

Industry Snapshot

Institute of Professional Development

Strategies For Managing Rising
Sickness Absence Rates and
Managing Long Term Health
Conditions in The Workplace.

**The Institute
In Professional Development**

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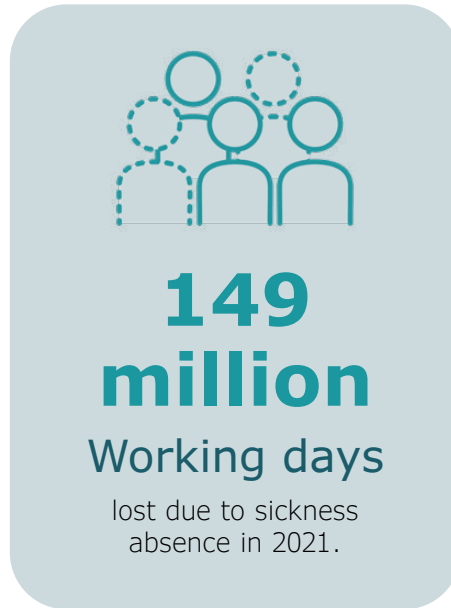
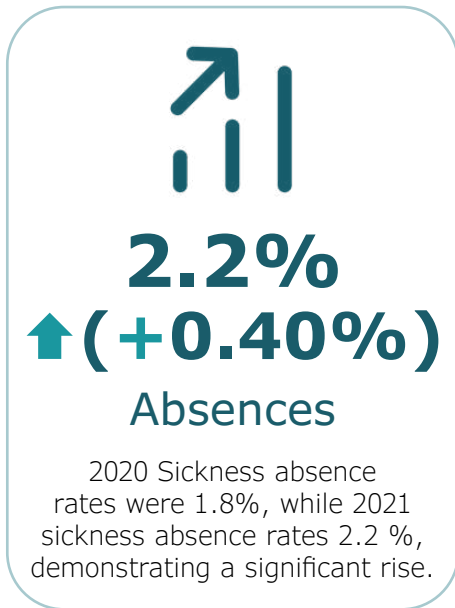
Summary

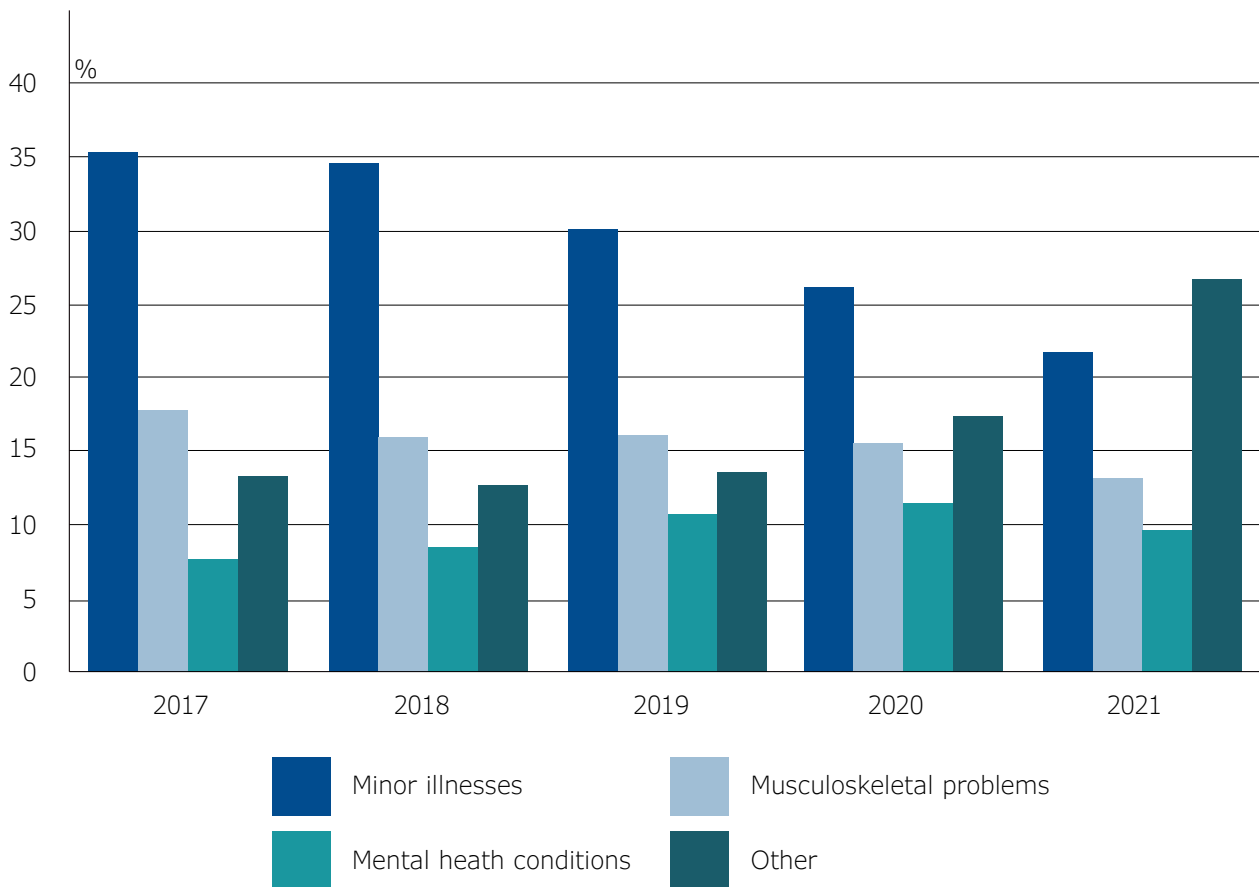
In Professional Development have undertaken a thorough and systematic review of the data and research in relation to wellbeing at work. We have examined the scale of the problem, who it impacts most, and key causes of employee absence. We have made 6 evidence informed recommendations for leaders to consider at a policy level, to improve wellbeing in their organisation. The moral and business cases for taking these steps is compelling; a proactive approach to wellbeing improves efficiency, retention, and employee motivation, and results in creative, thriving workplaces.



