
A New Vision for Health and Work?

The Black Report has identified some key "foundations" and a new vision for health and work in Britain which seeks to demonstrate the links between work and health and the need for them to be recognised as integral to the future of every level of society from individuals to corporations and communities.

Three principle objectives: (Chapter 1 - Working for a Healthier Tomorrow)

- Prevention of illness and promotion of health and well-being
- Early intervention for those who develop a health condition
- An improvement in the health of those out of work - so that everyone with the potential to work has the support they need to do so

The following reforms are highlighted:

- Improvements needed to sick certification that identifies and promotes fitness for work - radical reforms are planned for the current system
- Beliefs about fitness for work - there is still a strongly held belief in many sectors that a person must not return to work until they are 100% fit. This belief limits and underlies many of the negative approaches to managing people with problems. There needs to be a major shift in attitudes and expectations of all concerned.
- A review of the framework of Occupational Health provision needs to take place to ensure the best support of health and well-being.
- Actions to consider the health and well being of tomorrow's working population - the children and younger people

There need to be changes in approach amongst employers, the public and healthcare professionals. Then, in order to identify whether the new approach is working there needs to be measurement of improvement. It would be great to be able to gather information about individual businesses who measure absence and the effectiveness of any solutions they provide, so we'll take a look some straight forward ways to do this in another article.

contribution to the bigger picture. It is not a mission that can be achieved by one employer or organisation alone but is going to require co-operation all the way from the shop floor to the board room, and across public and private sectors.

Just making small changes to the way your business does things makes a difference to your employees and their families and has ripple effects back out into the community.

For more information about some of things you could start doing right away you can request my Free Special Report on "Getting Your Employees back to work Faster". Please visit the website to access it if you haven't yet seen it - www.workperformance.co.uk/

References:

Working for Healthier Tomorrow - Dame Carol Black <http://www.workingforhealth.gov.uk/>

Waddell, G & Burton, A.K. (2006) Is work good for your health and well being? London. TSO (The Stationery Office).