

EDITOR'S COMMENT

To coincide with the fourth National Workplace Wellbeing Day (which took place on 13 April), research undertaken by Ibec revealed that nearly half of the 1,000 employees surveyed would leave a job where an employer does not care about their wellbeing.

There was a significant increase on the 500-plus companies who participated in last year's National Workplace Wellbeing Day, to raise awareness of the importance and benefits of healthier lifestyles, and to improve employee wellbeing by promoting better exercise and nutrition in the workplace.

According to the World Health Organisation, there are many benefits of workplace health promotion for employers and employees, including reduced absenteeism, increased productivity, reduced stress, improved sense of well-being and improved morale.

In this edition of 'Health & Safety Times' we take a special look at the issue, and find that there's a changing mindset on the need to incorporate more health and wellness initiatives and programmes in Irish workplaces.

We contacted a number of leading consultancy companies who offer HR advice, corporate health and wellness programmes, and health innovation training services. And the general consensus was that there's been a considerable growth in awareness of employee wellbeing, while a number of factors have contributed to this increased awareness.

According to one consultant, many employers in Ireland now understand and have accepted the many benefits to their business in looking after the health and wellbeing of their employees.

Another one noted that while 52% of US employees have access to a health and wellness programme, this figure is only 23% in Europe, and claims that while Ireland would be seen as a leader in Europe, we've a long way to go to catch up to the US.

In fact, workplace wellness is viewed as a business imperative by a leading HR consultancy, and it recently conducted research which found that employees' personal health was the second most significant issue to cause employees stress about their financial security.

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7 NEWS UPDATE

Health and Safety Authority appoints Sharon McGuinness as new CEO * Linking farm safety to EU payments to save lives * Online course for safety reps * New NSAI Board Chairman appointed * Teagasc beefs up attention on high-risk areas for farmers * Medical Ambulance Service picks up safety award.



17 NURSING HOMES

The ninth annual Nursing Homes Ireland's Care Awards – the premier national celebration of the outstanding care being provided by nursing homes in communities across Ireland – will take place on Thursday 15 November at the Citywest Hotel, Dublin.



18 EMPLOYEE WELLNESS

Companies wanting to retain staff are increasingly splashing cash on wellbeing initiatives in the workplace, because six out of 10 employees say they are more likely to stay long term with an employer who cares about them.



22 FIRST AID TRAINING

Ireland has joined many other European countries in making first aid training compulsory in the workplace. And now a food delivery company is leading the way by rolling out training for its riders in the Greater Dublin Area.



24 WORKPLACE DRUG TESTING

Given that the United States represents five per cent of the world's population and consumes 60 per cent of the world's supply of illicit drugs, workplace drug testing can be seen as an investment against the cost of low productivity, claims one medical expert.



31 LONE-WORKING APP

A smartphone app 'StaySafe' to protect out-of-hours staff who operate alone has been launched by Celtic Anghian Water, to replace the traditional buddy system which the utilities company identified as an outdated method to protect their lone workers.



32 ASTHMA ADVICELINE

With research revealing that 60% of Irish asthmatics do not have their condition under control, the Asthma Society of Ireland is calling on them to use its free advice line to help them to better manage their condition.



36 PERSONAL INJURY CLAIMS

There's been a 50 per cent increase in personal injury cases lodged in the High Court and Circuit Court over a ten-year period. Kevin Thompson, CEO of Insurance Ireland, says that the growing cost of claims is not sustainable and must be addressed by Government as a matter of priority.

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37 WORKPLACE RELATIONS COMMISSION

The results of the first annual customer survey of the Workplace Relations Commission (WRC) provide tangible evidence that its establishment has been welcomed by its users and that overall satisfaction and its service provision is high, says Oonagh Buckley, WRC Director General.



38 ONLINE SAFETY

Over 50,000 organisations are now using BeSMART.ie – the Health and Safety Authority's free, easy-to-use, online tool to prepare safety statements and risk assessments specific to their workplace – since its launch in 2011.



39 PRISON SERVICE

With assaults on prison officers an "accepted norm", the former President of the Prison Officers' Association is now calling for an independent analysis of assaults against officers on duty and recommendations on how prison officers can experience a safer workplace.



40 IOSH NEWS

Richard Jones, Head of Policy and Public Affairs at IOSH, said the new global standard can enhance the drive towards a safe and healthy world of work, and leaders will have to ensure ISO 45001 is integral to their strategies and operations.



42 EURO NEWS

The European Safety Agency's 2018-2019 awareness raising 'Healthy Workplaces Campaign' will address the importance of the managing dangerous substances in the workplace, and has provided guidelines and examples of good practices coming from all over Europe on its dedicated campaign website.



43 UK NEWS

Safety experts criticise inaction following Grenfell tragedy * Construction site training programme for Northern Ireland * Postal workers campaign to stamp out dog attacks * More prison officers resigning as violence soars * Firefighters are stressed out in underfunded Scottish service.



46 INTERNATIONAL NEWS

New initiatives to build site safety enforcement in Israel * Canadian union calls for nationwide action on safety criminals * 'Hands off' anti-harassment rules check into Chicago hotels * Work-related diseases A 'significant' problem in New Zealand.



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