



THE WORKPLACE
WELLBEING CHARTER
NATIONAL AWARD for ENGLAND

Funded in Liverpool by Liverpool City Council
Delivered by Health@Work

Self Assessment
STANDARDS

This pack contains an overview of the Workplace Wellbeing Charter, including the Charter Framework, the Assessment Standards and other useful information.

For additional information on the standards, the assessment process and to find local providers please visit:

www.wellbeingcharter.org.uk

On the site you will also find an online self-assessment tool in addition to useful and practical resources to help employers achieve the standards and improve the health and wellbeing of staff.

THE WORKPLACE WELLBEING CHARTER

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Welcome...

The Workplace Wellbeing Charter is an opportunity for employers to demonstrate their commitment to the health and well-being of their workforce. The positive impact that employment can have on health and wellbeing is now well documented. There is also strong evidence to show how having a healthy workforce can reduce sickness absence, lower staff turnover and boost productivity - this is good for employers, workers and the wider economy.

The Workplace Wellbeing Charter provides employers with an easy and clear guide on how to make workplaces a supportive and productive environment in which employees can flourish.

Organisations of all sizes can use the Charter standards. The entry level has been developed as a baseline for all businesses to achieve and acts as a useful checklist for smaller organisations to ensure legal obligations are met. The criteria for small businesses should not involve significant financial investments, and there are lots of free resources and guidance on the website as well as support from your local provider.

Employers who volunteer to sign up will find help and support available through the website. This will include a network of providers who can offer employers the services and advice they need to meet the Charter, and help them to build the healthy workforce that business needs for the future.

I urge all employers to consider signing up to the Charter, so they can take advantage of what it has to offer both them and their employees.



A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads "Carol Black". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Professor Dame Carol Black
Expert Adviser on Health and Work
to the Department of Health,
England

WHAT IS THE WORKPLACE WELLBEING CHARTER AND WHAT DOES IT OFFER?

The Workplace Wellbeing Charter is a statement of intent, showing your commitment to the health of the people who work for you.

Organisations using the Charter, benefit in many ways including:

- **The ability to Audit and Benchmark against an established and independent set of standards** – identifying what the organisation already has in place and what gaps there may be in the health, safety and wellbeing of your employees.
- **Developing strategies and plans** – The Charter provides a clear structure that organisations can use to develop health, safety & wellbeing strategies and plans
- **National recognition** – The Charter award process is robust and evidence based. With over 1,000 organisations across England holding the award, The Workplace Wellbeing Charter is now widely recognised as *the* business standard for health, safety & wellbeing across England. The award helps to strengthen the organisation's brand & reputation and supports in sales and marketing activities.

The Standards and the supporting toolkit materials and topic guides have been funded by Public Health England, and are free for all organisations to use on the website. The aim is to support local health and wellbeing partnerships and employers to maximise the potential of their staff, and to make small changes that have large impacts on staff health and wellbeing'.

Employers that sign up to any of the Public Health Responsibility Deal pledges concerning Health at Work, can use the Charter standards as a road map to fulfil the commitments made in the pledge. Similarly, employers that are taking action under the Workplace Wellbeing Charter may also wish to sign-up to the Health at Work pledges under the Public Health Responsibility Deal, in order to demonstrate their commitment in this area.

HOW DOES THE WORKPLACE WELLBEING CHARTER WORK?

Employers can sign up to it using our online self-assessment tool, and find out what they are already doing right, and where they need to improve.

It is relevant to all businesses, no matter how big or small they are, as long as they employ staff and can demonstrate their commitment to the health and wellbeing of those staff. It is open to all public, private and third sector organisations.

The Charter focuses on three key areas – leadership, culture and communication – where even small steps can make a big difference to the health of your staff, and therefore the health of your organisation.

The Workplace Wellbeing Charter comes in three levels, each containing different standards that need to be achieved. Some, or all, will be relevant to you depending on the size and direction of your organisation. The three levels are Commitment, Achievement and Excellence. You can find out about each of those three levels, and what is required to attain them, in the wording of the Charter itself and via our online self-assessment tool. You can progress from one to another by achieving all of the necessary standards.

