



What a month it has been, and a challenging start to 2021! As always, our Healthy Workplace team and Healthy Lifestyles service are here to help with support, advice, and resources for all. Many of us have really struggled over the last year with our wellbeing due to the impact of the global pandemic. However, this year is different, there is an end in sight with the vaccination programme growing. We now have an opportunity to learn from our experiences and come back stronger than ever. Whether you embraced 'Dry January' or just were not feeling it this year, it is time to look forward. Spring is around the corner and there are lots of things we can do together to make 2021 better.

In this issue:

Looking after your mental health in lockdown 3 - with new local and national tools and information

Health checks and health screening – from dental health to eye care and how we can raise awareness

Muscular Skeletal Conditions (MSK) – how to look after our bodies and tackle the impact of MSK

Upcoming Health Campaigns - February and March 2021

Get involved - Healthy activities that any workplace can get involved in

News, training, and opportunities with free resources to support Gloucestershire Businesses



There are simple things we can do to look after our mental wellbeing. We all know that lockdown has taken its toll so here are four top resources for employers large and small:

- Take the short **Mind Plan Quiz** to get a free NHS plan full of tailored tips and advice to help you manage stress, sleep better and boost your mood.
- Celebrate **time to talk day on 4th February** and discover how small conversations about mental health with colleagues and friends can make a big difference
- Get involved in **The Mental Health at Work Commitment** with six key actions that can be undertaken in the workplace to help create a supportive culture for mental health
- Share the **'One Gloucestershire'** campaign which has been launched to encourage people across Gloucestershire to **'Be Well'** and access support for their mental health and wellbeing when they need it. Find out more **here**

Our Healthy Workplaces Website offers more resources, information and tips on this topic and you can also access our **Comprehensive Guide** for Leaders and Managers co-designed with colleagues at Gloucestershire County Council



Health Checks and Health Screening

Now that the evenings are getting lighter it is a great time to promote self-care and healthy habits.

One of the things that employers can do is to raise awareness of the importance of check-ups and health screening. In February and March there are some great national health awareness campaigns that you promote in your virtual workspace such as world cancer day in February as well as world oral health day in March.

In addition to the national campaigns, you may also want to think about raising awareness of issues that could be specific to your workforce at the moment. For example, if you have employees who are remote working, attending their meetings online and generally spending much more time at a computer you may want to raise awareness of the importance of eye health and eye health screening. This [link](#) is a great one to share for information and advice on this topic.

Does your workplace have a policy on time off for health screening appointments? dental appointments? or maybe you offer vouchers for a free eye test? Make sure that any schemes of this nature are promoted and used by those who need them. Simple reminders of any benefits you offer could really help to encourage people to think and act.

For more information on eyecare contact [The Eyecare Trust](#)
For information on oral health visit [The Oral Health Foundation](#)



Corporate Challenge Coming Soon.....

If your workplace is ready to support each other as a team and earn points for working towards your own personal health and exercise goals with **FREE** support from a dedicated health coach, then [email us here](#) with the subject: Corporate Challenge 2021 to find out more.

Our new Corporate Challenge initiative will be launched this Easter and more information will be coming your way next month.

The impact of Muscular Skeletal Issues (MSK) in the Workplace

There is some evidence to suggest that MSK problems could escalate with home working. Not having a decent workstation and taking fewer natural breaks from the computer screen have been taking their toll on many of us.

PHE and BITC have developed a comprehensive toolkit for employers to help prevent MSK and support employees with MSK conditions. There are some key simple actions set out in this toolkit that we have summarised for you here:

- **Make a commitment to MSK:** Appoint a wellbeing champion, engage and consult employees about MSK and encourage open communication at all levels. Understand your legal obligations and co-create a plan with your employees. Share best practice with other employers.
- **Understanding MSK:** Understand the impact of MSK in the workplace, assess and minimise risks and hazards and assess individual employee needs.
- **Prevention:** Optimise physical and mental health and understand the link between the two. Provide line manager training and encourage healthier choices
- **Early intervention:** Know the support your employees need and enable and encourage employees to talk about it. Share and signpost to information and support on MSK.
- **Adjustments in the workplace:** Pro-actively tackle any stigma and find out if work is causing or exacerbating any problems. Find adaptive ways to complete tasks to allow employees to continue working within their abilities
- **Rehabilitation and return to work:** Stay in touch with employees on sick leave and support them back to work by reviewing individual needs and making reasonable adjustments where needed. Support employee self-management and use Fit for Work and Access to Work initiatives where needed

