

WELL BEING AND WORK

BACKGROUND Worker wellbeing has become a central theme adopted by both policy makers and researchers around Europe offering great potential to improve working lives. PEROSH members describe the concept of wellbeing in OSH as a positive, sustainable concept of optimal function. In order to understand wellbeing, various themes should be included. Health and wellbeing at work has recently been the focus of a number of newer initiatives. The reasons behind this refocusing are many, and include changing population demography, changing financial requirements to retain healthy workforces for longer working lives in order to reduce reliance on state benefit, or “doing the right thing” for workers.

Multidisciplinary consensus relating to the definition of wellbeing, and how to develop simple, practical and cost effective interventions to improve this is needed. There is also a scientific need to understand wellbeing interventions given changing worker demographic and rapid changes in organisational structure.

OBJECTIVES The project aims at developing a common understanding of wellbeing and the drivers for wellbeing research and interventions in the different countries, including the identification of similarities and differences between each country.

Project members will seek to identify common needs for not only improving wellbeing, but also preventing ill-health, enabling those with ill-health to stay at work, and for rehabilitating people who are not at work following ill-health or injury.

Another objective is to debate on the research needs in this area, which may include developing the business case or straightforward pragmatic interventions to enable employers to manage wellbeing at work.

RESEARCH METHOD

In order to develop a consensus view between the PEROSH member institutes in relation to various aspects of well being at work, a Delphi exercise will be carried out using a standard Delphi technique and based on previously described Delphi methodology. A project launch workshop provided a basis for designing the question set and constituted *round one* of the Delphi survey. The results of the Delphi exercise will be published in a peer reviewed journal.

An employer-focused 'model' for understanding well being will be developed in order to capture a shared understanding of what wellbeing means.

Case studies will also be collated as a way of boosting the business case for wellbeing and the development of an international wellbeing indicator tool. Case studies could be utilised to improve understanding of what sort of interventions are effective in improving wellbeing (e.g. to reduce stress or increase productivity) and also to promote wellbeing in the occupational setting.

PROJECT LEADER

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