For smaller organisations the Commitment level acts as a useful checklist to ensure legal obligations are met. The criteria for Commitment level should not involve significant financial investments, and there are lots of free resources and guidance on the website as well as support from your local provider.

Each of the three levels will consider, in different ways, issues such as leadership, sickness and absence management, awareness of alcohol and drug abuse, smoking, mental health and stress, healthy eating and physical activity.

If employers wish to be formally assessed against the standards there is a network of providers across England who can provide formal accreditation services. Providers are either Local Authorities or social enterprises commissioned to deliver on behalf of Local Authorities. Over 1,000 organisations have received the award across England, with a strong mix of small, medium and large employers across the private, public and third sectors.

To find a local provider simply logon to www.wellbeingcharter.org.uk

WHO IS THIS FOR?

The Workplace Wellbeing Charter is a voluntary, self-assessment scheme open to all public, private and voluntary sector organisations based in England. Whatever their size, all organisations and businesses can benefit from working towards Charter standards.

WHY YOU SHOULD TAKE PART?

There is a growing body of evidence to show the financial benefits enjoyed by organisations that implement well-being programmes, including reduced sickness absence, improved productivity and reduced staff turnover.

According to the Office of National Statistics 131 million days were lost due to sickness absences in the UK in 2013.

With employers and employees bearing the burden of sickness absence costs, and the economy losing the output of those who are not in work, it's in everyone's interests to improve the health and well-being of working age people.

The Chartered Institute for Personnel and Development agrees, pointing out that the high costs of absence and 'presenteeism' highlight the value of a strong focus on managing health for all organisations. Effective communications with employees and line managers to identify threats to well-being and a robust understanding of the causes of absence are an essential part of this to ensure effective and timely interventions.

'For many employers, the costs of ill-health, which, given the ageing population and the increase in chronic disease, will only grow in the absence of intervention, is enough to justify a comprehensive wellness scheme'.

PriceWaterhouseCoopers LLP, Building the Case for Wellness (2008).

CHARTER FRAMEWORK

To achieve the maximum benefit and return on employee health and well-being, it is important your organisation has three key elements in place to make your initiatives both successful and sustainable – Leadership, Culture and Communication.

The diagram below shows some examples of what could support each of these areas.

The Three Key Elements of the Charter Framework



THE STANDARDS OF THE WORKPLACE WELLBEING CHARTER

This self-assessment contains standards under each of the main areas that your organisation can address to improve the health and well-being of your employees. The purpose of the standards are to provide a guide as to what steps can be taken and give an indication of where you may need to improve, or where you are doing well.

Under each area, the standards are separated into three categories: Commitment, Achievement and Excellence. These categories are there to provide a general overview as to how you are performing in each area.

COMMITMENT

Your organisation has a set of health, safety and wellbeing policies in place and has addressed each area, providing employees with the tools to help themselves to improve their health and well-being.

ACHIEVEMENT

Having put the building blocks in place, steps are being taken to actively encourage employees to improve their lifestyle and some basic interventions are in place to identify serious health issues.

EXCELLENCE

Not only is information easily accessible and well publicised, but the leadership of the organisation is fully engaged in well-being and employees have a range of intervention programmes and support mechanisms to help them prevent ill-health, stay in work or return to work as soon as possible.

GUIDANCE

In order to progress from one level to another within any one area, e.g. from commitment to achievement within Physical Activity, you must fully meet all of the standards in the lower level.

Against each standard are four options. These indicate where your organisation currently stands on any particular issue:

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Fully Met (FM)

Every aspect of the standard has been met or exceeded. The organisation can evidence this both by documented and practical examples where applicable.

Partially Met (PM)

Some or most of the standard has been met and can be evidenced. This option should be selected if the organisation undertakes activities to meet the standard but cannot evidence it or have not effectively communicated with employees about it.

