

Manchester Health and Wellbeing Baseline Assessment

Background

Aspire and PACE were commissioned by Manchester Health and Wellbeing Board (HWBB) to take a transparent look at health and wellbeing in the work place across the health and care system in Manchester. The commissioned work spanned 12 months and coincided with significant service transformation as part of Greater Manchester Devolution, which presented both opportunities and challenges.

The case for change

There is a convincing economic case for stronger leadership across public, private and third sector partners at health and care system level in relation to developing a collective approach to workplace health and wellbeing to keep people, health, well and at work e.g. cities. The impact on public sector partners in terms of absenteeism and lost productivity is significant, and the evidence suggests that current practice lags behind organisations in the private sector. Initial research undertaken ahead of the Health and Wellbeing Baseline Assessment (HWBBA) project identified:

- Sick people cost their employer £620,000 per year in businesses employing more than 500 people.⁸
- Similarly, a DWP report⁹ stated that more than 130 million days (ONS) are still being lost to sickness absence every year in Great Britain and working-age ill health costs the national economy £100 billion a year.
- The same report estimates that employers face a yearly bill of around £9 billion for sick pay and associated costs, with individuals missing out on £4 billion a year in lost earnings. Meanwhile, around 300,000 people a year fall out of work and into the welfare system because of health-related issues.
- PricewaterhouseCoopers¹⁰ estimate the cost to be even higher, at an average of 9.1 days of absence per UK worker, costing UK business nearly £29bn a year.
- The Centre for Mental Health¹¹ estimated in 2007 that the total cost to employers of mental distress and ill health in the workforce is estimated at nearly £26 billion each year. That

is equivalent to £1,035 for every employee in the UK workforce.

With this insight and evidence, members of the Manchester HWBB set a goal that member organisations (hospital trusts, commissioning groups, council, 3rd sector and charitable organisations) across the City should be exemplar employers in relation to workplace health. Member organisations were set the objective of working collaboratively during 2015-17 to baseline their current position in order to set improvement goals and share good practice, with the inclusion of mental health as a priority area. The Manchester HWBB's ambition was to ensure that, as public services with responsibility for health and wellbeing in the City, its own organisations were driving good practice and demonstrating leadership in this area.

The project

The Health and Wellbeing Baseline Assessment (HWBBA) project began in May 2016 and concluded July 2017 with the production of several outputs including:

- Workplace Health and Wellbeing Assessment Framework (including mental health and disability)
- Individual baseline assessment site reports for organisations participating in the project
- Manchester City wide report to include: analysis, findings, collective strengths and 6 high impact recommendations
- Case studies of good practice draw from literature and the participating organisations

The following organisations participated in the project. The inclusion of a voluntary sector organisation was seen to be critically important as an instrumental partner in delivering health and social care.

- Manchester City Council (MCC)
- NHS North, Central and South Clinical Commissioning Groups
- University Hospital of South Manchester NHS Foundation Trust (UHSM)

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- Central Manchester University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (CMFT)
- Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust (PAT)
- Greater Manchester West Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust (GMW)
- Back on Track (BonT) – a charity providing education and work experience to disadvantaged people.

The approach

Self-Assessment Framework

Having established a Steering Group, Aspire and PACE worked with each participating organisation to undertake the baseline self-assessment against a bespoke Health and Wellbeing Framework. This explored 4 domains:

- Health for all
- Leadership
- Culture
- Mental health and disability

In each of these areas, the self-assessment looked at good practice, innovation and gaps against specific criteria which then meant that there was the ability to ‘traffic light’ organisations against the 4 domains (105 criteria).

Following the initial assessment and data capture, each site went through a validation process to ensure that the data was accurate. In addition to exploring the 4 domains data was captured relating to:

- Days lost to sickness absence
- Average cost of sickness absence
- Top 3 reasons for sickness absence
- Sickness presence
- Staff engagement
- Cost of temporary staffing

This data was used to provide a high level overview, recognising that data was captured in different ways, that organisations had different characteristics, geographical locations etc. and therefore could not provide a ‘like for like’ comparison.

At the end of the self-assessment process each site had a detailed analysis and action plan, plus a series of case studies to share with other organisations relating to examples of good practice.

Focus on mental health and disability - Capturing lived experience

We were keen to hear experience from staff with mental ill health or a disability as well as hearing from managers. We interviewed over 30 staff and managers to hear their experiences so that these would inform local and system wide recommendations.

Challenges

- Many of the organisations were undergoing structural changes across the city. This impacted on data capture and analysis as organisations changed to incorporate new staff groups e.g. Greater Manchester Mental Health Foundation Trust incorporated staff from Manchester Mental Health and Social Care Trust.
- Finding the **best way to encourage staff with a disability or mental ill health to come forward** to share their experience was challenging. Our initial idea of holding focus groups did not prove to be successful, so as a team we invested extra time by undertaking confidential interviews and generating themes
- It was **not possible to compare organisational data** as organisations captured data in different ways
- Many organisations had **difficulty placing a £ figure** on actual HWB spend across the organisation as there wasn’t a defined budget allocated to HWB

Learning

- The **commitment from the site leads and steering group** was exceptional and was instrumental in the project successfully achieving its goals

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- There was a significant amount of **good practice across the system** to share
 - The process of being involved in the **project appeared to be an intervention in itself and a force for good** – sites reported making step changes and gaining commitment with the additional ‘spotlight’ on health and wellbeing in the work place
 - All the organisations were undergoing **major structural reform**, although we were successful in capturing the required data
 - Sites reported that having a **‘spot light’ on HWB highlighted** the need to bring HWB interventions and inputs together from across the organisation.
 - Many sites reported that they have a greater awareness and broader definition of what now constitutes as HWB activity
3. Encouraging all organisations across the Manchester to use the HWB baseline assessment and agree common data sets for measuring outcomes
 4. Developing a culture that encourages a healthy work-life balance through senior leadership role modelling
 5. Emphasising the focus on mental health and disability of part of a wider health and wellbeing approach
 6. Creating a common HWB branding and logos on everything related to HWB

Next steps

The Health and Wellbeing Board have accepted the recommendations and have committed to drive the agenda through the local HR Directors who will oversee implementation. The Steering Group are currently agreeing next phase of work to maintain momentum and the project team are following up sites to access impact.

Outcomes

At this stage, the key outcomes are:

- Successful engagement of health and care organisations across the City of Manchester to focus on Health and Wellbeing in the Workplace
 - Participating organisations have a specific action plan and recommendations
 - Over 25 case studies of good practice
 - The development of a bespoke criteria based Health and Wellbeing Baseline Assessment Tool
 - A greater focus on work place health as part of the Health and Wellbeing Boards adoption of the 6 high impact recommendations:
1. Setting common HWB improvement objectives
 2. Promoting HWB for all care organisations (including 3rd sector). Pooling resources and learning from each other across Manchester to support the delivery of common evidenced based HWB interventions

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