

Healthy Ireland at Work

A National Framework for Healthy Workplaces in Ireland

2021–2025



Case Studies



Case studies

The Framework intends to integrate and enhance the valuable work already being undertaken, enhance effectiveness and increase the reach of successful approaches.

As part of this project, a number of case studies demonstrating good practice in workplace wellbeing have been collected. It is hoped that these case studies will provide guidance to other workplaces who wish to promote workplace wellbeing in their organisation.

Eli Lilly

2

A global pharmaceutical company that employs around 1,000 people, with an additional 500 outsourced and contract staff involved in the provision of day-to-day support services for the company's operations.

Central Statistics Office

4

Ireland's national statistical office with a purpose to collect and analyse statistics relating to Ireland's people, society and economy.

WALK

3

A community and voluntary organisation which supports adults with intellectual disabilities to live self-determined lives in socially inclusive communities.

ICE

5

An owner managed SME, it is a recruitment agency, a Further Education and Training Provider (FET) and a provider of Outsourced Backroom Process and Services.

Eli Lilly

Eli Lilly employs around 1,000 people, with an additional 500 outsourced and contract staff involved in the provision of day-to-day support services for the company's operations.

The manufacturing campus in Kinsale employs over 900 people, and supports the commercialisation, manufacture and supply of many of the medicines in Eli Lilly's portfolio.

Organisation type:
Global
Pharmaceutical



Employees:
1,500



Location:
Kinsale,
Co. Cork



WALK

WALK are a community and voluntary organisation which supports adults with intellectual disabilities to live self-determined lives in socially inclusive communities. They employ 205 staff and support 570 people with disabilities across 19 sites in Leinster. The organisation's Strategic Plan for 2015-2017 had a specific aim to 'Increase the consistent wellbeing of all persons in WALK'.

Organisation type:
Voluntary
Organisation



Employees:
205



Location:
Walkinstown,
Dublin 12



Promoting Workplace Wellbeing – The Process

Eli Lilly took a number of steps to promote workplace wellbeing:

- Gained management commitment and employee engagement
- Used the HSA Work Positive Survey to identify what was important to employees
- Identified what was already being done in the wellbeing space and increased employee's awareness of these programmes
- Developed a holistic integrated wellbeing programme based on four elements, Live Safe, Live Fit, Live Healthy and Live Well
- Developed an annual calendar of wellbeing events, identifying local, national and international events
- Used data from the Employee Assistance Programme to help identify priority areas.

Initiatives were evaluated using a wellbeing survey in 2012 and 2016. On-site class metrics from the Fitness Centre were measured and reported to senior management. Feedback was requested from employees who attended information sessions as part of the wellbeing programme.

Challenges

- Identifying and communicating the need for developing a site-wide wellbeing programme and building a case when the organisation was going through change was a challenge.
- Organising events based on what employees wanted was also a challenge. Using the Work Positive Survey to identify the needs and wants of employees helped rectify this.

Costs

- Low cost or no cost initiatives were used.
- External low-cost awareness programmes offered by the Irish Cancer Society, Irish Heart Foundation and Pieta House.
- Collaboration with the company Health Insurance Provider ensured support for events.

Outcomes

- Employees increased their physical activity through use of the Fitness Centre.
- Lower absenteeism rates.
- Talent attraction and retention.
- Relationships built within work groups and the wider Lilly community.

Key learnings

- Identify what is already being done in relation to wellbeing and build on these programmes.
- Brand programmes so all initiatives are recognisable to management, employees, and key stakeholders.
- Use networking opportunities.
- Align initiatives with organisational objectives and goals.
- Consider low cost or no cost initiatives.

Promoting Workplace Wellbeing – The Process

A dedicated Wellbeing Team with cross organisational representation was created. Research, focus groups and online surveys on wellbeing were carried out to determine staff perception of wellbeing and priority areas for action.

A Wellbeing Policy for staff was launched with eight staff as Wellbeing Coaches and four staff as Wellbeing Mentors. Seven Wellbeing Ambassadors were also appointed.

A WALK Assist programme was introduced to provide:

- Peer to peer wellbeing coaching
- Access to experienced mentors for support through difficult situations
- Free physical health checks every two years
- A mental health awareness week and a wellbeing week annually.

Wellbeing Champions assessed the impact of the initiative in the area where they worked. Wellbeing was discussed at staff meetings and performance reviews and an annual organisation-wide survey on wellbeing was undertaken.

Challenges

- Staff in WALK had experienced a pay freeze since 2009. Working with the Financial Controller and Senior Management to agree a base salary for all front-line roles resulted in increases for 24% of front-line staff.
- Due to funding volatility, WALK had previously introduced short-term contracts that gave no job security. All these contracts were reviewed and 70% of them were changed to contracts of indefinite duration.

Costs

- This was a two-year project with a budget of €5,000.

Outcomes

- Staff subjective measure of wellbeing increased by 8%.
- Service user satisfaction increased by 12%.
- Number of occurrences of mental health related absences reduced by 7%.
- Overall job satisfaction increased by 4%.
- Rating for being a fair place to work increased by 5%.
- Duration of mental health related absence reduced by 13%.
- Staff turnover due to wellbeing issues reduced by 12%.

Key learnings

- Take time to find out what wellbeing means for staff and not assume that every workplace is the same.
- Establish credibility and deliver on promises.
- Encourage peer leadership, rather than all HR or head office led action.
- Address fundamental issues for staff in order to receive buy in.