Not Met (NM)

None or very little of the standard has been met. This option should be selected if activities, procedures or systems are still under development or have not been implemented.

Not Applicable* (NA)

The standard covers an area that does not relate to the organisation due to the nature of its activities, location or other practical reason.

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Leadership

Commitment	FM	PM	NM	NA	Notes/Evidence
The organisation has assessed its needs and priorities around health and work.	●	●	●	●	
Management can demonstrate the process for ongoing consultation and communication with staff on relevant workplace health issues. (Where there is a recognised Trade Union, this should be through an appropriate agreement with them.)	●	●	●	●	
Senior Management encourage a consistent and positive approach to employee well-being throughout the organisation.	●	●	●	●	
The organisation is aware of its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and other equality legislation is known and adhered to.	●	●	●	●	
There is an effective communication policy in place.	●	●	●	●	
An effective policy and procedure to tackle bullying and harassment has been implemented.	●	●	●	●	
Flexible working practices and family friendly policies are in place.	●	●	●	●	
An effective policy is in place for whistle-blowing.	●	●	●	●	
Effective policies are in place to manage disciplinary and grievance procedures.	●	●	●	●	

Achievement					
A system is in place that recognises and rewards good work.	●	●	●	●	
Managers understand the main issues that impact on the health and well-being of their team.	●	●	●	●	
Line managers have relevant leadership and management training.	●	●	●	●	
Excellence					
Line managers demonstrate regular joint working and shared decision making with employees and empower employees to work in an independent way.	●	●	●	●	
Line Managers have training in how to have difficult conversations, developing people skills and resolving disputes.	●	●	●	●	
Employees are offered learning and development opportunities to maximise their potential.	●	●	●	●	
Evidence of managing organisational development and change appropriately.	●	●	●	●	
The organisation has a health, work and well-being strategy in place with a detailed action plan.	●	●	●	●	

Absence Management

Commitment	FM	PM	NM	NA	Notes/Evidence
A clear attendance management policy is in place and procedures are known to staff.	●	●	●	●	
Contact is maintained with absent employees to provide support and aid return to work.	●	●	●	●	
Documented return to work procedures are in place and followed.	●	●	●	●	
Return to work interviews are conducted and recorded with concerns /appropriate support recorded and provided.	●	●	●	●	
Specific risk assessments for individuals are conducted and take into account a person's health status.	●	●	●	●	
Reasonable adjustments are available to employees in line with recommendations made in a Statement of Fitness for Work.	●	●	●	●	
Achievement					
Absence rates and causes are collected and monitored.	●	●	●	●	
Interventions are undertaken where patterns indicate trends of absence.	●	●	●	●	
Managers have participated in Attendance Management training.	●	●	●	●	

Excellence					
Absence trends are monitored across the organisation and specific programs are designed and implemented to address the issues identified to prevent further absence.	●	●	●	●	
The organisation's return to work policies are designed to support sustainable rehabilitation and early return to work with adjustments made to accommodate this when necessary.	●	●	●	●	
The organisation has a proactive system in place to support staff on long term sick to return to work and will raise awareness of and support staff with long term conditions.	●	●	●	●	

Health and Safety

Commitment	FM	PM	NM	NA	Notes/Evidence
Demonstrate an awareness of legal obligations in relation to health and safety.	●	●	●	●	
Relevant health and safety policies and procedures are in place to demonstrate compliance with health and safety legislation.	●	●	●	●	
A risk assessment programme has been implemented and all staff are informed of the workplace risks that affect them and the controls in place.	●	●	●	●	
The workplace environment is conducive to health and employee welfare should be addressed – drinking water, washing facilities, clean toilets, eating facilities etc.	●	●	●	●	
Health and safety training has been given to all staff.	●	●	●	●	
Achievement					
Systems are in place for staff to raise and resolve health and safety issues.	●	●	●	●	
All health and safety policies and workplace activities are regularly monitored for new hazards and improvements are made.	●	●	●	●	

