



Affinity Health at Work Research Consortium

Since 2006, the Affinity Health at Work Research Consortium has enabled us to undertake innovative and practical research relating to workplace health, wellbeing and engagement (see below for examples of previous research and the resources we have developed). More recently it has allowed us to establish the exciting new Affinity work health and wellbeing Hub, a unique online expert resource for anyone interested in workplace health and wellbeing (see separate document for details).

The Research Consortium allows us to work with and be supported by a group of forward-thinking organisations, including a number of 'institutional sponsors' (such as CIPD, HSE, Acas, and IOSH) plus a variety of employer organisations drawn from a range of sectors (such as transport, Big 4 accountancy, insurance, university, local government). It is a collaboration between Affinity Health at Work researchers and Research Consortium members, who contribute by taking part in research projects and helping shape outputs, as well as financing the research work; and, in return, receive a range of membership benefits such as:

- Early and immediate access to new research and developments in the field and how to apply them in practice
- Quarterly master-classes that provide both academic and practitioner speakers:
 - Up-dates, learning and continuing professional development
 - Access to thought leadership
 - Professional networking and support
- Opportunity to have a 'seat at the table' and contact with key decision makers within the forward-thinking institutions in this space
- Involvement in research
- Access to advice and support from the Affinity Health at Work team

Consortium membership is £3,000 + VAT per year and includes 2 members of your organisation/institution attending the quarterly masterclasses.

Masterclass themes are decided each year by the consortium members based on their interest and needs. The forthcoming masterclasses include:

23 rd March 2017	Organisational Interventions for health, wellbeing and engagement
28 th June 2017	Burnout and engagement
12 th October 2017	Menopause
6 th December 2017	Workplace design for health
Tbc March 2018	Technology and wellbeing

Testimonial from one of our organisational members (Senior Occupational Health Manager in a large public sector organisation)

Being part of the consortium brings many benefits to us as an organisation, supporting our drive to improve the health and wellbeing of our employees:

- *We have an opportunity to influence the subject matter for future research projects*
- *We can take part in research ourselves*
- *We keep up to date with current research findings and how they apply to us*
- *We keep up to date on issues relevant to health and wellbeing – having choices over themes for each consortium day*
- *We get to learn about best practice in other organisations*
- *We have the opportunity to meet and develop working relationships with colleagues in the field*

This increased understanding and awareness means that my work to improve health and wellbeing of our employees is based on solid research, best practice and experience, so our employees gain maximum benefit from our services.

Who we are

Affinity Health at Work is a niche occupational health psychology consultancy and research group, founded in 2006 by Emma Donaldson-Feilder and Dr Joanna Yarker and joined soon afterwards by Dr Rachel Lewis. We are multi-award winning and currently holders of the British Psychological Society and Division of Occupational Psychology Practitioner of the Year awards.

Our research is always designed to generate practical tools and guidance for use in organisations, freely available to download from sponsors' websites and from the Affinity Health at Work website www.affinityhealthatwork.com (and in future through the Hub). See final pages of this document for further information and links.

Our aim is to make a tangible difference in the way workplaces function – to humanise the workplace:

- Improving levels of employee health, wellbeing and engagement
- Enhancing people management and leadership skills

We do this through:

- Taking a rigorous evidence-based approach that builds and gathers academic research and practitioner expertise
- Creating outputs that are directly applicable and useful to practitioners and are accessible to all
- Bringing together multi-disciplinary groups of stakeholders to ensure that our approaches are fit for purpose/have maximum impact and to encourage collaboration across all relevant disciplines (including National policy makers, Employers, line managers, practitioners in HR, Health and Safety, Occupational Health, Psychology)

Affinity Health at Work Research Consortium previous research

Resources and materials developed from our research so far include the following:

Online tools for managers:

- **'Managing employee wellbeing'** online learning package developed with Business in the Community: <http://www.managingemployeewellbeing.com/bitc>
- **'Preventing stress'** learning materials based on the management competencies for preventing and reducing stress at work research: <http://preventingstress.cipd.co.uk/>
- Self-report version of the **stress management competencies indicator questionnaire** to measure the management behaviours for preventing and reducing stress is available at: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/mcit.htm>

Reports and guidance based on our research:

Developing managers to manage sustainable employee engagement, health and wellbeing

This research reviewed all the available about what affects the success of programmes to develop managers to manage in ways that improve employee engagement, health and wellbeing. It looked at both academic and practitioner literature and gathered data from experts, practitioners and organisations in order to provide a unifying framework bringing all the evidence together. It resulted in the creation of a set of checklists that highlight the range of factors that can enhance or reduce effectiveness of such programmes, with the aim of helping organisations in implementing programmes successfully.

- The research report and the various checklists and guidance developed can be downloaded at: <http://www.cipd.co.uk/hr-resources/research/developing-managers.aspx>

Managing for sustainable employee engagement

This research developed a behavioural framework setting out what managers need to do to engender engagement in their team, while at the same time preventing stress/protecting wellbeing, in order to create sustainable employee engagement. This brings together our previous work on management competencies for enhancing engagement and for preventing and reducing stress at work.

- A guidance leaflet based on the research can be downloaded at: <http://www.cipd.co.uk/publicpolicy/policy-reports/engagement-behavioural-framework-guidance.aspx>
- The research report can be downloaded at: <http://www.cipd.co.uk/publicpolicy/policy-reports/engagement-behavioural-framework.aspx>.

Management competencies for preventing and reducing stress at work

This research programme explored what managers need to do to prevent and reduce stress in their employees. It developed a framework of relevant manager behaviours, and evaluated an intervention to support managers in developing their skills.

