The changing world of mental health promotion in work and prevention of work related stress: A European Perspective

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I'm doing a little research for a job interview...

"Fires, explosions, falls and other hazards can be very dangerous!"

"So workers should be ... fire-proof, bullet-proof, shatter-proof, water-proof, blast-proof, trauma-proof"!!!

"A good worker is an unbreakable worker!"
Psychosocial Risk Factors

I'm in control

I'm out of control!
“That’s true. We did advertise for someone who ‘works well under pressure’...”
Please don't make me go to school tomorrow!

But Honey, you're the teacher.
Fear not
we have the tools
It's a difficult job, he needed a bigger than average 'stress ball'.

FRAN
Now what?
YERKES-DODSON LAW 1908

Constructive optimum tension

BEST PERFORMANCE

Performance

Comfort

Low

BORERDOM

SUPERFICIALITY

Medium

High

Tension/arousal/anxiety

Anxiety

STRESS ANXIETY UNHAPPINESS

ARE YOU HERE?
CONTEXT AND LEGAL OBLIGATIONS IN THE UK
Health and safety at work
Stress, anxiety and depression statistics 2016

0.5 million
Workers suffering from work-related stress, anxiety and depression (new and long-standing cases) in 2015/16
Source: Estimates based on self-reports from the Labour Force Survey

11.7 million
Working days lost
Source: Estimates based on self-reports from the Labour Force Survey 2015/16

24
Working days lost per case on average
Source: Estimates based on self-reports from the Labour Force Survey 2015/16

37%
Of all work-related ill-health cases
Source: Estimates based on self-reports from the Labour Force Survey 2015/16

45%
Of all working days lost due to ill health
Source: Estimates based on self-reports from the Labour Force Survey 2015/16

£5.2 billion
Annual cost of work-related stress, anxiety and depression in Great Britain 2014/15
Source: Estimates based on HSE Cost Model

Main work factors
Workload pressure including:
• Tight deadlines
• Too much pressure
• Too much responsibility

Lack of managerial support including:
• Organisational changes
• Violence at work
• Role uncertainty

Source: Estimates based on self-reports from the Labour Force Survey 2015/16

Public sector most affected
In particular:
• Education
• Health
• Social care

Associated jobs:
• Teaching
• Nursing/midwifery
• Welfare

Source: Estimates based on self-reports from the Labour Force Survey 2015/16

www.hse.gov.uk/stress
Work-related stress, depression or anxiety

595,000
Workers suffering from work-related stress, depression or anxiety (new or long-standing) in 2017/18

239,000
Workers suffering from a new case of work-related stress, depression or anxiety in 2017/18

15.4 million
Working days lost due to work-related stress, depression or anxiety in 2017/18

Stress, depression or anxiety by cause, averaged 2009/10-2011/12

- 44% Workload
- 21% Other
- 14% Lack of support
- 13% Violence, threats or bullying
- 8% Changes at work

Industries with higher than average rates of stress, depression or anxiety, 2015/16-2017/18

- Education
- Human health and social work
- Public admin/defence

The rate of self-reported work-related stress, depression or anxiety was broadly flat but has shown signs of increasing in recent years.

Working days lost per worker due to self-reported work-related stress, depression or anxiety shows no clear long-term trend.

Working days lost due to stress, depression or anxiety account for 57% of all working days lost due to ill health.

Estimates of work-related stress, depression or anxiety based on self-reports from the Labour Force Survey (LFS).

To find out the story behind the key figures, visit www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/causdis/
What the UK Law says

• There are various pieces of legislation that relate to stress:
  – Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
    • Places a duty on employers to protect workers from hazards including stress caused or aggravated by work
  – Management of H&S at work Regulations
    • Places a duty on employers to carry out an assessment of the risk to employees from stress and to tackle those risks were necessary
  – Stress is not RIDDOR reportable
What the UK Law says

• There are various pieces of legislation other than health and safety legislation that could relate to stress:

  – The Equality Act 2010 protects people from harassment, bullying and discrimination where such treatment is targeted on the basis of one of the protected characteristics

  – The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 defines harassment and stalking and creates a route for prosecution. There is a distinction made for harassment in Scotland

  – Other legislation relating to violence and aggression at work, including criminal law.
The UK Management Standards Approach: A risk-based perspective

1. Identify the risk factors
2. Who can be harmed and how
3. Evaluate the risks
4. Record your findings
5. Monitor and review

Management Standards
HSE MANAGEMENT STANDARDS FOR WORK-RELATED STRESS

DEMANDS Issues such as workload, work patterns and the work environment.