Excellence					
There are identified health and safety representatives (Trade union and/or company representatives).	●	●	●	●	
Staff representatives have been involved in the development and/or evaluation of health and safety policies.	●	●	●	●	
There is a clear emphasis on prevention of ill health across all health and safety policies.	●	●	●	●	
All managers have received health and safety management training.	●	●	●	●	
Regular health and safety meetings are held and recorded.	●	●	●	●	

Mental Health

Commitment	FM	PM	NM	NA	Notes/Evidence
Provide information to employees to reduce the stigma around mental ill-health.	●	●	●	●	
Provide information about mental health and well-being, including work-related stress, and additional further information readily available to staff at all levels.	●	●	●	●	
The organisation ensures that employees are made aware of their legal entitlements regarding working conditions.	●	●	●	●	
The organisation has implemented a mental wellbeing policy that follows the principles of the Health and Safety Executives Management Standards for Stress.	●	●	●	●	
Ensure employees are aware that mental health and well-being issues are valid and people seeking to address these issues are fully supported by the organisation at all levels.	●	●	●	●	
Achievement					
Mental health management training is able to be accessed to help managers identify employees with potential issues.	●	●	●	●	
The organisation has an individual performance review system in place. This allows employees to comment on work related and personal issues that affect their performance and enables training needs to be identified.	●	●	●	●	
The organisation has a protocol in place for the use of risk assessments to prevent stress. This is conducted on an individual and organisational level and is regularly reviewed.	●	●	●	●	
Education and development opportunities are routinely available to managers and staff to enhance their skills and knowledge around workplace mental health issues.	●	●	●	●	
The organisation provides appropriate avenues of communication to keep staff at all levels informed of changes.	●	●	●	●	

Excellence					
A mental health and well-being strategy/stress prevention strategy is in place and followed. This should highlight the promotion of mental wellbeing to the organisation and address investment in the mental wellbeing of the workforce.	●	●	●	●	
Mental health awareness training is available for all employees and it has been delivered to the majority of employees.	●	●	●	●	
Staff consultations/surveys take place that seek information on the mental wellbeing of staff and also covers working conditions, communication, work life balance, cost of living wage, staff support and work related or other causes of stress, with action plans drawn up to address major issues.	●	●	●	●	
The organisation provides a confidential support service in-house or externally to individuals who come forward with a problem.	●	●	●	●	
Ensure organisational and individual change is accompanied by support, information or targeted intervention programmes e.g. retirement, redundancy planning.	●	●	●	●	
Social support groups, volunteering and out-of-work activities are actively encouraged and supported by the organisation.	●	●	●	●	

Smoking and Tobacco

Commitment	FM	PM	NM	NA	Notes/Evidence
Management are aware of their duties under smoke-free legislation and are in compliance.	●	●	●	●	
All staff are aware of the smoke-free and tobacco control laws and how they are applied in their workplace.	●	●	●	●	
Sources of further information and support to quit smoking are readily available.	●	●	●	●	
A working smoke-free policy is in place and staff are aware of it.	●	●	●	●	
The smoke-free policy extends to all smoking habits including Electronic-cigarettes.	●	●	●	●	

Achievement					
Building managers, reception staff, ground staff and those operating in communal areas are aware of how to report breaches of the smoke-free policy.	●	●	●	●	
Excellence					
All open areas (outdoor) are clearly signposted as smoke-free and steps are taken to prevent smoking in these areas.	●	●	●	●	
Actively promote 'stop-smoking' services and allow staff time to attend.	●	●	●	●	

Physical Activity

Commitment	FM	PM	NM	NA	Notes/Evidence
A physical activity statement is in place and employees are aware of it.	●	●	●	●	
Information is made available on the benefits of physical activity.	●	●	●	●	
The minimum legally required breaks are taken by all staff.	●	●	●	●	
Staff are encouraged to take regular breaks.	●	●	●	●	
Achievement					
Physical activity in the workplace is actively encouraged and supported by the physical environment.	●	●	●	●	
Physical activity opportunities in the local area are actively promoted to staff and supported by the organisation.	●	●	●	●	

