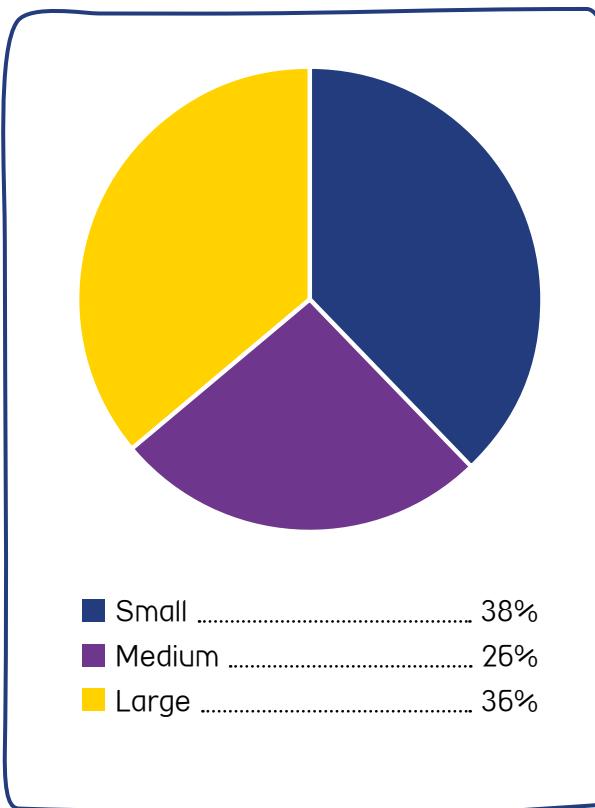
That's more than double the 30 who got involved in our first year. Overall, 43,892 staff from across the 74 organisations shared their views and experiences through staff surveys and in-depth interviews. Participants ranged from very small voluntary organisations to very large private sector companies. On the following pages is a breakdown of participants by sector and size.



Organisation profile



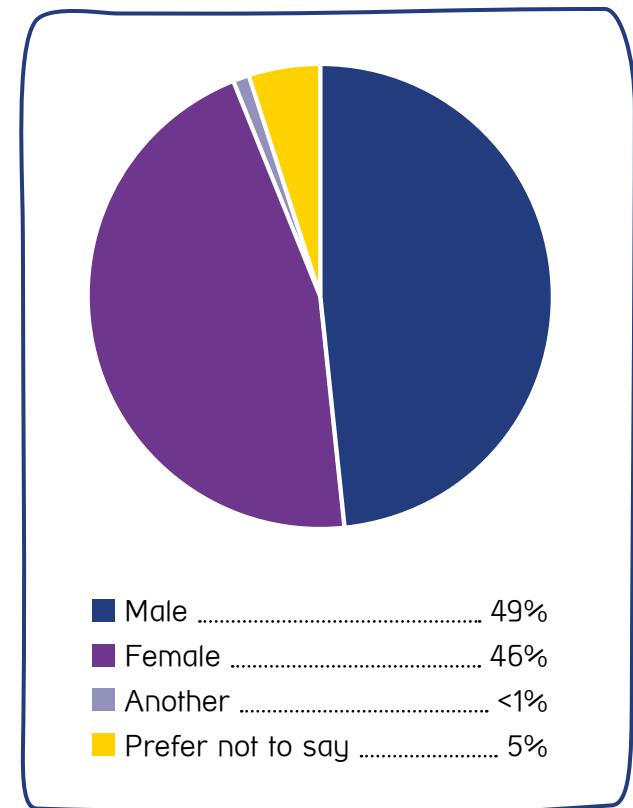
Graph 1: Number of participating organisations by sector



