

Bringing the benefits of
Workplace Health
and Wellbeing
to Everyone



GOOD WORK is Good for You

Employer Information Guide



Better Health
at Work Award

www.betterhealthatworkne.org



The Business Case

Promoting a healthy workplace has considerable benefits for employers and can lead to decreased absenteeism, increased productivity and improved performance.

It can also enhance an organisation's reputation and standing with staff, stakeholders and the wider community.



The average level of employee absence in 2016 was **4.3 days**



The Award covers the **North East and Cumbria**



In 2016, **15.8 million** working days were lost due to **mental health issues** (inc stress, anxiety, depression) in the UK

For every **£1** invested in workplace stress prevention there was a **ROI of £2**



Workers living in the **North East** had the highest rate of sickness **absence in England in 2016**

It is estimated that **mental ill health** costs the UK economy almost **£13 billion** per year.



ROI for workplace health programmes ranges from **£2 to £34** for every **£1** invested



37.3 million working days were lost due to sickness or injury in the UK in **2016**

In 2017, **350 employers** covering over **235,000 employees** engaged with the Award

Sources are available on our website: www.betterhealthatworkne.org

Welcome to your **Healthier Workplace**

For too long, the North has had a reputation for being an ‘unhealthy’ place to live and work; unfortunately borne out by our fairly shocking life expectancy rates and high long-term sickness and disability figures.

To help combat this, a unique partnership project to the North East was created and the Better Health at Work Award (BHAWA) was established in 2009 to take health and wellbeing into the workplace.

This partnership has now been taken forward by Local Authorities in the North East and more recently Cumbria, with programme coordination provided by the Northern TUC.

Workplace Health is an integral part of the regional public health strategy and is even more relevant in challenging economic times, when companies need to use every tool available to ensure productivity and competitiveness.

With over 500 regional employers participating in the scheme so far and a reach of nearly 250,000 workers in 2017 alone, as well as the very favourable findings of at least two independent evaluations, the need for, and effectiveness of the Award for all concerned is clear.

Individuals benefit from a healthier environment and culture, increased access to health information and interventions where they wouldn't normally; workplace activity as part of the Award has potentially saved lives on numerous occasions – identifying dangerously high cholesterol levels and early stage cancers.

At the same time, employers benefit from improved staff engagement, lower levels of absenteeism and increased productivity. There are few more apparent win-win situations.

The Award Scheme

The Better Health at Work Award recognises the efforts of local employers in addressing health issues within the workplace.

The award scheme is FREE, flexible and open to ALL employers in the North East and Cumbria, regardless of size, location or type of business.

Many organisations already promote healthy lifestyles and consider the health of their employees. This Award recognises the achievements of these organisations and helps them move forward in a structured and supported way.

For those organisations who have not considered promoting health at work, taking part in this award will help you reap the rewards of facilitating a healthy workplace.

There are 4 levels to the Award –Bronze, Silver, Gold and Continuing Excellence, with appropriate criteria at each stage to build into an Award Portfolio. Organisations are given up to a year per level, but there is flexibility for those who need it.

Evidence indicates that it takes a period of time to effectively establish the infrastructure that will engage employees in adopting behaviours / lifestyle changes. This is why ALL employers are required to begin at Bronze and progress systematically upwards through the levels.

Every employer/organisation who signs-up to participate in the Award scheme is supported by a dedicated Health Improvement Specialist.

Taking part in the Award does not affect the participant's obligation to comply with the law, including health and safety and employment law. It is the employer's responsibility to ensure they are legally compliant in these matters and, therefore, the awarding body cannot be held accountable for any shortfalls in legislative compliance as a result of participation in the scheme.



The Process

Sign up to the appropriate level

Train up health advocates

Create and action plan for the year

Implement and evaluate the actions

Complete your Assessment Criteria Document as you go

Collect evidence for the portfolio

Identify who/what could be a potential case study and write up (see case study section for guidance)

Compile the portfolio

Assessment Period opens 01 July and closes 30 November

Submit the portfolio. 30 November cut off date for submissions

Final assessment visit

Assessment verification

Notification of achievement

Celebration event

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Create an action plan for the year- including setting your assessment date

Ensure you are familiar and comfortable with the requisite criteria for your level.

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Applications for the award need to be made by a senior person within the organisation in consultation with the local award co-ordinator. This includes commitment to/ the signing of the Better Health at Work Charter at Bronze.

Familiarise yourself with the appropriate criteria.

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Your dedicated Workplace Health Lead will be able to provide guidance on, for example, carrying out a health needs assessment and developing health-related policies.

Resources, information and signposting will also be available to those organisations taking part in the award from the coordinators.