Central Statistics Office

The Central Statistics Office (CSO) is Ireland's national statistical office and its purpose is to collect and analyse statistics relating to Ireland's people, society and economy. There are approximately 850 staff in total, based in Cork and Dublin locations. Wellbeing is identified as a key priority in the CSO's People Strategy.

Organisation type:
Irish
Governmental



Employees:
850



Location:
Cork and
Dublin



ICE

ICE is an owner managed SME, headquartered in Galway. It is a Recruitment Agency, a Further Education and Training Provider (FET) and a provider of Outsourced Backroom Process and Services, working with clients throughout Ireland and internationally. Founded in 1972, it employs 45 fulltime people, 30+ contracted trainers and an average Agency Workforce of 1,000pw.

Organisation type:
SME



Employees:
45(fulltime)



Location:
Galway (HQ),
Limerick,
Sligo,
Dublin and
Sydney



Promoting Workplace Wellbeing – The Process

The CSO took a number of steps to promote workplace wellbeing:

- Senior management assigned dedicated staff and budgetary resources to support the development and implementation of a wellbeing programme for staff across four areas - Health, Fitness, Nutrition and Mind & Body
- Funding was also provided to support staff training in health and wellbeing
- Staff input and involvement in the programme was actively encouraged and facilitated by line managers
- Health-related talks, posters and messaging were facilitated on an ongoing basis
- Evaluations were built into most initiatives and included gathering feedback pre and post initiative, measuring participation rates and an annual staff survey.

Challenges

- Gaining staff participation was a challenge at first and communication and consultation with staff was an essential requirement to engage staff with the programme and develop the range of initiatives and interventions.
- Lack of space to host classes, showers and changing facilities proved problematic as activities increased. Negotiating discounted classes locally (outside of core working hours) helped overcome some obstacles.
- Devising a tailored programme for remote staff was logistically difficult. Assigning team champions has helped and efforts to increase the level of engagement with the programme is ongoing.

Costs

- Costs vary, with the majority of the budget assigned to class subsidies, facilitator costs and initial start-up costs.
- Availing of the numerous free supports through national organisations keep costs to a minimum, e.g. Healthy Ireland, Irish Heart Foundation, Irish Cancer Society, Diabetes Ireland.

Outcomes

- Culture of health and wellbeing embedded in the organisation.
- Staff given the opportunity to raise personal awareness and knowledge in health-related areas as part of their working environment.
- Reputation of the organisation as a positive working environment and an employer of choice is promoted.
- Staff are given the opportunity to manage initiatives and demonstrate leadership skills.

Key learnings

- Ensure senior management are visibly committed to workplace wellbeing.
- Present a business proposal to senior management with relevant metrics and proposed programme benefits.
- Conduct staff focus groups and information sessions to ascertain priorities and encourage involvement.
- Establish the main goals and objectives of the wellbeing programme.
- Consider what improvements are required and how they can be achieved.
- Continually evaluate, review and improve the programme.
- Think creatively and allow the programme room to grow.

Promoting Workplace Wellbeing – The Process

ICE believed that the introduction of a four-day working week would promote better work/life balance, improve work and home wellbeing, result in more energy and focus on working days and ensure that everyone was enthusiastic about coming into work every day.

A number of steps were taken to prepare and support the launch of the four-day week initiative:

- A review of work practices, legislative compliance and employee T+C's was conducted
- A 'Pessimist Committee' was established to identify barriers, challenges and solutions
- Staff booklet prepared to explain concept to family and friends
- Announcement to staff at Extraordinary SMART DAY
- Facilitated workshop, where 120 ideas to drive success were generated
- Staff and Business Units developed detailed plans on delivery
- HR with staff developed the '4dayweek Etiquette Charter'
- Benchmarking recorded
- Staff wellbeing survey completed
- Staff signed trial agreement.

Various methods of measurement were used to evaluate the progress which was measured at different points throughout the trial and beyond. Following the mid-trial review, the decision to implement the four-day week permanently was confirmed at board level.

Challenges

- Such a new concept – how does it/will it work?
- Everyone received a booklet describing the 4-Day Week concept and project trial rollout with all foreseen Q&A.
- Following the initial announcement there were a number of productivity measures put into place to account for identified challenges.

Costs

- A significant innovation in this ICE initiative is to provide five days' pay for four days' work arranged with a three-day weekend every week.
- Project Development & Implementation time: Introduced new HR Systems to track timekeeping including project time.

The cost of the system was enveloped by its savings in manpower and efficiency in producing reports.

Outcomes

- Created a culture that allows people to go home from work vs a culture that draws them more and more into the workplace.
- Made a real difference to the quality of life for our employees and society in general.
- Made a contribution to reducing our carbon footprint.
- Share the 'Wins for a better Quality of Life'.
- Drive change in Ireland's 'Future World of Work'.
- Reduced attrition.
- Reduced single day absenteeism.
- Increased productivity and employee wellness.
- Enhanced culture of positivity.
- Began the 4dayweek conversation in Ireland.
- Changed the lives of our employees and their families.

Key learnings

- Align your workplace wellbeing goals with the overall strategy and culture of the organisation.
- Starting from nothing? Keep it simple – focus on what is easy and has the most impact when beginning from nothing. There are lots of free resources online.
- Get everyone involved! Management/HR can explain the Wellness intentions and budget info, and then ask the employees to come up with ideas – what would they like to see? A simple free survey will get you plenty of a start here.
- Remember your Core Values – Your focus should be relating the wellness initiatives back to your organisational goals.