Sickness absence at work in context

From the Office of National Statistics:





Deloitte (2020) indicates that poor mental health costs the UK economy £45 bn per year.

Burnout and emotional exhaustion

Deloitte research indicates that 77% of professionals have experienced symptoms of burnout and emotional exhaustion, over the course of their career.

Mental Health UK have identified that women have scored higher on stress over the pandemic, potentially because of caring responsibilities, home-schooling, and financial concerns.

In the NHS, 4.6% of staff took sickness absence in June 2021, with anxiety, stress and depression being the most highly reported cause. The BMA indicates that 'moral distress' is a growing cause of workplace stress for NHS workers.

77%
of professionals

Our Recommended Strategies

Following a systematic review of the data and literature on wellbeing in the workplace, we have identified 6 positive actions organisations can take to improve the wellbeing of their employees.

Equip managers with the ability to identify causes and symptoms of burnout.

Training in mental health first aid, understanding wellbeing, and similar, will provide managers with awareness of the symptoms of stress, anxiety, depression, and burnout. Research indicates that managers should be aware that domestic pressures disproportionately fall on female colleagues, and leaders should be proactive in ensuring they are supported.

Improve management practices in relation to wellbeing.

Leaders should ensure that colleagues have the resources to meet the demands of their roles. There should be opportunities to stimulate personal growth, learning, and development, and managers should be skilled in providing their team with effective feedback.

Where possible, align working practices to employee values.

Leaders should be aware of the psychological costs of asking workers to compromise their values due to resource constraints, et cetera. Employee values should be factored into strategic decision making.

Ensure wellbeing is integrated into organisational policy.

Wellbeing should be an organisational priority, and a core factor in training, and organisational decision making. In addition to the moral case for taking a strategic approach to wellbeing, this will have multiple organisational benefits, including improved productivity, employee motivation, and retention.

Focus on the wellbeing needs of older adults.

The age demographic in the workplace is predicted to change in the coming years, with an increased number of older workers contributing to the workforce. Leaders will need to understand and engage with the needs of older colleagues. This includes providing access to training and development to enable a multi-generational workforce to maintain relevant skills and competencies.

Consider encouraging exercise in the working day.

Overwhelming evidence indicates that people who exercise daily enjoy improved mental health and wellbeing, and increases the likelihood for older people to be able to work and contribute for longer. Gym memberships, or time to exercise at lunchtime, increases employee wellbeing and creates opportunity for social interaction.

