**Wellbeing**

**What is wellbeing?**

Although there are different definitions of wellbeing, in the work context it is usually about organisations enabling and supporting employees in maximizing their physical and mental health.

Wellbeing is more than preventing sickness absence. It is about a holistic approach that can include physical, mental, emotional, nutritional, social and even financial health. Wellbeing can also include the organisation of work, the balance between work and home, and personal development.

Wellbeing is about the whole person.

Employee wellbeing involves:

* Maintaining a healthy physical self by making healthy choices about diet, exercise and leisure.
* Developing an attitude of mind that enables the employee to have self-confidence, self-respect and to be emotionally resilient.
* Having a sense of purpose, feelings of fulfillment and meaning.
* Possessing an active mind that is alert, open to new experiences, curious and creative.
* Having a network of relationships that are supportive and nurturing.

*(Canadian Centre for Management Development)*

Often, wellbeing is a partnership. Whilst the individual owns their own personal wellbeing, an organisation can create an environment in which wellbeing is supported and enabled, providing programmes and events, time and opportunities to take part in wellbeing activities at the workplace. Wellbeing includes many different facets, including culture, environment, training and more practical measures such as healthy food, health and wellbeing benefits and opportunities for fitness and exercise.

You can find more about the University six ways to wellbeing [here](http://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/wellbeing/).

**Benefits of wellbeing**

Supporting employees in their wellbeing is the right thing to do. But there are many practical benefits to the University of promoting health and wellbeing too. These include:

* Increased motivation and engagement
* Improved organisational culture
* Increased sense of value and recognition by staff
* Reduction in sickness absence costs
* Reduction in accident and injuries
* Reduction in recruitment and turnover costs

A focus on wellbeing can make the University a more productive, attractive and corporately responsible place to work.

**Manager responsibilities**

Managers can have a significant impact on the wellbeing of the people that work for them. The relationship between employees and their immediate manager can be one of the most important factors in employee wellbeing. Where there are strong relationships between managers and teams, wellbeing can be enhanced.

It is part of the role of every University manager to contribute to creating a supportive working environment that promotes employee health and wellbeing.

Managers are uniquely placed to promote wellbeing and create a healthy, transparent team culture in which people feel able to discuss sensitive issues or ask for help when they need it.

Small changes by managers can make a big difference. Positive people management can help support employees in developing themselves, balancing work and home and being their best self at work.

In particular, managers can support staff wellbeing through:

* Responding to any concerns regarding the wellbeing of any member of the team.
* Being aware off the symptoms of ill-health and responding to them promptly.
* Ensuring employees have reasonable workloads.
* Encouraging staff to take part in University wellbeing activities.
* Attending relevant training.
* Supporting staff with health issues, especially on their return to work after sickness absence.
* Monitoring working hours to ensure staff are not working excessively and are taking their holiday entitlement.
* Discussing wellbeing and health during 121s and review meetings.
* Referring employees to Occupational Health or other health services promptly when a wellbeing or health issues arises.
* Listening to employees.
* Encouraging staff to talk about wellbeing.
* Provide time and space to enable employees to engage with wellbeing activities.

Finally, managers can act as role models – employees will be more likely to engage with wellbeing activity if they see their manager doing the same or giving priority to their own health and wellbeing.

**Frequently Asked Questions**

*Where can I get more information on wellbeing?*

We have a dedicated website which includes resources, a dedicated blog and sources of help and advice. For specific issues, such as supporting employees through ill-health, you can contact HR or Occupational Health for additional advice.

You can find the website here: <http://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/wellbeing/>

*Where can I get advice on introducing wellbeing activities for my department or team?*

We have a number of wellbeing champions across the University, whose role it is to support and promote wellbeing activity. They will be able to provide information on already existing activities. They may also be able to support you with advice and guidance on specific activities for your team. Further advice and support will be available from Human Resources.

*I have concerns about the wellbeing of one of my team. Where can I get advice?*

In the first instance, it is a good idea to discuss this with your HR Partner. Depending on the nature of the issue, they can assist you with advice or signposting appropriate services.