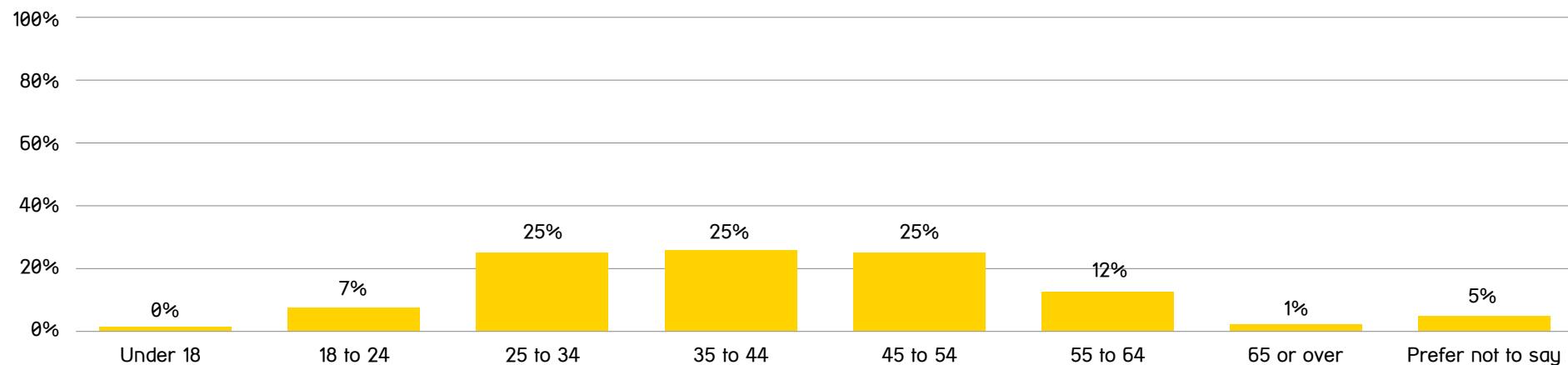
Graph 2: Number of participating organisations by size

Staff profile

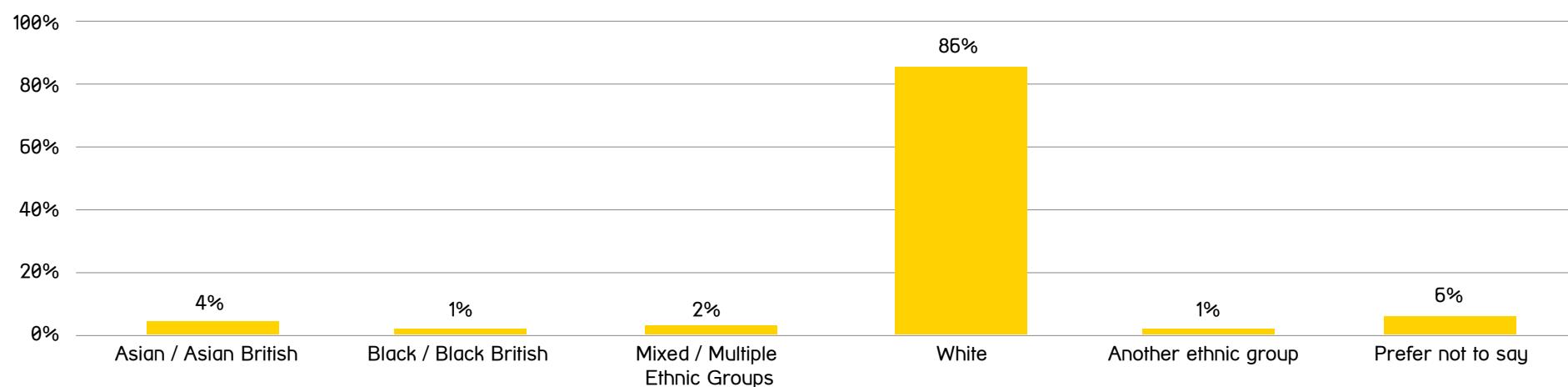
43,892 staff completed the staff survey, compared to just over 15,000 staff in 2016/17.



Graph 3: Participants by gender



Graph 4: Participants by age



Graph 5: Participants by ethnicity

Index key areas

We've compared the employer assessment and staff survey results around five categories. This allows us to see where organisations are working towards better mental health and wellbeing in contrast with staff views. Findings are presented as overall employer and staff results from all those taking part in the Index.

Culture and engagement

This key area focuses on organisations' general wellbeing culture and agenda, alongside staff perceptions of positive change, work/life balance and what proportion are motivated by their workplace culture.

What are employers doing well?

The majority of employers report that they are consulting their staff on various aspects of their work. This includes how the organisation is run and whether staff are satisfied and engaged.

94 per cent of employers are monitoring staff views through surveys or consultations.

71 per cent consult staff on how the organisation is run at least annually.

Staff engagement or satisfaction levels are monitored at least annually by 73 per cent of organisations.

It's positive that most organisations consult their staff. However, this loses its value if no action is taken. Our findings suggest that almost all organisations surveyed are working towards formally acknowledging the mental health agenda. This includes ensuring that someone has responsibility for maintaining a culture of positive wellbeing and engagement.

46 per cent of organisations have an action plan to take forward the mental health agenda. A further 45 per cent have an action plan in development or partly established.

