Health and Work
Spotlight on Mental Health

Almost 1 in 6 people of working age have a diagnosable mental health condition.

Mental health conditions are a leading cause of sickness absence in the UK. Over 15m days were lost to stress, depression and anxiety in 2014 – an increase of 24% since 2009.

In 2015, some 48% of Employment and Support Allowance recipients had a ‘Mental or Behavioural disorder’ as their primary condition.

Each year mental ill-health costs the economy an estimated £70bn through lost productivity, social benefits and health care.

In 2016, 42.7% employment rate for those who report mental illness as their main health problem (Mental illness, phobia, panics, nervous disorders (including depression, bad nerves or anxiety). Compared to 74% of all population.

Of people with physical long term conditions, 1 in 3 also have mental illness, most often depression or anxiety.

Work can be a cause of stress and common mental health problems: in 2014/15 9.9m days were lost to work-related stress, depression or anxiety.

Health and Work Costs

An unhealthy workforce hurts the UK's economy and society due to lost productivity, reducing in income tax receipts, increases in long-term sickness and increased healthcare costs. Better management of employee health can minimise these costs.

The costs to the taxpayer – benefit costs, additional health costs and forgone taxes – are estimated to be over £100bn annually. This is greater than the current annual budget for the NHS and equivalent to the entire GDP of Portugal.

The combined costs of sickness absence, lost productivity through worklessness, and health-related productivity losses, are estimated to be over £60bn annually. This is greater than the current annual budget for the NHS and equivalent to the entire GDP of Portugal.

Sources: Black, 2008
Over half of people with a long-term condition say their health is a barrier to the type or amount of work they can do, rising to over 80% when someone has three or more conditions.

Long-term conditions are associated with social class and type of occupation. People in the poorest communities have a 60% higher prevalence of long-term conditions than those in the richest.

Employees from unskilled occupations (52%) experience long-term conditions more than groups from professional occupations (33%).

By 2030 40% of the working age population will have a long term condition.

In the coming years the workforce is projected to get older. 43% average age in 2030 compared to 39% in 2016.

1 in 3 of the working age population in England report having at least one long-term health condition. Over 11m people.

1 in 7 of the working age population in England report having more than one long-term condition.

Over half of people with a long-term condition say their health is a barrier to the type or amount of work they can do, rising to over 80% when someone has three or more conditions.

Long-term conditions and limiting long-term conditions are more prevalent in older people.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>16 to 24</th>
<th>25 to 44</th>
<th>45 to 64</th>
<th>65 to 74</th>
<th>75 and over</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prevalence</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>69%</td>
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* Working age population: individuals aged 16 to 64
Health and Work

Health of UK employees

1 in 4 of UK employees reported having a physical health condition.

1 in 5 of those employees with physical health conditions, also reported having a mental health condition.

1 in 3 of current UK employees have a long-term health condition.

1 in 8 of current employees reported having a mental health condition.

1 in 10 employees reported having musculoskeletal conditions.

42% of employees with a health condition felt their condition affected their work ‘a great deal’ or ‘to some extent’.

Employees with mental and physical health comorbidity were much more likely to see their health as affecting work.

29% were affected ‘a great deal’ compared to 13% of those with a physical condition only and 15% of those with a mental health condition only.

In 2013, more days of sickness absence were attributed to back, neck and muscle pain than any other cause.

In 2013, 30.6m days of sickness absence could be attributed to MSK.

In 2013, 23% of all working days lost were due to work related MSK.

An estimated 9.5m working days were lost due to work related MSK, an average of 17 days lost for each case. This represents 40% of all days lost due to work related ill-health in 2014/15. Agriculture; construction; health and social care; and transportation and storage industries all show elevated rates of MSK.

In 2010, ESA claimants with MSK were more likely than those with other conditions, to attribute their health conditions to work – 36% related it to work.

In 2015, 13% of Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) recipients reported MSK as their main condition.

Employment rate for people who report MSK as their main health condition is 59.7%.

The prevalence of MSK in the workforce is likely to increase.

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33% of English long-term sickness absence is attributed to MSK.

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131m working days are lost to sickness absence every year.

4.4 days are lost on average for each worker due to sickness absence.

42% of employees experience at least one period of sickness absence in a year.

7% of employees take periods of sickness absence lasting 2 weeks or more.

31m days
Musculoskeletal conditions

27m days
Minor illnesses (coughs and colds)

15m days
Stress, anxiety or depression

Main causes for lost working days in 2013

Costs of presenteeism (attending work while ill) are estimated to be £30bn annually.

Employers spend £9bn each year on sick pay and associated costs.

Percentage of hours lost to sickness in 2013

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Public sector</th>
<th>Private sector</th>
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<tr>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
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</table>

1 in 3 of employees with a long term health condition have not discussed it with their employer.

52% of employees report having access to occupational health through their work.

39% report having access to independent counselling.

SMEs (between 0 and 249 employees) represent a very large proportion of UK workplaces. In 2015, 99.9% of all UK private sector businesses were SMEs.

They employ 15.6m people, accounting for 60% of private sector employment.

Only 21% of employees of small businesses (<50 employees) reporting access to occupational health, and only 12% reporting access to Employee Assistance Programmes.

95% of people who move from economic inactivity into work in the private sector start their own business or work for a SME.

Sickness absence is lower in smaller businesses:

- 1.7% < 25 employees
- 2.3% Between 25-500 employees

Similar when self-reported:

- 61% Employees in small business (1-49)
- 56% Large firm employees

61% of employees report no absence in a year:

Employees in micro businesses (<10 employees) are twice as likely to leave work and move onto Employment Support Allowance without a period of sickness absence than those in larger businesses, suggesting that micro businesses and their employees can find managing ill-health challenging.

