

JOHN LEWIS
& PARTNERS

JOHN LEWIS
PARTNERSHIP

WAITROSE
& PARTNERS

THE JOHN LEWIS PARTNERSHIP WORKING WELL REPORT



#WorkingWell

REPORT SUMMARY

Fulfilling and meaningful work is a source of wellbeing. Having a supportive employer who enhances employee wellbeing and invests in early clinical intervention, can make a real difference to someone grappling with a physical or mental health condition and their recovery. For business, a healthy, engaged workforce can boost performance and productivity.

New research from the John Lewis Partnership and Centre for Economics and Business Research (Cebr) shows the **total cost of absenteeism** in the UK due to mental health and musculoskeletal conditions is forecast to reach **£3.8 billion¹** in **2025**. While substantial, this is dwarfed by an estimated **£84 billion²** in **reduced productivity** by **2025**.

By employers, health experts and government working together, we estimate businesses in the UK can **save up to £1.7 billion** by 2025 from the cost of absenteeism, just through early clinical intervention for musculoskeletal and mental health conditions³. The cost of reduced productivity could also fall, saving **£36.4 billion⁴**. This report doesn't hold all the answers but is the start of a conversation on how to do that.



EMPLOYERS CAN HELP BY:

- **Intervening early and offering free occupational health services** which are high quality and clinically-backed.
- **Promoting good management practices** and work-life balance to lay the foundations for a healthy workplace.
- **Creating an inclusive culture, tackling taboos and removing stigma to allow people to thrive** so that they can seek help and receive the adjustments they need.
- **Sharing best practice and evidence and promoting the business case** for investing in the health of their people.

GOVERNMENT CAN HELP BY:

- **Making occupational health services a non-taxable benefit in kind** to incentivise employers to invest in early intervention.
- **Focusing workplace health policy and legislation on early intervention** as well as long-term sickness absence.

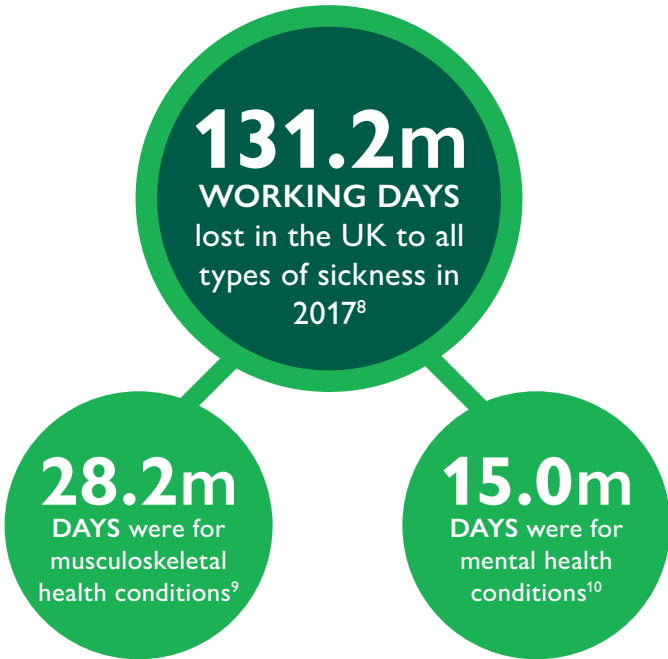
On average
5.9
sick days per employee
are taken per year in the UK¹².

80%
of UK organisations
have observed 'presenteeism',
when someone is not well but
at work, in the past year¹³.

30%
of UK workers
surveyed by YouGov said
their employer doesn't offer
any health and wellbeing support
or services¹⁴.

WORKPLACE HEALTH IN NUMBERS

After minor illnesses, mental health (stress, anxiety, depression or other serious mental health disorders) and musculoskeletal conditions (back, neck, leg or muscular pains and strains that affect movement) are the two largest causes of sickness absence in UK workplaces⁵. Estimates suggest that by 2030, 40% of the working age population will have a long-term musculoskeletal condition⁶. Together, the forecasted total costs in absenteeism will reach **£3.8 billion** for businesses, equivalent to a 0.6% increase each year from 2020 and **£84 billion** in reduced productivity by 2025⁷.



