

Only 53% of employers believe their employees have a good understanding of the full range of benefits provided

7 months ago



Research¹ published this week by Towergate Employee Benefits shows that only around half, 53%, of employers believe their employees have a good understanding of the full range of benefits they provide.

The research shows that communicating health and wellbeing support is becoming more difficult due to hybrid working:

It's now more difficult to communicate the support we offer our staff, because we have many colleagues working from home all or some of the time: 62%

In addition, employers believe that making communications relevant to a diverse workforce is more complicated:

We now find it difficult to ensure communication is always relevant to employees (e.g. being able to target specific messages at specific groups of our workforce): 64%

Debra Clark, head of wellbeing at Towergate Employee Benefits, says: "Benefits are effectively wasted if they are not communicated, and it is clear from our research that employers need some help in doing so, due to the shift in work settings and diverse employee profiles."

Although the research shows that employers are finding it harder to communicate health and wellbeing support well, the figures do also reveal that they are moving with the times and adapting their benefit communication to meet changing needs.

For example, the frequency of communications has increased:

We now communicate health and wellbeing support more regularly: 76%

As has the breadth of media used:

We now concentrate more on digital health and wellbeing communications, such as via apps and digital platforms: 75%

Benefits must be communicated well for employers to achieve the full value for their business. A successfully communicated benefits programme will assist with the recruitment, retention and engagement of employees, as well as reducing absence levels and increasing productivity.

Variety of communication methods

Using a variety of communication methods is the most successful strategy to enable employers to reach and engage with a greater number of employees. Options have opened up hugely in the past few years, with an increased emphasis on digital communications. This can include simple emails and messaging systems to comprehensive benefits platforms and apps that allow the whole benefits programme to be managed in one place: from communicating the availability of support to measuring engagement and tracking usage.

Debra Clark says: "There are lots of ways for employers to communicate their full range of health and wellbeing support. Particularly with the emergence of digital platforms, there are now many communications options which can be a great way to help a benefits package provide value for money and a return on investment."

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1. Research conducted by Opinium on behalf of Towergate Employee Benefits among 500 HR professionals, January 2024.