84 per cent of organisations have a senior sponsor or champion.

Job satisfaction is a key indicator of wellbeing. It promotes higher levels of employee engagement which ensures a collaborative and positive relationship between both employees and employer. These results indicate that the majority of employers surveyed are consulting staff on these areas and have developed action plans to take this forward.

What can employers improve on?

While employers are largely assessing factors such as staff satisfaction, more work needs to be done to ensure that these plans focus on the right areas. These results show that staff wellbeing, mental health and stress are often not directly measured.

43 per cent conduct formal or informal stress risk assessments to ensure that anticipated workloads are realistic.

Results in this area also showed that organisations had action plans in place to take forward the mental health agenda. However, these actions need to be focused in the right areas, particularly job design. Making mental health and wellbeing a priority in job design will achieve high staff satisfaction levels.

Less than half (49 per cent) of those organisations surveyed agree that it is a priority to ensure a role is designed to promote staff wellbeing and mental health.

1 in 10 organisations have greater than 90 per cent staff satisfaction.

Staff mental health and wellbeing should be a priority at all stages, from job design to monitoring and assessment. Unrealistic workloads are a primary cause of high stress. If roles are not designed to reduce stress, and staff's mental health and wellbeing are not monitored, then organisations could face poor wellbeing levels that they're not even aware of.

25 per cent
of organisations do not monitor staff wellbeing and mental health.

62 per cent

feel that positive changes have been implemented as a result of feedback.

What do staff report positively?

On consultation, staff and employers have similar responses. Staff say that they are consulted on factors that can affect them, including how the organisation is run and promoting staff wellbeing.

59 per cent of staff say that their organisation consults them on how it should be run.

62 per cent say they are consulted on what they feel would promote staff wellbeing.

Staff also report that organisations take action to support their wellbeing and that they are actively encouraged to look after their mental health while at work.

62 per cent feel that positive changes have been implemented as a result of feedback.

58 per cent are encouraged by their manager to have a healthy work/life balance.

These results show that in some areas staff are confirming that efforts are taken to consult with employees and take forward the mental health agenda.

What do staff think could be improved?

Despite the majority of staff reporting that they are encouraged to have a healthy work/life balance, this doesn't necessarily work in practice. These results show that workload, change management and support are often lacking.

More than 1 in 5 (21 per cent) feel that their workload is unmanageable.

A third (34 per cent) say they are clear how changes at work will work out in practice.

50 per cent agree that their organisation supports their mental health.

Poor results in these areas reveal a poor overall workplace culture. This has an impact on how comfortable staff are about speaking up and how motivated they feel.

Around half (51 per cent) are motivated by their workplace culture.

Summary

Fully embedding a positive culture around mental health in an organisation takes time. Overall, organisations are doing well at generally finding out what their staff think and how they feel. Many employees get a positive result from the feedback they provide. However, more needs to be done in terms of workplace culture – to create an environment where staff are motivated, supported and able to speak openly. It's not enough to survey people and collect data. Promoting a two-way conversation and involving employees in organisational decisions helps to build trust and integrity. These are vital ingredients in creating a culture where employees feel comfortable talking about their mental health.

**Less than half
(44 per cent)**

say that the culture in their organisation makes it possible to speak openly about mental health.

There has been progress made but there seems to be a belief that health and wellbeing is a bonus requirement as opposed to an essential criteria.

We often do surveys but little action is taken. People are always too busy with their day jobs.



81 per cent
of employers
encourage activity and
regular exercise.

Wellbeing initiatives

This key area focuses on the physical environment and the initiatives employers are implementing to improve wellbeing. We also look at what staff think about these initiatives and whether they feel connected, active and have time to reflect.

What are employers doing well?

The majority of employers report that they encourage positive wellbeing behaviours. These include flexible working arrangements, encouraging good physical health and awareness-raising initiatives.

Almost all (97 per cent) of employers reported that managers negotiate flexible working arrangements for staff who request them.

Three quarters (76 per cent) provide access to healthy food options.

81 per cent provide breakout spaces across the organisation.

Just over two thirds (68 per cent) of employers use initiatives such as awareness-raising events to directly promote mental health.

Each of these initiatives contribute towards creating a positive wellbeing environment. It is important that employers consistently consider the physical working environment and employees' physical health when developing a comprehensive employee wellbeing strategy.

What can employers improve on?

As might be expected, staff want improvements in some aspects of the physical environment, like exposure to natural daylight. Also, although many organisations encourage healthy habits, managers could do more to be role models for these initiatives.