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This is usually conducted by your dedicated BHAWA contact and is then submitted to the coordinators to undergo quality assurance checks and verification.

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This is provided by the BHAWA coordinators by a stipulated date, depending on submission date.

Health Advocates



Health Advocates are your point of contact with your Workplace Health Specialist. They are vital to the award process, so should be passionate about health and wellbeing. They can be anyone in the organisation regardless of role or experience.

If you have a large or multi-site organisation it may be more practical to have a team of advocates, but we mandate **at least** two advocates so that they can support each other. The following information should help you when recruiting:

- ♥ **The Health Advocate should have the full support of all the management team and have access to evidence required for the assessment process**

- ♥ **Management must be committed to working with the Health Advocate to action any measures necessary to achieve the award**

- ♥ **The Health Advocate will need time to collect evidence and work with the assessors to implement the health action plan. They should not be expected to do this on top of a full workload**

- ♥ **Staff with knowledge of specific areas of the Award (Occupational Health, Health & Safety, Human Resources Industrial Relations, Training, Communications and Trade Union matters) would be ideal but enthusiasm and commitment are equally as important**

Health Advocates are fundamental to help organisations achieve the award. They work hard to involve and motivate employees to actively participate in the process.

Full support and endorsement from both management and personnel within the organisation is crucial to meeting the required criteria and embedding health and wellbeing for the benefit of all.

The Health Advocates and your organisation will benefit in many ways:

- ♥ **Learning new skills, accessing training from Health and other professionals which will make them much more valuable to your organisation. Advocates often cascade training back into their organisations**



♥ Making contact with other advocates in a range of different sectors and sizes of businesses which may be mutually beneficial for your organisations

♥ Better staff engagement and cohesion. Access to information, advice and support from trained health professionals to address specific issues in your organisation

♥ Exchanging good practice with other organisations and attracting positive publicity for your organisation

Below is a more detailed remit of the role of the Health Advocate to help you to make the right choice of person and to give you a better idea of how you can support them in that role. Support will also be provided throughout the year from the Better Health at Work team, both on a one to one basis and through local support events and training.

The Health Advocate Remit

To support their organisation towards the achievement of the Better Health at Work Award and help develop a positive wellbeing culture in the workplace and beyond

Responsibilities:

♥ Key Contact person between organisation and Award Assessors

♥ Compilation of the portfolio of evidence required to achieve the award

♥ Work in consultation with the Award Assessors at initial and any follow up meetings to address any actions required

♥ Progress health action plan (if required) to achieve award

♥ Organise and promote health initiatives/ activities within their workplace

Time Commitments for Remit

(The actual time spent will depend upon the size and complexity of the organisation and the number of Health Advocates in the team)

♥ Attending Award induction and any support or training events organised by the award co-ordinators

♥ Organisation of/running health campaigns and events

♥ Compilation of evidence portfolio

♥ Assessment visit facilitation

♥ Health action plan work (if required)

♥ Attendance at award celebration event

Associated Costs:

♥ Health Advocates' time commitment

♥ Travelling expenses for Health Advocate to attend events

♥ Health promotion activities (there are a lot of free resources available and your WHIS will be able to advise on current initiatives or local offers)

♥ Identified training (initial training is provided free by a Workplace Health Specialist)



Award Criteria

Bronze Award



The Bronze Level lays a firm foundation to build a healthier workplace.

- ♥ There should be a health needs assessment offered to the workforce
- ♥ The health awareness of the workforce will be raised, through three health campaigns or events based on the outcome of a health needs assessment.
- ♥ Raise awareness of risky alcohol and drug use within the organisation

♥ Positive mental health and well-being will be promoted, for example through employee support, training and awareness-raising

♥ Healthy food choices will be available (if there is a canteen, restaurant or vending machine). Otherwise a mechanism will be in place to ensure employees are aware of dietary issues and healthy food choices and these will be actively promoted

♥ General awareness of how health can be affected by work activities and assessments of risk

♥ The company will enforce smokefree legislation and promote harm reduction around the use of tobacco/ tobacco products

♥ Absence rates and causes will be collected and monitored

♥ A mechanism should be in place for ongoing consultation and communication with staff on relevant workplace health issues. Where there is a recognised trade union this should be through an appropriate agreement with them

♥ The workplace environment should be conducive to health and employee welfare will be addressed – drinking water, washing facilities, clean toilets, eating facilities etc





Silver Award



The Silver Level of the award builds upon the basics of the Bronze level and rewards organisations that take a more holistic view of the workplace.

