

Workplace Mental Health

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Workplace mental illness

- Workplace mental health key area in improving attitudes of employers, experience of employees and overall population mental health.
- Business in the Community “Seizing the Momentum” reported, all the important indicators are moving in the right direction.
 - Depression remains the most commonly reported diagnosis (22%),
 - General anxiety (15%)
 - Panic attacks (6%).
- 60% of employees feel their line manager is genuinely concerned for their wellbeing,
- 64% of managers put the interests of their organisation above staff wellbeing at some point.
- Lack of high-quality mental health training for line managers continues to be a pivotal issue.
- NHS performs relatively poorly across many measures of staff health and wellbeing:-
 - 27% higher sickness absence rates than the UK public sector average,
 - 46% higher sickness absence rates than the average for all sectors.

Thriving at Work

“Thriving at Work” (Stevenson / Farmer) recommended that :

- organisations, whatever their size, be equipped with the awareness and tools to not only address but prevent mental ill health caused or worsened by work;
- be equipped to support individuals with a mental health condition to thrive, from recruitment and throughout the organisation;
- aware of how to get access to timely help to reduce sickness absence caused by mental ill health.

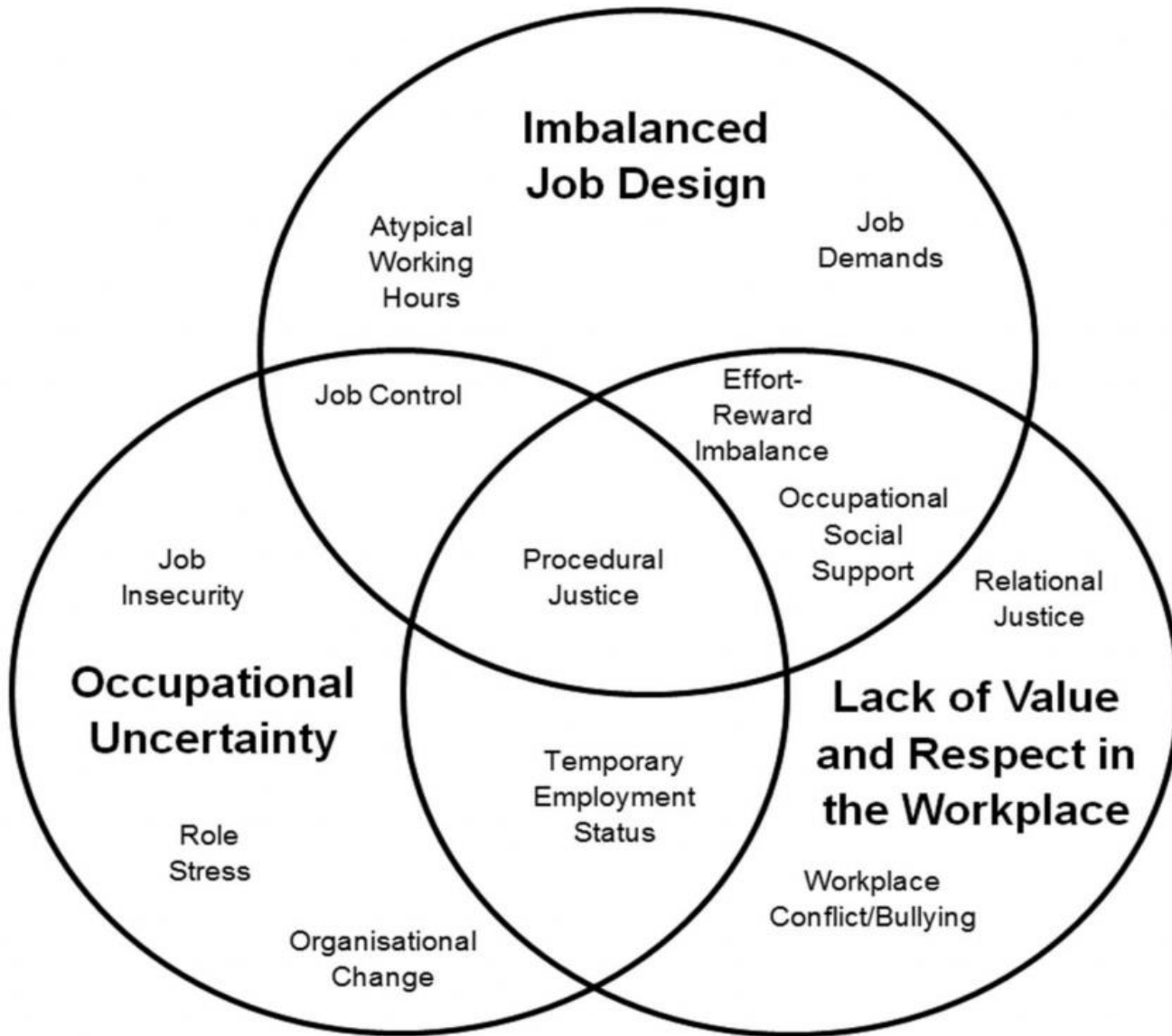
Causes of workplace mental illness

Strong evidence:

- i) imbalanced job design,
- ii) occupational uncertainty and
- iii) lack of value and respect in the workplace

Moderate evidence:

- High effort / reward ratio imbalance
- Low job control
- High job demands
- Low procedural justice (lack of fair policies and procedures)
- Low relational justice (no point raising issues as no-one will take it seriously)..
- Role stress.
- Bullying
- Low social support in the workplace.



Conclusions

- Support the individual but also change the harmful impact of job roles and the work environment.
- Employers need to understand the benefits of taking the workplace environment seriously
- Comprehensive approach to workplace mental health – fully integrate the whole continuum of mental health and well-being in the workplace.
- Create environments that help everyone to perform well - include promotion, prevention and support.
- Encourage bottom-up responses that are related to the local workplace.
- Replace sickness absence measures - possibly with a suite of metrics to include retention rates.
- Give people the power to try solutions and evaluate them - this may take a number of iterations.

Questions

Does this resonate with your experience ?

What are the blocks to achieving better workplace mental health ?

Are there ways in which we can work together to achieve this ?