More than a quarter of employers (26 per cent) do not have exposure to natural daylight in all workspaces.

49 per cent of organisations agree that managers are role models for healthy working habits such as taking sick leave when needed.

Access to natural daylight is a key element in promoting workplace wellbeing. Managers also need to make sure that they're setting a good example by making use of initiatives to improve wellbeing. Otherwise staff will not feel comfortable doing so themselves, leading to initiatives not being used.

What do staff report positively?

Some initiatives are becoming more common in workplaces. These include flexible work arrangements and staff taking all their annual leave.

60 per cent agree that employers run initiatives designed to raise awareness of mental health.

Two thirds (67 per cent) of staff say they are offered flexible working arrangements.

72 per cent say they are encouraged to take their full annual leave entitlement.

Flexible work arrangements and taking annual leave are important for staff to rest and recuperate after busy periods, or to have a healthy work/life balance. Encouraging their use allows employees to feel that they have the support they need to take time for themselves where necessary.

**Less than half
(44 per cent)**

say that the culture in their organisation makes it possible to speak openly about mental health.

**Less than half
(42 per cent)**
say they are
encouraged to take
contracted lunch
breaks.

What do staff think could be improved?

In other areas employees have less positive experiences. For example, in organisations that don't promote taking lunch breaks away from desks and taking regular breaks.

42 per cent are encouraged to rest and recuperate following busy periods at work.

40 per cent feel they can take time to reflect and take stock rather than feeling rushed off their feet.

Largely, employers say that they're supporting staff physical health. However, many staff say otherwise.

50 per cent agree their organisation encourages them to be physically healthy.

Not all staff are encouraged to take sick leave when they're unwell. The physical environment is also an area for improvement.

Just over half of staff (54 per cent) are encouraged to take sick leave when needed.

41 per cent agree that the physical environment at work supports their mental wellbeing.

Summary

Many organisations scored highly in this category, including offering flexible work arrangements and encouraging exercise and healthy eating. It's good to see that ninety-seven per cent of organisations offer flexible working arrangements for those who need it. In contrast however, one third of staff appear to not be aware of them.

Meanwhile, over 70 per cent of employers say they provide breakout areas and encourage physical health. However, 40-50 per cent of employees say that they are encouraged to look after their physical health and that their physical environment promotes wellbeing.

Flexible working hours, promoting work/life balance and providing a good working environment can make a significant difference to all employees, whether or not they have a mental health problem.

There is evidence that managers don't act as role models for these initiatives. This means that where they exist, they aren't taken up by staff because managers don't lead by example. This may explain why many staff don't report the same benefits employers say they provide. Senior leaders and managers should be role models for healthy work habits and encourage staff through leading by example.

Over 70 per cent
of employers say
they provide breakout
areas and encourage
physical health.

There has been progress made but there seems to be a belief that health and wellbeing is a bonus requirement as opposed to an essential criteria.

81 per cent

of organisations are encouraging staff to talk openly about their mental health problems.

Knowledge and skills

This section covers mental health awareness, training and information provided by employers, alongside employees' views on how they develop knowledge and skills at work.

What are employers doing well?

Overall, employers are providing resources for improving mental health and wellbeing knowledge. Mental health training and signposting to information are common.

80 per cent have at least partly established mental health training for all staff including how to spot signs and symptoms of poor mental health and tips for staying well.

Nine out of ten (91 per cent) have at least partly established signposting to improve mental health literacy.

Ensuring staff know where to find reliable information and get training on mental health is important for improving employees' knowledge and confidence when it comes to mental health and wellbeing.

Many organisations are also encouraging staff to share their knowledge and experience through sharing personal stories and having champions to promote mental health discussion.

81 per cent of organisations are encouraging staff to talk openly about their mental health problems.

Two thirds (66 per cent) report that senior or high-profile employees with experience of mental health problems have spoken out about their experiences.

Just over two thirds (68 per cent) have at least partly implemented Mental Health Champion initiatives. Champions run events or activities to get people talking about mental health.

Encouraging this type of knowledge-sharing is vital for allowing staff to feel comfortable being open about mental health.

What can employers improve on?

Many organisations are working towards building mental health knowledge and skills. However, some areas are lacking. It's not yet common for organisations to recruit Mental Health Champions, and when sharing knowledge, some channels are under-used.

30 per cent have established initiatives recruiting staff with lived experience of mental health problems to champion mental health and help drive anti-stigma activity. A further 15 per cent have partly established these initiatives.