Excellence					
<p>Opportunities for physical activity linked to the workplace have been investigated and implemented. These activities are sustained over long periods to become embedded in the organisational culture.</p>	●	●	●	●	
<p>Tailored programmes to improve understanding and take-up of physical activity are offered.</p>	●	●	●	●	
<p>The organisation has a travel plan that promotes physically active ways of getting to and from work and travelling between meetings.</p>	●	●	●	●	

Healthy Eating

Commitment	FM	PM	NM	NA	Notes/Evidence
A healthy eating statement is in place and employees are aware of it.	●	●	●	●	
Appropriate, acceptable and accessible information on healthy eating is provided.	●	●	●	●	
Any kitchen facilities or beverage areas are in good condition and conform to the highest possible standards and requirements of food hygiene.	●	●	●	●	
Wherever possible, eating facilities that are clean and user friendly are provided away from work areas. Use of these facilities is promoted to enable regular breaks away from the work area.	●	●	●	●	
Achievement					
Any on-site catering facilities provide healthier options that are actively promoted.	●	●	●	●	

Alcohol & Substance Misuse

Commitment	FM	PM	NM	NA	Notes/Evidence
A working Alcohol and Substance Misuse Policy is in place, regarding the use of alcohol and other substances in the workplace, that is clear and consistent.	●	●	●	●	
Employees are provided with information about the effects of alcohol and substance misuse that is appropriate, acceptable and accessible.	●	●	●	●	
Alcohol policy includes guidelines on the use of alcohol at business functions.	●	●	●	●	
Employees are supported in seeking help to treat alcohol or substance misuse issues. This includes providing sources of further information and support that are readily available.	●	●	●	●	
Achievement					
Organisational code of conduct and behaviour in relation to alcohol and substances has been well established and well publicised.	●	●	●	●	
New employees are made aware of how to access relevant policies, information and support services at the point of induction.	●	●	●	●	

Excellence					
<p>Managers at all levels are aware of the link between alcohol, substance misuse and mental health in the workplace and aware of why staff may be reluctant to come forward with related problems. Managers actively promote the use of external help and rehabilitation when approached.</p>	●	●	●	●	
<p>Employees are aware of link between alcohol, substance misuse and mental health in the workplace.</p>	●	●	●	●	
<p>Staff representatives from various levels of the organisation are involved in the development or review of the policy which addresses alcohol and other substances.</p>	●	●	●	●	
<p>Managers have access to information on how to identify the signs of alcohol / substance misuse and are aware of where to obtain support or signpost employees with a problem.</p>	●	●	●	●	
<p>Employees have access to alcohol awareness training and it has been delivered to the majority of the employees.</p>	●	●	●	●	

HOW DO I DO THIS?

1. How healthy is your business?

- Health surveys
 - health status of staff and the business
 - awareness of health needs
 - ask them!

2. Is workplace health embedded into your business?

- Identify a workplace health and well-being champion
- Board reports on progress
- Policies and procedures in place

3. Are you engaging with your staff?

- Staff focus-groups
- Suggestion box
- Health, Work and Wellbeing group
- Good communication using appropriate media

4. What will success look like?

- Action plans
- Identify quick wins and longer term goals
- Make local connections to health promotion teams

5. How will you know you have got it right?

- Evaluate your programme
- Record your progress
- What changes in absenteeism have you seen?
- Has it been easier to recruit new staff?
- Has your staff turnover reduced?
- Have you seen an improvement in productivity?
- Has your business reduced costs?
- Is there a change in morale? Make sure you find out staff opinion!
- Is there a change in disciplinary numbers?

FURTHER NOTES/EVIDENCE



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HEALTH@WORK
Ground Floor Orleans House
Edmund Street
Liverpool
L3 9NG
0151 236 6608
info@healthatworkcentre.org.uk

www.wellbeingcharter.org.uk