NHS figures show that
over 200 different types of
musculoskeletal conditions
affect one in four of the adult
population in the UK.

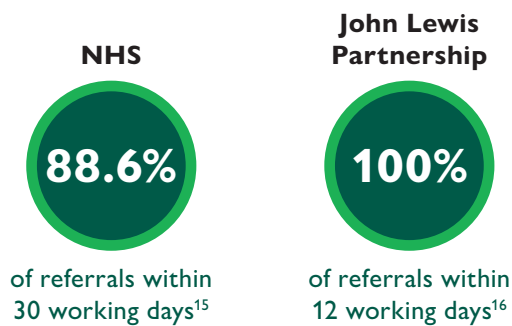
One in six people in England
report experiencing a common
mental health problem, for
example depression and anxiety
in any given week¹¹.



THE BENEFITS OF GETTING HELP AND SUPPORT EARLY

There are three main ways that individuals can access health and wellbeing services – through the NHS, by self-paying through private healthcare or via their employer.

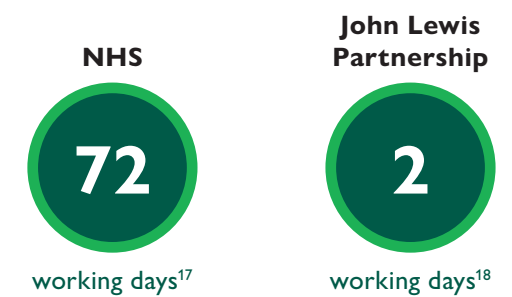
AVERAGE WAITING TIMES FOR MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT FOLLOWING REFERRAL



John Lewis Partnership Partners in work at start of treatment: **71%**

John Lewis Partnership Partners in work after treatment: **98%**

AVERAGE WAITING TIMES FOR PHYSIOTHERAPY TREATMENT FOLLOWING REFERRAL

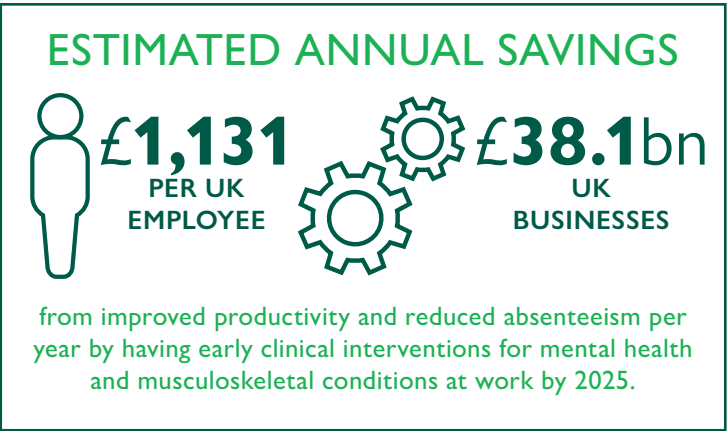


John Lewis Partnership Partners in work at start of treatment: **76%**

John Lewis Partnership Partners in work after treatment: **96%**



The physical and mental stresses and strains that life can throw at us - from bills, to pay, to accidental injury - don't magically disappear when we get to work. New research from YouGov and the John Lewis Partnership reveals 21% of UK workers disagree their employer would support them if they were unwell because of a physical health condition. This increases to 29% due to a mental health condition. In contrast, over four in five employees (83%) agreed they could recover quicker from a physical or mental health condition if they felt supported at work¹⁹. At the John Lewis Partnership, our focus on early clinical interventions means that three quarters of Partners are in work when starting psychological or physical therapy²⁰.



TACKLING THE MENTAL HEALTH TABOO AT WORK

Our research²¹ indicates that for a significant proportion of UK workers, mental health can still be a taboo subject at work. Workers are more likely to seek free and confidential support from their employer for musculoskeletal conditions (66%) than mental health conditions (52%). Nearly a third (29%) also disagree that they would be supported by their employer if they were unwell because of a mental health condition. In 2016, NHS England²² estimated that £34 billion is spent each year on mental health in England. When considering the wider economic and social impacts, estimates from the NHS suggests poor mental health costs £105 billion a year in England.