- 🌱 The organisation will be expected to have a policy regarding Alcohol, Drugs and Other Substances
- 🌱 The company will organise and fully evaluate a minimum of four health related campaigns
- 🌱 Physical activity will be encouraged by the organisation
- 🌱 Continue to address mental health and wellbeing of the workforce and embed into organisational infrastructure
- 🌱 Consultation will take place with employees on the development and implementation of a healthy eating statement or policy
- 🌱 The organisation will start to embed health and wellbeing within company structures and support their health advocates
- 🌱 The organisation will provide information to contractors and visitors in relation to health issues
- 🌱 Equality and Diversity issues/needs will be addressed
- 🌱 The organisation will facilitate a healthy living culture and healthy behaviours, both in the workplace and beyond



Gold Award



This level builds upon the Silver level and requires companies to look outside their own organisation and promote health within the wider community.

- ♥ A minimum three-year health strategy and one-year action plan to be in place for health improvement activities and task related health issues, which should be reviewed annually
- ♥ A follow-up health needs assessment to be conducted with workforce

- ♥ The company will participate in a minimum of five local, regional or national health topics one of which should be ongoing throughout the year
- ♥ Health topics to be promoted in the wider community and to families of the workforce.
- ♥ Employees will be supported to have regular health checks/attend screening
- ♥ The company will have policies in place for bullying and harassment that are actively monitored and reviewed
- ♥ The organisation will have a proactive system in place to support staff on long term sick to return to work and will raise awareness of and support staff with long term medical conditions
- ♥ A Social Value approach to be demonstrated by the organisation

Continuing Excellence Award



This recognises the importance of organisations sustaining the progress they have made during their participation in the award and encourages them to use their experience to support others.

- ♥ Progress and evidence activity needed to deliver your 3 year Strategy
- ♥ Continue to raise health awareness with the workforce, through five high quality, interactive local, regional or national health campaigns or events.
- ♥ Provide a mentoring role and/or continue to actively promote the award to other organisations
- ♥ Compilation of a case study to publicise your organisation's achievements
- ♥ Address any new elements added/amended to the previous Award levels as a result of the annual criteria review process

Please Note: information from the case study may be used in the media to help to promote the award and motivate other organisations



Maintaining Excellence Award



Achieved by employers who have been engaged with the Award for long enough to have achieved a pass at all levels and twice at Continuing Excellence, via the completion of a criteria document, portfolio and full workplace assessment.

Employers reaching this level will no longer be automatically assessed. They will move on to the Maintaining Excellence Framework and need to complete a yearly report to evidence that their health and wellbeing activity is being sustained at 'Excellence' level.

Award Progression



Ambassador Status



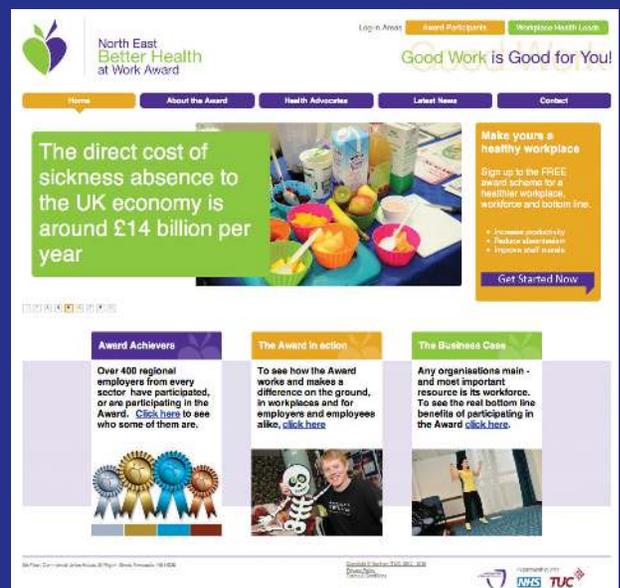
Ambassador Status is a fairly recent addition to the Award, created to recognise those employers who demonstrate both long-term commitment and outstanding practice around workplace health and wellbeing, not only achieving but consistently going above and beyond at every stage of assessment.

Eligibility/Process

Organisations are eligible for Ambassador Status after 2 successful Continuing Excellence achievements (min 5 years engagement) and with the recommendation of their designated Workplace Health Improvement Specialist. This is then passed through to the BHAWA Verification Panel for endorsement.

The status involves being a public Ambassador for the Award, mentoring other employers and also the opportunity for nominated Health Advocates within the organisation to become BHAWA Assessors for the CE level.

The central Better Health at Work Award website not only promotes the Award externally but is a practical, multi-functional tool to support all participants in the programme as they move through the process.



Once signed up and registered, all organisations are allocated a login password for the BHAWA website which has a comprehensive information portal, resource library and secure networking bulletin board.

The Resources section includes useful links, downloadable documentation, template policies and activity materials to help guide and support participants through the Award at all levels.





Better Health at Work Award



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