- Guidance leaflets based on the research can be downloaded from the CIPD website: <http://www.cipd.co.uk/hr-resources/guides/line-management-behaviour-stress.aspx>
- Full research reports can be downloaded as follows:
 - Phase 4 (case studies): <http://www.cipd.co.uk/hr-resources/research/preventing-stress-promoting-positive-manager-behaviour-phase-4.aspx>
 - Phase 3 (development, testing and evaluation of intervention): <http://www.cipd.co.uk/hr-resources/research/preventing-stress-promoting-positive-manager-behaviour.aspx>
 - Phase 2 (validation and refinement of framework): <http://www.hse.gov.uk/research/rrhtm/rr633.htm>
 - Phase 1 (initial background and first version of framework): <http://www.hse.gov.uk/research/rrhtm/rr553.htm>

Management competencies for enhancing employee engagement

This research explored what managers need to do to enhance employee engagement and developed a framework of relevant behaviours.

- The research report is available from the CIPD website:

<http://www.cipd.co.uk/hr-resources/research/management-competencies-for-engagement.aspx>

Managing conflict

We developed a competency framework for Managing Conflict based on our research findings on preventing and reducing stress. The CIPD has used this as part of a guide for managers, which can be downloaded at:

http://www.cipd.co.uk/subjects/empreltns/general/_mngcnftwrk.htm

Manager support for return to work following long term sickness absence

This research explored what managers need to do to support employees following long terms sickness absence and developed a framework of relevant behaviours.

- Guidance leaflets based on the research can be downloaded from the CIPD website:

http://www.cipd.co.uk/subjects/hrpract/absence/_manager_support_long_term_sickness

- The full research report can be downloaded from the BOHRF website:

<http://www.bohrf.org.uk/projects/rehabilitation.html>

Developing resilience

This research explored the interventions being used to develop resilience at organisational and individual level and provides a summary of the evidence available.

- Practitioner guide: <http://www.cipd.co.uk/hr-resources/guides/developing-resilience-evidence-guide.aspx>

- Research report: <http://www.cipd.co.uk/hr-resources/research/developing-resilience.aspx>

Cancer and work

This research developed a self-management tool to help people resolve work issues during their cancer journey by asking the right questions of the right people:

<http://www.macmillan.org.uk/Cancerinformation/Livingwithandaftercancer/Workandcancer/Supportforemployees/SupportForEmployees.aspx>

A further collaborative project developed a similar self-management tool for those caring for people with cancer while working:

<http://www.macmillan.org.uk/Cancerinformation/Ifsomeoneelsehascancer/Workingwhilecaringforsomeone/Workingwhilecaringforsomeone.aspx>

Other publications:

Perspectives on leadership

Commissioned by the CIPD, this report provides an overview of recent developments in leadership theory and research, including leadership development, and looks at the implications for HR practitioners:

http://www.affinityhealthatwork.co.uk/files/8513/5163/4310/perspectives_on_leadership.pdf

The future of health and wellbeing in the workplace

A discussion paper put together in collaboration with Acas as part of their 'Future of Workplace Relations' series, which reviews the broadening of the health at work agenda in recent times and highlights future challenges to health and wellbeing, such as the aging workforce and economic austerity measures. See:

<http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=3544>.

Corporate wellbeing toolkit

Put together by HRZone and Simplyhealth, this toolkit was developed to help HR professionals more easily access the latest wellbeing research and give them practical

advice to help increase wellbeing and productivity in their organisations. We contributed a chapter on the role of managers in raising levels of wellbeing. The report can be downloaded from: <http://www.hrzone.com/corporate-wellbeing/>. We also gave a presentation as part of a webinar linked to the publication, see: <http://www.hrzone.com/node/143966/done?sid=25357>.

Business case for wellbeing and engagement: literature review

We carried out a literature review for a project about wellbeing and engagement in higher education institutions, which looked at the literature around the business case for wellbeing and engagement interventions. The report, reference list and spreadsheet of references are available on the UCEA website:

<http://www.ucea.ac.uk/en/empres/epl/engage-well/wellbeing-proj-resources/index.cfm>.

Building the business case for managing stress in the workplace

We contributed to this CIPD guide that looks at all aspects of why employers should manage stress in the workplace. Available on the CIPD website:

www.cipd.co.uk/subjects/health/stress/_bscsstrss.htm

Work and Cancer – getting the message out

Commissioned by Macmillan Cancer Care and the National Cancer Survivorship Initiative, we facilitated a workshop with a range of experts from industry, employer organisations, Government, and charities to explore ways of promoting cancer and work information resources amongst employers and encouraging adoption of best practice. A report summarising the key findings from the workshop is available at:

<http://www.ncsi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Work-and-Cancer-Expert-Workshop-Report.pdf>

Engage for Success wellbeing subgroup

We were part of the subgroup responsible for producing a report about the evidence for the linkage between employee engagement and wellbeing, and the consequential impact on individual and organisational performance. Available on the Engage for Success website:

www.engageforsuccess.org/ideas-tools/wellbeing-whitepaper-evidence

Implementing culture change within the NHS: Contributions from Occupational Psychology

Emma was the founder of a group within the Division of Occupational Psychology of the BPS that is working to enhance the use of Occupational Psychology evidence in public policy making. The first report published by the group is about the contributions that Occupational Psychology can make to addressing the question of how culture change can be implemented within the NHS. It can be downloaded from:

<http://shop.bps.org.uk/publications/briefing-papers-and-reports/implementing-culture-change-within-the-nhs-contributions-from-occupational-psychology.html>.

Also, our book is available for purchase: *"Preventing stress in organisations: How to develop positive managers"*: <http://www.amazon.co.uk/exec/obidos/ASIN/047066553X>