48 per cent do not use case studies and blogs written by or with staff with lived experience of mental health problems via internal communications channels.

Having employees with lived experience of mental health problems drive activity and share their experiences is a powerful way to reduce stigma and encourage openness to mental health in the workplace. Internal communications such as blogs provide an accessible way to include all employees in the discussion.

Overall, less than half (42 per cent) agree that staff have a good awareness and knowledge of mental health issues.

What do staff report positively?

Staff generally feel comfortable providing support, promoting wellbeing and interacting with colleagues who are experiencing poor mental health.

The majority of line managers (71 per cent) and non-line managers (67 per cent) reported that they would feel comfortable supporting a colleague experiencing poor mental health at work.

Most (69 per cent) line managers also report feeling that they have a good understanding of how to promote mental wellbeing to their staff.

81 per cent of non-line managers would feel comfortable interacting with a colleague who was experiencing poor mental health.

These are promising results. Ensuring managers and non-managers feel comfortable supporting colleagues is important to break down stigma so that no-one feels unsupported when experiencing poor mental health at work.

What do staff think could be improved?

Many staff report feeling comfortable providing support and promoting wellbeing. However, employees do not feel that their employer has helped build their knowledge and understanding.

One third of line managers (34 per cent) agree that their employer has helped build their skills to support a member of staff experiencing poor mental health. This falls to 18 per cent for non-line managers.

42 per cent of line managers agree that their employer has helped build their understanding of how to proactively promote the mental wellbeing of their staff.

20 per cent of non-line managers believe their employer has helped build their understanding of how to interact with a colleague who is experiencing poor mental health.

People management

This key area includes feedback, guidance and appraisal processes provided by employers and staff views of their duties and responsibilities.

What are employers doing well?

The majority of employers provide a structured environment to support and develop staff. This includes one-to-one meetings, setting objectives, outlining how staff's work contributes to the aims of the organisation and personal development.

85 per cent hold one-to-ones every four-six weeks.

100 per cent set annual and short-term objectives or targets.

91 per cent ensure that staff understand how their work fits into the overall aim of the organisation.

93 per cent encourage learning and development.

These results show that almost all organisations taking part ensured that employees had development goals and were able to build their skills and experience. These are both important factors for motivation and wellbeing.

I can come in every day and update my manager on my current situation and know that I will not be judged. I know that if I am struggling with my work load, due to any mental health problems, that if I speak with my manager adjustments can be made.

What can employers improve on?

Although employers largely have a people management structure in place, this does not always lead to positive wellbeing behaviours. Managers specifically are often not confident having conversations about mental health or responding when staff disclose that they are experiencing poor mental health.

52 per cent of employers say their managers have conversations about wellbeing and/or mental health in one-to-ones and team meetings.

36 per cent say that managers report feeling confident about their mental health knowledge and about how to respond when a staff member discloses that they are experiencing poor mental health.

38 per cent agree that where asked, managers report feeling confident about having conversations with staff about mental health and wellbeing.

These results indicate that one-to-one management is focused largely on target setting and performance and less so on mental health and wellbeing.

What do staff report positively?

Staff responded positively to questions around duties and responsibilities, mirroring the results from the employer assessment.

82 per cent agreed they are clear what their duties and responsibilities are.

65 per cent agreed their manager takes responsibility for their actions, including any errors.

54 per cent

agree their manager supports their mental health.

Many line managers will feel out of their comfort zone when dealing with mental health issues with their direct reports and maybe won't feel confident that they will be supported in decisions they make.

What do staff think could be improved?

While structure and staff-manager relationships are positive for roles and responsibilities, fewer staff feel supported by their manager when it comes to their mental health and wellbeing. Most employees also feel that they can't feed back to their manager about this.

42 per cent agree they are confident that their manager would be able to spot the signs that someone is struggling with a mental health problem.

53 per cent agree their manager regularly checks in on how they are feeling.

40 per cent of staff agree that their manager encourages them to give feedback on their management style.

Summary

Employers say they provide a lot of support when it comes to practicalities such as roles, responsibilities, learning and development. This is also supported by results from the staff survey. However, more needs to be done to create a positive relationship between staff and managers to support employees' mental health.

Support

This key area covers the support tools provided by employers, what employees think of them and how they're used.

What are employers doing well?

A large proportion of employers report good general support for the mental health and wellbeing of their staff. This includes providing manager support from HR and workplace adjustments.

95 per cent agree that HR provide reactive guidance for supporting staff with a mental health problem when requested to do so by a manager.