ROLE OF EMPLOYERS

Employers can play a key role in creating a supportive workplace and investing in clinical health services for their employees. But there are important differences between the support that employers can provide to that of medical professionals. Businesses can provide support and training, but this support needs to be clinically-backed. The role of managers is to create a healthy, positive working culture and understand when and where to signpost to company resources and specialist support. Culture change takes time and is complex. This is not a quick fix solution, but a far more sustainable one.

ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

Government can use its convening power, policy and legislation to support employers to invest in the health and wellbeing of their employees. This should complement well-funded and well-resourced NHS services. This is supported by **77% of UK workers** who think that offering tax breaks to businesses to allow them to invest more money in providing health and wellbeing services in the workplace is a good idea²³. However, the current tax system acts as a disincentive for employers to invest in this area.

HOW EMPLOYER-PROVIDED HEALTH SERVICES ARE TAXED

Currently, employer-provided occupational health services are a taxable benefit to the employee and subject to Income Tax and National Insurance. This can result in an **effective tax rate of more than 40%** for those employers that wish to settle the taxes on behalf of their employees. While employers can receive a reimbursement of up to £500, this is only available if an employee is out of work for more than 28 days as a result of injury or ill-health. There is another limited exemption for the costs of treatment provided where the injury or illness is a direct result of an employee's work. We therefore want to see **all occupational health services as a non-taxable benefit** in kind to incentivise employers to invest in early intervention.

WHY HEALTH AND WELLBEING MATTERS TO US

As an employee-owned business, we have a responsibility to look after our 83,900 Partners who work for the John Lewis Partnership. We're committed to driving a commercially successful business which offers satisfying and meaningful jobs and supports our people to lead healthy, fulfilled lives. In fact, it's one of the key performance objectives for our leaders, alongside our financial objectives.

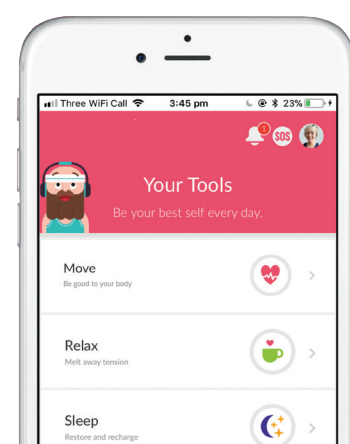
We introduced free in-house health and medical services to all Partners in 1929, 19 years before the NHS was established. We continue to offer comprehensive health and wellbeing services today and we're investing over **£20 million a year** to enable our Partners to feel well, enjoy life and have support when they need it. But we know there is more we can do, which is why we have a bold ambition to become Britain's Healthiest Workplace by 2025 and boost our productivity, gaining **over 1 million working days** by 2025.

OUR HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGY

1 WORTHWHILE AND SATISFYING EMPLOYMENT

A healthy and inclusive workplace starts with meaningful work, empowering managers, opportunities for growth and work-life balance.

3,406 democratically elected representatives in the business.



2 HEALTHY LIVES AND PERSONAL WELLBEING

We actively encourage our Partners to look after themselves and their health and wellbeing, taking a preventative approach.

500+ Partners volunteer as Wellbeing Champions across more than 160 locations.

3,500 free health screenings for Partners last year.

6,700 Partners subscribed to our free mental health and wellbeing app Unmind.

800 line managers participated in mental health awareness workshops.



3 EARLY HELP AND SUPPORT WHEN THINGS GO WRONG

We have free access to comprehensive in-house and third party medical, emotional and financial support for our Partners when they need it.

53 in-house occupational health experts.

14,179 occupational health cases during 2018/19.

£1.2m financial assistance loans and grants given to Partners.

23,783 calls to our in-house employee assistance Partner Support line run by Partners, for Partners.



