

## **Moving ahead** **On track for positive health**



*The Positive Health Programme (PHP) is an online confidential health and well-being service to help keep our employees healthy. It covers four main areas: sleep, nutrition, stress, fitness.*

*The PHP also provides information that we can use to identify health risk factors in our workforce which we can then target through health promotion. The programme is designed to engage our employees and result in improved attendance, productivity, and retention.*

The PHP pilot was launched in April 2009 to staff at our offices in Manchester and in London. The launch included a health fair, where staff were offered a mini health check and were provided with health information advice and leaflets.

Those that were particularly interested in health and well-being put themselves forward as health champions and were appropriately trained by the BUPA team, our occupational health and well-being provider. The champion's role involved motivating their teams during the pilot and organising initiatives at a local level. We invited 743 employees to take part in the pilot and of these, 395 people registered (53 per cent of total) with 220 completing the online health assessment questionnaire.

Following analysis of the first three months of management data provided by BUPA, the overall health and well-being (HWB) score of our pilot group was 49.2 – slightly higher than the industry sector (transportation) specific average of 45.8. This means that despite having a score that is about average for the industry, we are potentially incurring productivity loss and increasing other health-related costs such as sickness absence and staff turnover as a result of the HWB issues identified.

24.1 per cent of our pilot group fell into the 'high-risk' category. The most prevalent health risk

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areas identified were stress, nutrition and physical activity. The average results reported from the 24.1 per cent with a poor overall HWB score compared to respondents with good HWB scores were:

- 44.4 per cent lower job satisfaction
- 50.2 per cent lower productivity compared to respondents with good overall HWB
- 85.4 per cent higher instance of sickness absence per quarter.

Following the initial report, we targeted these health issues through a series of health interventions throughout 2009/10.

Key activities included:

- an online 12-week weight management course run by BUPA, alongside nutritional advice from our in-house fitness instructors
- Urban Walks, providing risk assessed walks for staff at lunchtime, along with a booklet called 'Stepping out' which details the benefits of walking, and a pedometer to monitor progress
- tailor-made sessions by Care First, our 24/7 employee counselling and advice service on how to manage stress
- a holistic day incorporating on site massage
- access to BUPA online stress and depression management courses called 'With me in mind'.

The PHP pilot finished in April 2010 and we are evaluating its success. We are analysing absence rates, employee engagement scores and how well the health interventions have been received by the pilot group.

Once we have completed our evaluations, we will decide whether or not to implement PHP throughout the Company.

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*of respondents fell into the 'high-risk' category. The most prevalent health risk areas identified were stress, nutrition and physical activity.*

