

Dear Business owner.

Low productivity due in a large part to absenteeism costs the business community billions each year. Physical illness is certainly one of the more recognisable reasons for taking a sick day; however, stress leave has become a leading cause. The mind not only impacts on health and wellbeing it also has a negative influence on work performance and productivity.

Mental illness affects at least one in four of us, it is unbiased and will lay claim to any mind that gives it the opportunity. You might be surprised to learn that apart from those who live with the pain, employers are the most affected. Over the coming months, I will be net-working with local businesses in the hope of creating more awareness of the support that is available.

Although poor productivity and absenteeism can be attributed to an employee's wellbeing this also means that in many cases absenteeism can be avoided and productivity increased. It is well documented that wellbeing initiatives have a positive influence on mental and physical health. The benefits to the employer include a happier work force a reduction in sick days, improved efficiency which in turn leads to increased productivity.

Large and small organizations alike are recognizing just how much health and well-being affects their bottom line. Not surprisingly many companies are engaging and participating in paying it forward projects. Some corporations are investing millions in funding well-being initiatives while many others are taking advantage of the resources already available to them.

Please read the enclosed letter, and if you would like further information, direction or support, please contact me.

Sincerely,

David Summers Cllr

david.summers@herefordshire.gov.uk <mailto:david.summers@herefordshire.gov.uk>

How much does mind created illness cost your business?

What stresses the mind also impacts the body; what stresses the body also impacts the ind. The encouraging feature of this equation suggests that an integrated Mind and Body Well-being Initiative can increase the efficiency and productivity of your workforce.

As you are aware in today's highly volatile market place, there is a fine line between profit and loss. One of the biggest expenditures for any business is its payroll, even at the best of times it is a huge commitment.

The economic impact of Covid combined with mind-related illness affects everyone.

Investing in preventative well-being initiatives is the best way of averting the demise of many businesses as they sink under the weight

of events beyond the control of even the most resourceful of us.

Human-resource management is as important today as it has ever been however,

recognizing those employees who might be struggling with depression is not easy, and

realistically, why would it be? Especially when one considers that much of the time neither does the person in crisis.

It has been suggested that some form of mental illness affects at least one in four. This figure, however, does not take into account how much it impacts on a myriad of other diseases.

Look around, many of the people you know may be experiencing some kind of mind created illness. Heart disease, Cancer, Diabetes, even the common cold can be influenced by mind. The connection between physical and mental health is frequently invisible however they are recognised by many experts as inseparable. No matter how an illness presents itself, it can be helped or prevented with a positive mental attitude. While it's true that a stressed mind can lead to physical illness, it must be also said that a resilient mind is vital to the healing process.

It is readily apparent that good mental health is crucial to the overall well-being of society as a whole. The economic cost of mind related illness in all its many forms is second only to the suffering experienced by those who are affected. Add up all the costs of mind influenced illness and the results are quite staggering. In the UK, the price tag for sick days is well in excess of £29 billion yearly.

There is a mind-set out there which suggests that those who have a mental illness are no longer productive. I would suggest just the opposite. Many of those who have mental health issues are often over achievers. Not only do they try harder; work to them is a much-needed positive experience. Rather than give up on them, it is far better to see them as caring hardworking employees.

Organizations large and small are recognizing just how much health and well-being affects their bottom line. Have you given any thought to investing in a workplace health and well-being strategy? Corporations around the world are investing significantly in well-being initiatives simply because they work. It is understood that for some, there might be budget restraints so it's no surprise that many others are taking advantage of the resources already available. There are a number of groups within the health care community ready willing and able to help you develop well-being initiatives.

A small investment of time or money could equate not only to an increase performance and productivity but a reduction in absenteeism. A designated pathway directed to health and well-being is a necessity in today's work environment. How you as an employer address this, will affect your bottom-line and possibly your future.

Stress and worry affect all of us at some time or other. Over time, the stressors that herald a problem become so normal, they are hard to recognize. For many, stress is a daily occurrence, and its big brother "depression" frequently takes a hold without being noticed. Ideally, there needs to be a system in place that allows some breathing space.

Absenteeism and low productivity can often be attributed to poor mental health; therefore, they are preventable. A good welfare and well-being initiative will have a positive influence

on employees. Whether it be in the workplace or in everyday life, it is well documented that a sound mind and body will contribute greatly to a healthier life style.

In short the benefits to the employer include a happier work force a reduction in sick days, improved efficiency culminating in increased productivity.

Regards

Cllr David Summers