85 per cent agree managers are encouraged to consider workplace adjustments or support measures for staff without a diagnosis who are struggling with a period of poor mental health, such as workplace stress.

86 per cent agree their organisation effectively supports employees who experience mental health problems.

It helped to talk to someone that didn't know me [and was objective] about what was going on and to know that I was not alone. It can feel very lonely sometimes – you think no-one else has ever experienced it before because people don't generally talk about it.

22 per cent
felt that the support
available was not
effective.

What can employers improve on?

Although employers are providing support, many are not ensuring the support is appropriate. They could achieve this by evaluating the support tools on offer or providing a range of tools such as peer support groups, online communities or mental health training.

44 per cent evaluate the support tools they have on offer at least most of the time.

32 per cent have established mental health and/or wellbeing peer support groups, a further 26 per cent have partly established them.

20 per cent have an established offering, or are encouraging employees to access online peer support communities for mental health, such as Elefriends or Big White Wall. A further 20 per cent have partly established them.

42 per cent agree that managers receive specific mental health training to improve their mental health literacy.

Not everyone needs the same type of support or feels comfortable with every support method. Providing a range of tools including support groups means that staff are more able to find a method that works for them.

What do staff report positively?

Staff are aware of the support provided by their organisation.

71 per cent were aware of support tools such as Employee Assistance Programmes (EAPs) or counselling offered by their organisation.

What do staff think could be improved?

While staff are aware of the support tools on offer, they are not necessarily comfortable using them and often do not feel that they are supported effectively.

33 per cent of those who had experienced poor mental health in their current workplace used the support tools on offer.

46 per cent had any confidence that their employer would support them.

It's encouraging that most organisations provide support. However, these results show that support needs to be provided in the right way to be effective.

24 per cent
did, or would, feel very uncomfortable disclosing poor mental health at work.

I know that if I am struggling with my work load, due to any mental health problems, that if I speak with my manager adjustments can be made.

Summary

Most employers provide some support. Employees are aware of support tools but most don't really use them and often do not feel they are effective. Less than half of employers assess the support tools they have on offer and this may contribute to their lack of use or effectiveness. Identifying the right tools for the organisation may improve the variety of tools on offer and ensure support in a way that employees are willing to use and benefit from.



Conclusion

In summary, there are positive results from our research in a number of areas. Employers taking part in our Workplace Wellbeing Index on the whole appear to be making clear efforts to acknowledge and take action on mental health and wellbeing.

Employers are consulting with staff in different areas including how the organisation is run and staff satisfaction levels. They are encouraging positive wellbeing behaviours such as exercise and healthy eating and commonly making flexible work arrangements to promote a healthy work/life balance.

Staff are provided with some training on mental health awareness and signposted to information on wellbeing, as well as given goals and opportunities for personal development.

While these results show that organisations are heading in the right direction, there is also evidence in our findings that there is still a lot more to achieve.

While some aspects of mental health and wellbeing are considered, there are still many that need to be more consistently accounted for. Satisfaction is often measured but workloads are not anticipated and roles not designed with wellbeing in mind. Some positive wellbeing behaviours such as taking rest or sick leave are often not encouraged, as managers don't show them in action. Few organisations have employees with lived experience championing mental health and wellbeing. While staff agree that their employer works with them to create goals and learning pathways, in many cases they do not feel that their wellbeing specifically is as well managed or supported. While staff agree that their employer works with them to create goals and learning pathways, in

many cases they don't feel their wellbeing is as well managed or supported.

A significant finding from our research is that while employers are making efforts to improve wellbeing, staff report that several factors mean they can't take advantage of mental health initiatives. These factors include managers not leading by example, lack of encouragement to rest and recuperate and heavy workloads. Our research shows that feeling motivated, feeling that our workload is manageable and taking time to reflect are the three most consistently important factors for mental health and wellbeing in the workplace. This means some of the areas we have found need improving are also some of the most important.

Ways to improve mental health in the workplace

1. Make wellbeing a key part of people management

The vast majority of employers report providing staff with opportunities to improve performance and personal development support, such as one-to-one meetings, targets and encouraging learning and development. As a result, many staff are clear about their duties and responsibilities.

Organisations could improve their people management by ensuring these conversations focus specifically on wellbeing more often, so that staff feel that their mental health and wellbeing is supported by their manager.

2. Make managers role models for mental health

Many employers have initiatives that encourage positive wellbeing behaviours such as regular exercise, healthy eating and flexible work arrangements.

