

Workers lose 30 days a year due to sickness absence and presenteeism

Employees lose an average of 30.4 working days a year due to sickness absence and underperformance due to ill health, according to health insurance provider [VitalityHealth](#).

Its latest Britain's Healthiest Workplace study, which was conducted in partnership, with the University of Cambridge, research body RAND Europe and employee health benefits firm Mercer Marsh Benefits, found that presenteeism – where employees struggle into work while they are sick – increased in 2017.

The survey of almost 32,000 workers found that staff worked an average of 27.7 days while they were unwell last year, compared with 24.2 days in 2016. Meanwhile, the average number of days employees were absent due to ill-health reduce from 3.3 in 2016 to 2.7 days in 2017.

When these figures are combined, the average employee lost 30.4 days due to feeling unwell, compared to 27.5 in 2016.

VitalityHealth said the increase in presenteeism demonstrated the importance of having a holistic understanding of staff mental and physical wellbeing, both in and out of the workplace.



Shuan Subel, director of corporate wellbeing strategy at VitalityHealth said: “For too long, the link between employee lifestyle choices, their physical and mental health, and their work performance has been ignored. Our data demonstrate a clear relationship – employees who make healthier lifestyle choices benefit from an additional 25 days of productive time each year, and also exhibit higher levels of work engagement and lower levels of stress.”

Subel said an effective workplace health and wellbeing strategy can improve employee engagement and productivity, which would in turn have an effect on profitability and reduce sickness absence.

Chris Bailey, partner at Mercer Marsh Benefits, said employers should consider promoting good nutrition, an active workforce and provide support for mental health issues to boost productivity.

He added: “Some employers still doubt the impact of presenteeism, dismiss the data, and fail to take action. It's key to understand that people are not machines – we are not 100% task-focused and performing at our best all of the time”.

Source: [Personnel Today](#)

[Corazon health](#)

Managing health in the workplace is a complex challenge and our Sickness Absence Management service provides advice to your business on how to avoid legal pitfalls and empower your decision makers.