

Council for Work and Health Business Plan 2019/20

The intentions of the Council, as set out in its Constitution, are to work with partners and other like-minded responsible organisations as follows:

- To provide employers and employees with tools to promote and protect health at work;
- To provide signposting for other health professionals on how to obtain competent advice and support on work and health issues;
- To promote consistent professional standards;
- To develop common educational initiatives;
- To respond collectively to official consultations and to encourage members to respond individually;
- To identify research needs in the field of work and health and proactively to contribute to the development of evidence-based practice;
- To develop the Council into a sustainable, dynamic and robust group working to a common purpose.

To achieve this we will prioritise the following strategies:

Strategy 1: To be a leading voice on Work and Health, called upon by Government and key decision makers for expert opinion and advice pro-actively.

Past activity: The Council has developed a regular horizon scanning activity as part of its regular meetings and uses its networks to share intelligence.

In 2019, the Council will continue its horizon scanning and intelligence sharing and will continue to raise its profile by contributing to publications and meetings, in collaboration with its members to improve awareness regarding health and work. A sub group has been established in 2019 to consider improved use of social media and the refreshed web site will be used to host new resources (for example the “Talking Work” guidance on work modifications resource to support GPs).

Consideration will be given to using funding remaining from past work on OH workforce planning to support activity being undertaken by the Government’s Joint Work and Health Unit on the future workforce OH needs.

Council members will wherever possible be supported to contribute to working groups for the development of the work and health agenda, and to promote peer to peer networking to enable debate and consensus amongst professionals working to support employee health.

Council will proactively seek contact with key decision makers e.g. the Joint Work & Health Unit to contribute to strategic level thinking, and support members attending expert advisory groups to promote the work of the Council.

Strategy 2: To influence policy direction through the utilisation of the diverse expertise of the Council members

Past activity has included development of an extensive network to manage timely and effective dissemination to enable members to contribute to consultation, research and policy development.

In 2019 the Council will use its resources to ensure members are aware and able to contribute to strategic consultations relating to work and health.

Council will promote consultation between employers and professional groups to enable opportunities to support employee health.

Council will endeavour to ensure it identifies key working groups and programme boards and will seek to ensure wherever possible representation within such.

Strategy 3: To promote consistent standards for the delivery of safe effective high quality services supporting work and health

Past projects have included supporting projects to improve training and qualifications, support the development of organisations promoting workplace health and contribution to development of quality standards.

In 2019 the Council will contribute to further formal consultation on “Transforming occupational health”, including the issue of improved quality standards. The Council will continue to contribute to programmes widening access to employee/employer health support.

Council will encourage its members to share experience and expertise through active input to working groups, conferences, seminars and training opportunities.

Strategy 4: To provide visionary multi-disciplinary leadership on Work and Health.

Past projects have included work to support understanding of training and qualifications required in the future OH workforce and Council Members have actively researched and produced guidance on many aspects of good employee health.

In 2018/19 the Council will continue to contribute to raising skills and awareness amongst professionals supporting work and health, and supporting activities contributing to the consensus statement “Work as a clinical outcome” and other policy initiatives enabling health professionals to support their patients’ health and work.

Strategy 5: To develop and promote tools to support improved employee health

Past projects have included an IOSH sponsored study to improve employer / GP communication, support for members campaigns on work and health and input to development of NICE Guidance;

In 2018/19 the Council is leading work commissioned by the Government’s Joint Work and Health Unit to provide guidance to GPs completing Fit Notes and prompting improved opportunities to recommend reasonable adjustments to support return to work. The Council is actively contributing to programmes to improve accessibility to occupational health advice and to improve awareness of the positive benefits of good work. The Council will continue to use its diverse multi-disciplinary membership to consult and contribute to the “Improving Lives” policy strategy.

The Council will use its networks and professional influence to support employers, employees and their advisers in maintaining and improving employee health. This should include opportunities to contribute to policy makers’, business leaders’ and line managers’ understanding of their contribution to health and work through creating and sustaining healthy and motivating workplaces.