The next step is encouraging more staff to use them. One way to achieve this is by ensuring that managers are role models for positive behaviours. This would boost the number of staff who feel able to take breaks, sick leave when they need it and time to recuperate after busy periods.

3. Give staff skills to support wellbeing

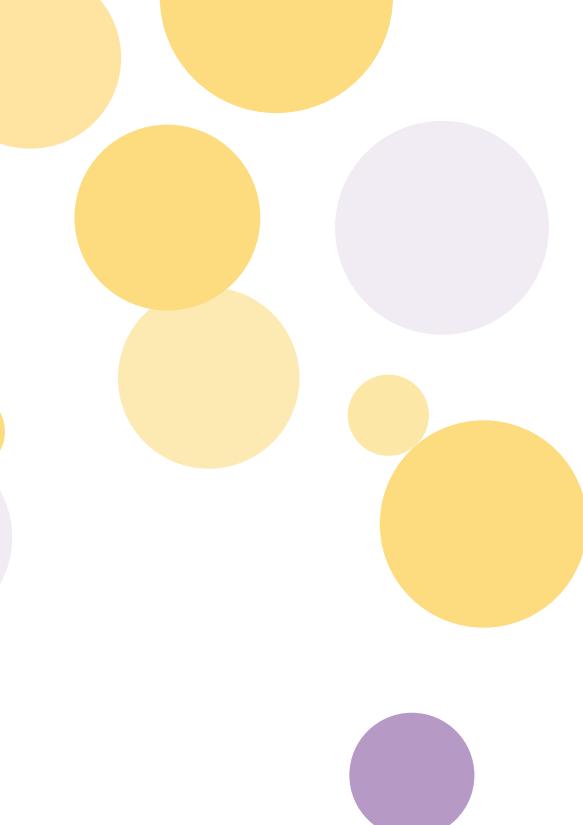
Our results suggest staff benefit from knowledge sharing and skills development mainly through mental health training and signposting to improve mental health literacy and awareness. This means staff feel confident supporting colleagues and promoting wellbeing.

Organisations could improve by going beyond this to ensure staff feel they have the skills and understanding to be proactive managing and supporting mental health and wellbeing.

4. Assess mental health support

Employers are making efforts to provide support to their employees when they are experiencing mental health problems, including HR guidance and workplace adjustments.

Organisations could improve by ensuring that the support tools on offer are appropriate and beneficial to employees. This would help more staff feel more confident in the support offered by their employer and encourage them to use it when they need to.



Appendix

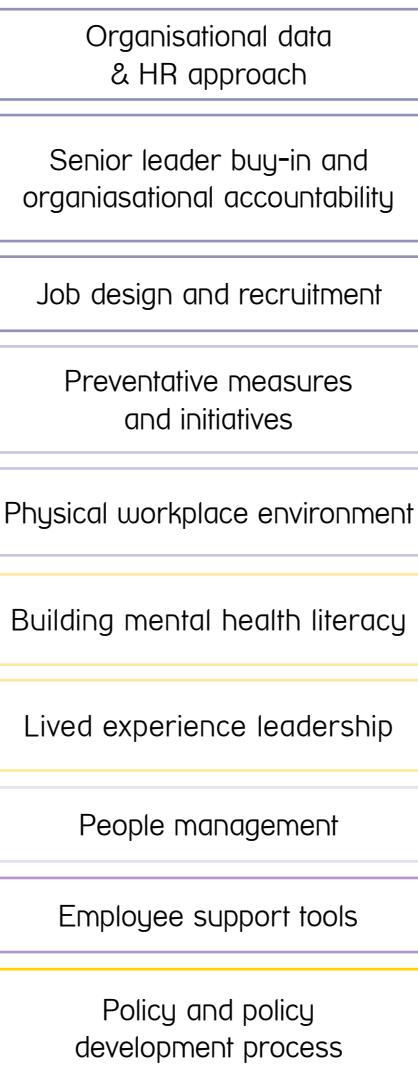
This is the second year of our Workplace Wellbeing Index Insights report. We've presented this year's insights in a new format as part of the ongoing development of the Index assessment and how the results are used to inform best practice in workplace wellbeing.

The first year demonstrated the key findings from the Employer Assessment and the Staff Survey to provide a comprehensive overview of workplace wellbeing and mental health policies and behaviours in UK organisations. This year we have developed the approach to look more closely at consistencies and contrasts between the results from the Employer Assessment and Staff Survey areas of the Index.

