

70% of employers find it hard to ensure wellbeing communication is relevant

2 years ago



The way in which health and wellbeing support is communicated has undergone a dramatic change recently, as research¹ released today by Towergate Health & Protection reveals. A huge 70% of large companies said they now find it difficult to ensure communication of health and wellbeing support is always relevant to employees.

For SMEs, this figure was 50%, meaning that on average, well over half (55%) of employers admitted difficulty in making communications relevant, struggling to target specific messages at specific groups of the workforce.

Over the last 12 months, 42% of companies have changed their health and wellbeing communication programme, and nearly two-thirds, 62%, say that they now communicate the support they offer their people more regularly. While this increased frequency of communication is positive, it is important not to use a broad-brush approach. Benefits communications must be carefully targeted, otherwise employees will soon turn off to it and will stop reading and interacting with the messages.

Debra Clark, Head of Specialist Consulting at Towergate Health & Protection, comments: “Where employers are finding it hard to ensure that communications are relevant, the answer is often as simple as asking employees what they want, and not just making assumptions. This applies to the health and wellbeing support being offered, but also to the type of communications being used.”

Impact of hybrid working

Nearly half, 48%, of the companies surveyed across the UK said they have found it more difficult to

communicate the support they offer to staff because many employees now work from home either some or all of the time. In likely response to this, the majority, 55%, of employers now concentrate more on digital health and wellbeing communications.

Debra Clark says: “The last few years have seen a sea-change in employment models, with working from home and hybrid working becoming commonplace. This means that the communication of health and wellbeing support has become more difficult and, arguably, more important.”

Going digital

Employers should embrace the dynamic nature of digital communication, using wellbeing platforms, apps, email, and their intranet, this is particularly valuable with employees working remotely. With the use of a sophisticated benefits platform, messages can be easily tailored and targeted to relevant groups and demographics within the company. This can, in many cases, link directly to the health and wellbeing support on offer, such as virtual GPs, virtual physios, online counselling, or health and fitness apps.

Debra Clark concludes: “Health and wellbeing support is a constantly changing landscape and so is its communication. Employers must ensure they listen to the needs of their employees and remain current and flexible in what they offer and how they convey this.”

Resources

1. Research carried out on behalf of Towergate Health & Protection by Opinium among 500 HR decision makers, between 9 and 13 January 2023.