You can access the full BITC PHE MSK toolkit online for free [here](#)



National Health Campaigns to take you towards spring 2021



4th February 2021:

World Cancer Day is the global uniting initiative. By raising worldwide **awareness**, improving **education** and catalysing personal, collective and government **action**, we're working together to reimagine a world where millions of preventable cancer deaths are saved and access to life-saving cancer treatment and care is equal for all.

time to change

let's end mental health discrimination

Time to Talk Day - 4th Feb 2021

This year's focus is on the power of small, because however you have a conversation about mental health – whether it's a quick text to a friend, a virtual coffee morning with colleagues, or a socially distanced walk and talk with your family – it has the power to make a big difference.

They have a range of great downloadable resources for workplaces from games and activities to a workplace conversation pack and more.



Eating Disorders Awareness Week 1st - 7th March 2021

Join the campaign to create a future where people experiencing binge eating disorder are met with understanding and compassion. Binge eating disorder will affect one in fifty of us in our lifetime, it is the most common but least understood. It isn't about being greedy or lacking in willpower, but a serious mental illness which many suffer with alone, often with the fear of how others might react the reason they don't reach out for help.



World Oral Health Day

20 March

World Oral Health Day aims to empower people with the knowledge, tools and confidence to secure good oral health. With FREE posters, fact sheets, and an action toolkit for workplaces this has everything you need to promote the importance of good oral health across your workforce.

If you are looking for inspiration, goals or just some ideas on how you can engage your workforce and boost morale through workplace wellbeing have a look at this list of opportunities and ideas



Active Gloucestershire

'We can move' change makers

Do you enjoy being physically active? Want to help and inspire others to enjoy the benefits of moving more? Join the community of change makers helping to get you, me and everyone in Gloucestershire active by making physical activity a part of our everyday lives.

Whether it's organising an event, learning first aid skills, how to use social media, shaping your idea or finding funding, we can move has have training to help you.



Health & Hustle supports staff and patient groups across Gloucestershire to be active and healthy, recognising that one-size does not fit all. The initiative has created an environment for promoting healthy lifestyles by encouraging and supporting each other to achieve active goals.

Do you have what it takes to be a Health and Hustle Change Maker?



Best-You is an online platform and app that you and your employees can use as your own personal platform to communicate, create goals and track your progress.

Create a private group and invite staff to discuss healthy lifestyles within the workplace – activity, eating or anything else that fits your organisation.

Employees can create goals for healthy eating, smoking, alcohol, weight, and activity. They can track their progress against their goal each day and Best-You will give motivational feedback.

Sign up download the app and digital desktop platform [here](#)



Support for your business from Gloucestershire Growth Hubs

The **Peer Network** programme in Gloucestershire is delivered locally by The Growth Hub, creating diverse cohort groups of individuals to collaboratively work through common business issues. Through interactive action learning, the programme enables business leaders to discuss their own challenges, gain and reflect on valuable feedback and implement practical solutions to overcome them.



Support for redundancy from Gfirst LEP

Being made redundant can be difficult, frustrating, and upsetting, and can leave you feeling adrift and unsure where to go next. Gfirst LEP has lots of useful resources to help you figure out your next steps and get back into the workplace, from assistance in finding a new job to training and learning opportunities.



There is also some good information on the ['Mind' website](#) on coping with redundancy

Free Webinars from Public Health England



Work, Worklessness and wellbeing – Covid19 and beyond

The Society of Occupational Medicine with PHE wishes to support employers and employees to be Covid secure and maintain health and wellbeing during the pandemic and beyond. We also want policy makers to think about key challenges employers and employees are facing during the pandemic and beyond. They are hosting a series of webinars on key issues with follow up briefing sheets for employers, line managers and employees that can support employee wellbeing, productivity and avoid legal challenge.

Who is it for?

- employers and employees from businesses, large and small.
- professionals working in healthcare, public health, occupational health, and human resources
- policy makers

Webinars are free - book on the links below:

- **4th Feb 2-4pm** [Managing job insecurity and creating better quality work](#)
- **11th Feb 2-4pm** [Managing stress, burnout and fatigue in health and social care](#)
- **24th Feb 2-4pm** [Promoting workplace health and wellbeing in Covid-19 and beyond](#)
- **3rd March 2-4pm** [Developing a Covid secure health and wellbeing strategy](#)
- **10th March 2-4pm** [Managing change – from restructuring, redundancy to home working](#)