To achieve this, we have condensed the number of areas in the previous Index Insights report into five broader areas so direct comparisons can be made. The figure on the next page shows the areas of the Index that make up each section. Insights from policy assessments will be presented separately.

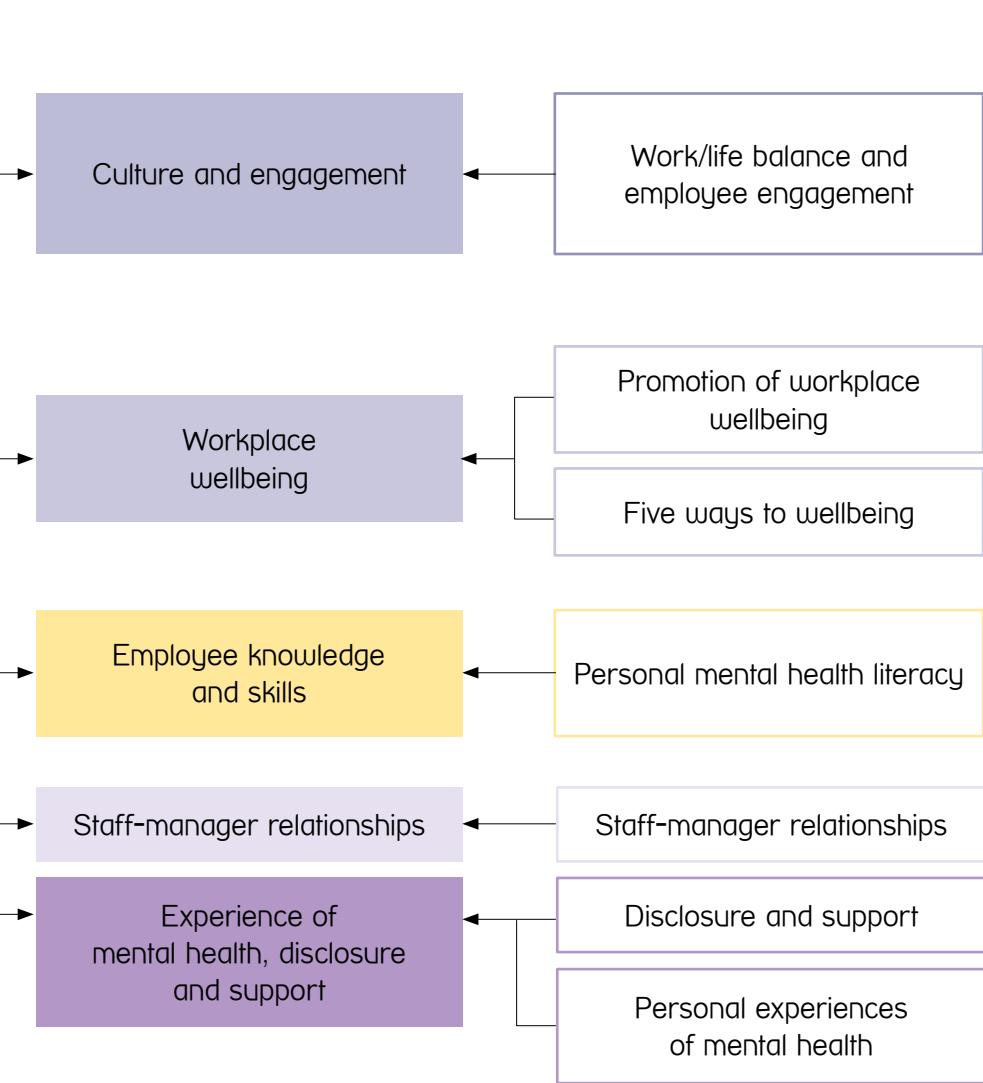
Employer Assessment

10 areas merged to 6



Staff Survey

7 areas merged to 5



We can help you support staff wellbeing

We are the leading mental health charity in England and Wales. No one else is better placed to support your organisation to improve your approach to mental health in the workplace and to support you to achieve the standards set out in the *Thriving at Work* report. To find out how we can help you visit mind.org.uk/workplace

We're Mind, the mental health charity. We want to support a million people to stay well and have good mental health at work by 2021.

Be part of our movement for change in workplace mental health.

work@mind.org.uk
mind.org.uk/work

 @MindCharity
 [Facebook.com/mindforbettermentalhealth](https://www.facebook.com/mindforbettermentalhealth)
 Follow us on LinkedIn

Mind
15 – 19 Broadway
Stratford
London
E15 4BQ
020 8519 2122

Mind's registered charity number: 219830