CONTROL How much say the person has in how they do their work.

SUPPORT The encouragement, sponsorship and resources provided by the organisation, line management and colleagues.

RELATIONSHIP Promoting positive working to avoid conflict and dealing with unacceptable behaviour.

ROLE Whether people understand their role in the organisation and whether the employer ensures they do not have conflicting roles.

CHANGE How organisational change, large or small, is managed and communicated in the organisation.

Source: The Health and Safety Executive
New initiatives at a national level
Core standards

- In 2017, the government commissioned Lord Stevenson and Paul Farmer (Chief Executive, Mind) to undertake an independent review of the role employers can play to better support individuals with mental health conditions in the workplace.

- The reviewers developed a set of core standards for employers to improve the mental health of their workforce and enable individuals with mental health conditions to thrive.
### Core Standards

The core standards are:

- Produce, implement and communicate a mental health at work plan
- Develop mental health awareness among employees
- Encourage open conversations about mental health and the support
- Provide employees with good working conditions and ensure they have a healthy work life balance and opportunities for development
- Promote effective people management through line managers and supervisors
- Routinely monitor employee mental health and wellbeing
European context
Healthy Workplaces Good Practice Awards: Practical examples in Psychosocial Risk Reduction from implementation
Healthy Workplaces Psychosocial Risk - key objectives

• Raising awareness about the growing problem with stress and psychosocial risks

• Focus on the positive effects of successful psychosocial risk management, including the business case

• Increasing the enterprises’ practical knowledge related to recognising and preventing psychosocial risks at work

• Providing and promoting the use of simple, practical tools and guidance for managing psychosocial risks and stress in the workplace
Best practice awards: The WINNERS
European Issues (1/2)

• Is there a need for a common European approach to looking at the development of interventions for tackling Work Related Stress

• What impact does different member states approach to WRS have on a common European approach

• With the move to wellbeing, how well placed are we as European to adapting it within our own countries.
European Issues (2/2)

• Upcoming Framework agreement on Psychosocial Risk

• WRS not just a UK problem but pan European

• Large Organisations are Pan European: use to working under different regulatory frameworks

• European Researchers have been influential in the development of WRS theory
International developments (1/3)

ISO 45003 introduced a new standard, as the panacea arrived.

45003 – psychologically healthy workplaces?
International developments (2/3)

• What is it that contributes to make workplaces psychologically healthy?

• How do we measure psychological health?

• Are we too webbed to traditional measures, is there another way?
• ISO 45003 is not easy to apply to a UK and EU regulatory framework
• Language of standard is very important in getting organisations to buy into use of them
• Consensus in this area is very difficult
• The standard has to reflect the workplace practices
International developments (3/4)

• What Is Total Worker Health™?

• NIOSH: “Total Worker Health™ is a strategy integrating occupational safety and health protection with health promotion to prevent worker injury and illness and to advance health and well-being.”

• http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/twh.centers.htm
The solutions have arrived?

What does resilience mean to you?

Huh?!
TODAY I WILL LIVE IN THE MOMENT

UNLESS THE MOMENT IS UNPLEASANT, IN WHICH CASE I WILL EAT A COOKIE
Balance or Imbalance
TO CONCLUDE
What do we need to consider over the next couple of years?

• You will need to use a variety of interventions and activities aimed at raising awareness, changing attitudes and behaviours to well-being and mental health and work related stress.

• Integrate policy into practice. Make it real and relevant to all.

• Change the Narrative around Mental Health.