



The thing about Wellbeing

10% of your people may be in urgent need!

by: Janet Webster

There is a statistic that Leaders will find alarming. Based on the results of the World Health Organisation Well-being (WHO-5) assessments deployed by Infit Care, an employee wellness platform, 10% of employees are in urgent need of mental health support. That's worrying from a human point of view and a business one. Obviously, none of us want our employees to be suffering mental distress. Then there is the impact that it will have on the performance of the business. If you can imagine yourself feeling in urgent need of mental health support, the chances of you being productive and performing well are probably nil.

The pandemic is over for now, at least, but it reminded us how important and potentially how fragile our mental health can be. And even though it's over, the impact of it lingers on in our minds and consciousness. There are many reasons for it, but one of them I think is discovering that life can change drastically overnight, and it's beyond our control. It came as quite a shock.



Many employers have realised that employee wellbeing has become a strategic business issue, not just a nice to have, and are taking action to address it.

Often leaders, including HR heads, don't feel they have the knowledge and skills to create the well-being culture they would like to support their people. Especially in relation to mental health. Many rely on their HMO to provide counselling for employees when they need it. The challenge with this is that very few people take up that counselling opportunity. So even though 10% of employees may feel an urgent need actually only 1% on average, if that, ever access the support provided through their company's EAP.

Of course, we know that ill health whether physical or mental, is the main cause of short and long-term sickness absence, and how much that costs organizations in lost time and productivity. A recent study by CIPD reported that 76% of reasons given for absence were stress related. So, taking action to address just that would really make a difference to the performance of our organizations, and that is well within the capabilities and control of leaders. It's one of many things we can do. As always though, determining our strategy and plan for wellbeing depends on having good data to know what our people really need. If your organization is setting out on a journey to building a well-being culture, getting that data will be an effective first step.