OUR STORIES

Helen is a Supermarket Assistant at Waitrose & Partners

“I've had rheumatoid arthritis since I was 18. When I was applying for a job at the Partnership I noted this in my application so the company was aware of my health condition before I joined. Everyone has been very supportive from day one. “Last year, my hip got worse and I needed some time off work. I was concerned and didn't know who to ask for help. That's when my team manager suggested I speak to the Partnership's occupational health services and Partner Support. The support I've received has been brilliant. I had a hip replacement in October and have had no trouble getting time off and they arranged a phased return to work, which was really helpful. I was even offered the opportunity to change roles if I wish. “I was really worried that I would be a burden to everyone at work, but through conversations with Partner Support and my line manager I felt supported and reassured that I'm not a burden and that I'm valuable to the Partnership.”



Matt is a Section Manager at John Lewis & Partners

“I may come across as a confident person at work, but I have suffered with anxiety periodically for years since my father passed away. I hid it, because I thought people would judge me, that 'real men' don't ask for help and that I was tough enough to ride it out. “Recently, it had been overwhelming me and came to a tipping point when one morning I couldn't get up and had to call in sick. When I came back to work I told my manager the truth and called Partner Support to get help. They told me about our health services and psychology support services and I now have regular counselling sessions and already feel better and more in control of my emotions. There was no waiting time and I was able to get help immediately and remain at work. “I bottled things up for so long and it's such a relief to be open about it. I've been amazed by the support and encouragement I've received from other Partners. We all need a little extra support from time to time, I'm so glad I finally asked for it.”



A NOTE ON DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this report, we define the following terms by:

ABSENTEEISM This is when a worker is unable to come to work for repeated or extended periods of time.

EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICES Integrated in-house and third party occupational health services provided by qualified clinicians prior to 28 days of consecutive absence.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH SERVICES Keeping people well at work – physically and mentally, ensuring you are fit for work.

OUTPUT The amount of something produced in a company, industry or economy. This can vary depending on the business and industry.

MUSCULOSKELETAL CONDITIONS Back, neck, leg or muscular pains and strains that affect movement.

MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS Stress, anxiety, depression or other serious mental health disorders.

PRESENTEEISM The phenomenon which describes when workers are present at work but unable to perform at their maximum capacity due to illness or injury.

PRODUCTIVITY The amount of output produced per worker.

1. Office for National Statistics (ONS) and Centre for Economics and Business Research (Cebr) - May 2019
2. ONS and Cebr - May 2019
3. ONS and Cebr - May 2019
4. ONS and Cebr - May 2019
5. ONS Sickness absence in the UK labour market, July 2018
6. Arthritis UK - www.arthritisresearchuk.org/arthritis-information/data-and-statistics/state-of-musculoskeletal-health.aspx
7. ONS and Cebr - May 2019
8. ONS Sickness absence in the UK labour market, July 2018
9. ONS and Cebr - May 2019
10. ONS and Cebr - May 2019
11. Mind Health
12. Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, 'Health and Wellbeing at Work Survey Report', April 2019
13. Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, 'Health and Wellbeing at Work Survey Report', April 2019
14. Wellbeing at Work YouGov survey of 1,017 UK workers which excluded self-employed for the John Lewis Partnership, May 2019
15. Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT), February 2019 - 6 weeks
16. John Lewis Partnership internal data
17. UK average calculated by PhysioMed based on individual CCG data
18. John Lewis Partnership internal data
19. Wellbeing at Work YouGov survey of 1,017 UK workers which excluded self-employed for the John Lewis Partnership, May 2019
20. John Lewis Partnership internal data
21. Wellbeing at Work YouGov survey of 1,017 UK workers which excluded self-employed for the John Lewis Partnership, May 2019
22. NHS England - www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/labourproductivity/articles/sicknessabsenceinthelabourmarket/2016/relateddata
23. Wellbeing at Work YouGov survey of 1,017 UK workers which excluded self-employed for the John Lewis Partnership, May 2019

YouGov survey: All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 2,114 adults, of which 1,017 were workers who are not self-employed. Fieldwork was undertaken between 17 - 20 May 2019. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all UK adults (aged 18+).

Find out more at
johnlewispartnership.co.uk/workingwell

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