

UK employers grapple with effectiveness of Wellbeing Programs despite high sickness absence rates

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A new [report by employment law firm Winckworth Sherwood \(WS Law\)](#) sheds light on the disconnect between rising sickness absence rates and the growing popularity of workplace wellbeing initiatives.

The report, titled “Wellbeing Strategies: Effective in Managing Sickness Absence?”, highlights a concerning trend. Despite a significant number of employers offering wellbeing programs, the CIPD (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development) has recently reported the highest sickness absence levels in the last ten years.

WS Law commissioned a survey of over 1,000 employees and 250 HR leaders to understand this apparent contradiction. The research explored several key areas:

- **Employee and Employer Perceptions:** The survey delved into how both parties view factors impacting workplace wellbeing. It also examined the strategies, benefits, and initiatives currently offered by employers.
- **“Wellbeing Washing”:** The report investigates the concept of “wellbeing washing,” where employers implement superficial initiatives without addressing core issues.
- **Effectiveness of Strategies:** A crucial focus was on determining if existing strategies are truly reducing sickness absence.
- **Prioritizing Mental Health:** The research explores measures deemed most effective in promoting mental health and preventing mental health-related absences.
- **Responsibility for Wellbeing:** The survey investigates the perception of responsibility for employee

wellbeing – should it fall on employers to improve the work environment or should employees take more ownership of their own wellbeing?

WS Law is offering complimentary workshops for HR professionals on June 18th and September 25th, 2024. These interactive sessions will provide practical advice and case studies on effectively managing sickness absence through targeted wellbeing strategies. you can register for this by emailing events@wslaw.co.uk

Seeking Solutions

The full report, [available for download](#), offers valuable insights and recommendations for employers seeking to improve workplace wellbeing and reduce sickness absence rates. By addressing the concerns raised in the research, employers can create a healthier and more productive work environment for all.