

Q and A on workplace health

1) How will a workplace health scheme benefit my business?

A strong workplace health programme can:

- **Improve motivation, productivity and performance:** Data suggests that employees work 20% better when motivated and are 87% less likely to resign¹.
- **Reduce absenteeism:** There were around 30.8 million working days lost to ill health / accidents in Great Britain in 2001/2²
- **Reduced staff turnover and increase retention rate:** Finding and hiring a new employee takes 40 days on average and costs business 34.5 percent of an employee's salary³.

2) How do I support the health of my shift workers?

Shift work plays an important role in the smooth running of the food and drink manufacturing industry and can have many benefits. It allows employees to condense their working time to improve work-life balance and to manage carer responsibilities for instance. However, poorly designed shift patterns, aligned with poor sleep patterns and environmental factors can have a detrimental impact on employee health and patient outcomes.

Companies can take a number of steps to specifically support shift workers:

- Ensure there is access throughout all shifts to healthy meals, snacks and drinks. This may include investing in refrigerated vending facilities or ensuring staff canteens stay open.
- Provide an on site gym / shower facilities for those wishing to exercise during breaks to help promote alertness.
- Review existing resources such as [Shift Worker Guidance for Healthcare Professionals](#), [BDA Information](#) and [HSE – Hints and Tips for Shift Workers](#)

3) How do I support the health of hybrid workers?

It is estimated that a third of organisations have some form of hybrid working model. This can offer multiple benefits for employees including no commuting time and costs, better work / life balance, and greater flexibility. However, working from home can potentially bring with it a whole host of health and well-being issues. Employers can support staff by:

- Hosting regular online social get togethers.
- Offering up virtual physio appointments.

¹ <https://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/dayslost.htm>

² <https://remote.com/blog/innovative-employee-retention-strategies>

- Gifting subscriptions to online apps that support mental health such as [Headspace](#).
- Encourage staff working at home to take a lunch break to get some exercise / fresh air or to take an online fitness class.

4) I run a small business with limited budget, can I still support staff?

Supporting the health of employees doesn't have to be costly or time consuming. There are lots of existing resources (many free) that companies can use:

- Partner with local organisations for support such as [NHS Health Check](#)
- Pinpoint staff to existing resources such as the [Government Better Health programme](#) or [This Girl Can](#)
- Make use of and publicise local spaces such as parks, tennis courts and walking routes
- Motivate employees to develop their own team activities and challenges or take part in larger events such as Race for Life.
- Take part in the British Nutrition Foundation [Healthy Eating Week](#) to encourage staff to think about their diet and lifestyle
- Make the most of lunchtimes and pre / post work windows to run events - lunchtime running clubs and walking meetings are free and easy to implement.