

## How to develop a Health and Wellbeing strategy

### Introduction

Putting a health and wellbeing strategy in place is more than just providing your employees with a suite of benefits to protect them. It is also more than finding the best prices for your health and wellbeing products. It is about achieving a healthier, more productive workforce and reducing the risk associated with your human capital. This is achieved by utilising the whole suite of health and wellbeing benefits, such as private medical insurance and gym membership, together with an engaging education programme for employees that gets them thinking about how to live a healthy lifestyle.

### Why implement one?

By having a good health and wellbeing strategy in place you can help to ensure your employees are healthy and engaged, you will find sickness levels decline and most importantly employees become more productive. Research conducted by Harvard Medical School suggests organisations with a health promotion programme in place saw productivity increase at least 8.5 per cent. In addition it can lead to reductions in your premiums for healthcare products as your workforce have lower absence rates and present less of a risk to an insurer.

### Measuring success and active management

The success of your health and wellbeing strategy might be measured in different ways - absence levels, insurance costs or productivity for example. In many ways that is the easy part. However, working with absenteeism as it happens and actively managing that absence will be central to success. In order to do this you need the ability to report on length of absence, which parts of the business are most affected and the reasons for absence. This will enable you to use health and wellbeing benefits to their greatest effect, while making sure your absent workforce knows of the benefits available to help them when they need them most.

### Communication and involvement

The type of benefits and tools which you use should be different based upon your objective. Its success will be largely dependent on the extent to which attitudes to health and wellbeing are changed throughout the organisation through effective communication.

The best results from implementing a structured health and wellbeing strategy are often seen when a wide scale launch is run companywide. This ensures each employee has the same level of information regarding any changes being made.

When you look at designing a health and wellbeing strategy it is equally important to remember that it is being done for employees. They will have some important contributions to make regarding the shape, look and feel of any strategy that is implemented. In some cases you may find that certain employees may even be able to assist in elements of the strategy through previous occupations, or qualifications they hold outside of their normal role (for example a qualified personal trainer).



Having implemented your Company's health and wellbeing strategy, it is important to remember it is a long-term and living entity. The strategy needs to be continually reviewed and revitalised so it remains relevant. As the health of your workforce changes so should your strategy to ensure it continues to benefit both your employees and the Company as a whole.