Sources: Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, 2015; Labour Force Survey, various years; Health and wellbeing at work: a survey of employees, 2014; Understanding the journeys from work to Employment and Support Allowance, 2015
In March 2016, there were 31 million people aged 16+ in work. 74% of the 16-64 population were employed, 5% were unemployed, and 22% were economically inactive.

Having a long-term condition is associated with unemployment and worklessness with an employment rate of only 60%.

Unemployed people were more than twice as likely as employed people to report having a limiting long term condition.

Among working age people, those who are economically inactive have the highest prevalence of long term conditions (42%) and limiting long term conditions (31%) even when accounting for age and income.

In 2016, 6% of working age adults are on Employment Support Allowance/ incapacity benefits.

The annual State spend on health-related benefits
£13bn

Annual cost to the State of the average claimant receiving Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
£8,500

Each year, approximately
330,000 people flow from work on to the State’s main health-related benefit, ESA

Around
140,000 people a year fall out of work and claim health related benefits without having a period of sick leave beforehand

Summary of ESA claimants by condition (August 2015)

- Mental and behavioural disorders: 48%
- Diseases of the musculoskeletal conditions and connective tissue: 13%
- Diseases of the nervous system: 6%
- Diseases of the circulatory and respiratory system: 6%
- Injury, poisoning and other external causes: 5%
- Other: 12%

Sources: Black & Frost 2011; Routes onto Employment and Support Allowance, 2011; OECD 2014; CESI, 2015; ONS 2014

2 in 3 are male

Over 1 in 3 are over 50 years of age
There is considerable variation in health and health-related employment outcomes across the UK.

- **Unemployment rates**
  - North East: 7.7%
  - South West and South East: 3.8%
  - England average: 5.1%

- **Percentage of working age population claiming Employment Support Allowance**
  - Liverpool city region: 10%
  - Greater Manchester: 7.9%
  - Cheshire and Warrington: 5.2%
  - England average: 5.6%

- **Gap in employment rate for individuals with a long term health condition**
  - Liverpool: 21.2% points
  - Rutland: -8.4% points
  - England average: 8.6% points

- **Percentage of employees who had at least one day off in the previous week**
  - Kingston upon Thames: 4.3%
  - Harrow: 0.6%
  - England average: 2.4%

- **Percentage of working days lost to sickness**
  - Yorkshire and the Humber (both): 1.8%
  - London: 1.2%
  - England average: 1.5%

Whenever an out-of-work claimant moves into a job at the Living Wage, the local economy benefits on average by £14,436 annually.
Health and Work
Supporting older workers with health problems

By 2020, it is estimated that 1 in 3 British workers will be over the age of 50 years.

Older people are more likely to experience longer periods of unemployment.

47% of unemployed 50-64 year olds have been out of work for a year or more, compared to 40% of unemployed 25-49 year olds, and only 33% of unemployed 18-24 year olds.

Of the 7.2m people aged 50-64 who are employed, 42% are living with a health condition or disability.

Among those aged over 50 even a short period of unemployment increases the risk of mortality and a heart attack as much as smoking.

Each year, 330,000 people move from work onto Employment Support Allowance.

1 in 3 are over 50 years old.

Long term absentee employees

46% of long term absentee employees in England are aged 50 or over, as compared to 27% of the employee population overall.

Economic inactivity rate vs Unemployment rate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>50-64 year-olds</th>
<th>25-49 year-olds</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>29%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5%</td>
<td>6%</td>
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For those who are not working when asked why:

12% of 50-64 year olds are retired.

10% say they are not looking for work due to sickness or disability.

4% say they are looking after the home or family.

People with a disability and those aged 50 and over are less successful in getting a job through the Work Programme.

About half of mental health conditions begin before the age of 14.

Young people with disabilities account for 7% of the 16-24 population.

The employment rate gap between people with and without disabilities widens after education:
- 27.8 percentage points at the age of 23
- 36.2 percentage points at the age of 24

Among 16 to 24 year olds with work-limiting disabilities, the unemployment rate is 24%.

For young people without such disabilities, it is 14%.

In a study reporting on how young people’s chronic conditions can affect their ability to prepare for and seek employment:
- 54% reporting having to delay their education or training, while
- 63% reported that their condition prevented them from reaching their full educational potential.

Chronic health conditions also lead young people at school age to review their career plans:
- 93% indicated that their chronic condition had an impact on their self-confidence, leading them to believe that certain careers were not viable.

Education:
- The percentage of pupils at the end of Key Stage 4 achieving 5 or more GCSEs at grades A* to C:
  - 88.9% students without Special Educational Needs (SEN)
  - 59.2% students with SEN without a statement
  - 24.9% students with SEN with a statement

Post-19 Education:
- Disabled people are around 3 times as likely not to hold any qualifications compared to non-disabled people, and around half as likely to hold a degree-level qualification:
  - 19.2% working age disabled people
  - 6.5% working age non-disabled people

% of people who do not hold any formal qualification:
- 14.9% working age disabled people
- 28.1% working age non-disabled people

% of people who hold degree-level qualifications:
- 88.9% students without Special Educational Needs (SEN)
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Sources: Kessler et al 2005; Labour Force Survey, 2011 & 2012; Bevan et al., 2013; National Pupil Database academic years 2005/06 to 2010/11