

Promoting mental health and wellbeing in the workplace

Research Question(s)

- What is the effectiveness and cost effectiveness of organisation-wide workplace interventions in promoting mental health and wellbeing and preventing mental ill-health?

The programme is not interested, in this call, in evaluations of interventions targeted at individuals, such as Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT).

- **Population:** Employees.
- **Intervention:** Organisation-wide workplace interventions to promote mental health and wellbeing; researchers to specify and justify.
- **Comparator:** People in similar workplace settings with no intervention or usual practice (researchers to specify and justify).
- **Outcomes:** May include the following: reduction in mental health problems; reduction in associated physical health conditions; improved mental wellbeing; reduction in workplace absenteeism. Cost-effectiveness evaluations should include both health economic and business perspectives.
- **Duration of follow up:** Researchers to specify and justify.
- **Impact on inequalities:** Research design should consider the impact of the intervention on health inequalities; researchers to specify and justify.
- **Design:** Primary research, researchers to specify and justify.
- **Setting:** Any workplace setting. This includes NHS settings but results must be generalisable to non-NHS environments.
- **Public engagement:** Proposals should incorporate a mechanism for public involvement.

Background to commissioning brief:

Within the workplace mental wellbeing is affected by the interaction between the working environment, the nature of the work and other factors affecting the individual's wellbeing. Some working environments pose risks for mental wellbeing - for example, if they lead to an employee's sense of insufficient control and support. Prolonged workplace stress is linked to conditions such as anxiety and depression as well as physical conditions such as heart disease, back pain and headache.

There is little UK based evidence to show the effectiveness and cost effectiveness of organisation-wide approaches (not individual approaches such as CBT) that aim to improve the mental well-being of employees. Even less is known on the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of organisation-wide interventions within different sectors and sizes of organisation.

Notes to Applicants

The NIHR Public Health Research programme is funded by the NIHR, with contributions from the CSO in Scotland, NISCHR in Wales, and HSC R&D, Public Health Agency, Northern Ireland. Researchers in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are eligible to apply for funding under this programme