



## **The Council for Work and Health – outputs and outcomes as at 31 July 2017 and strategic objectives for 2017 to 2022**

### **Introduction**

Following the publication in 2008 of Dame Carol Black's review into work and health "Working for a Healthier Tomorrow", the Council for Work and Health was established as part of the Government's response to take forward the issues raised, as a forum for all concerned with work and its relationship with health.

The Council brings together the professional bodies concerned with work and health, including those organisations representing practitioners in occupational health, safety and rehabilitation, health and work services providers in the public, private and charitable sectors, and those representing the perspective of employers, human resources professionals and employees.

The Council elects a Board of Directors from among its members to provide governance and strategic oversight of the running of the Council, and the directors appoint a Chair.

### **Purpose of the Council**

The Council for Work & Health provides an authoritative and representative "single voice" to influence and advise policy makers in Government, and in organisations across the United Kingdom, to the benefit of the health of people in the context of work, and to organisations and the nation as a whole through the improved productivity that results from a healthy and motivated workforce.

As a network of professional experts, each with their own professional networks, the Council facilitates information sharing to provide expert advice on protecting the health of people at work, on supporting those with health conditions and disabilities in work, and sustaining return to work following ill health and injury.

The Council is an advocate for healthy workplaces, promoting health at work and the prevention of ill health and injury as a result of work. The Council aims to make good health and good work a priority in policy and practice at the national, local and individual organisational level.

### **What effect has the Council had since it was set up?**

The impact of the Council derives from "the whole being greater than the sum of the parts". As an alliance of the organisations concerned with health and work, the Council has been able to leverage the strength derived from its breadth and diversity to bring a measured, informed and collaborative approach to issues such as the following recent examples:



- The Council for Work & Health paper on the occupational health workforce in 2016, including support to the development of training by the National School of Occupational Health (NSOH). This paper was widely cited, including by the All Party Parliamentary Group on Occupational Safety and Health in its report on the national shortage of occupational health professionals. A seminar held in May 2017 under the auspices of the Council and facilitated by Syngentis, made plans for the third stage of this research.
- Facilitated the formation of the Faculty of Occupational Health Nursing (FOHN) by providing an overarching context as the FOHN developed.
- Contribution by the Chair to the NICE guidelines on work and health.
- Contributed to consultations on the Fit Note in 2016. The Chair was asked in 2017 to join further consultation on the Fit Note.
- The Council for Work & Health response to the Government Green paper on Work, health and disability in 2017.
- Contribution to the development of standards, such as BSI PAS 3002 - specification for the management of employee health & wellbeing in 2017.
- The Chair, Deputy Chair and the directors are regularly asked to contribute to high level conferences in the field of work and health, for example the Birmingham conference on health and work, conferences to discuss the Government Green paper on the disability employment gap in 2016/2017, conferences to discuss employment rights in the context of Brexit.
- International influence includes the Chair speaking in Munich, The Hague, Dublin and Milan, and the Deputy Chair was part of an international group formulating the British Standard mentioned above.

### **What does the Council intend to do over the next three to five years?**

Over the coming three to five years, the Council aims to further enhance the value it brings by engaging with national developments that include the implications for work and health of the United Kingdom leaving the European Union, and other strategic issues affecting work and health nationally.

The Council will achieve this in two main ways:

- The Council will respond to strategic issues as they arise, effected by means of a Council member (or professional body) being appointed as the lead for each such issue, on behalf of and with expert contributions from the full Council. The lead may be a member of Council that has identified the issue, or identified by the Board as an appropriate member to bring the Council response together.
- The Council will as a body, at each of its regular meetings, undertake “horizon scanning” to consider potential and emerging strategic issues,



identify the stakeholders, and appoint a Council member (or professional body), or a specifically constituted working group, to bring together the expertise from across the Council membership to proactively advise policy makers and others.

The Council will also consider opportunities arising from working with other bodies, be they in Government (and in particular the Health and Safety Executive, the Department for Work and Pensions and Department of Health Joint Work and Health Unit, and Public Health England), from the academic sector including University departments, and other bodies advising on work and health in the public, private and charitable sectors.

Specifically, the Council will seek to achieve the following:

To build on its existing strengths as a body with expertise in health and work:

- Capturing and enabling knowledge, through the reach of its membership
- Building on the strong and vibrant community that is the Council
- Enabling coherence of advice from the professional bodies that form the Council and so enhancing the impact of each body and Council as a whole

To deliver optimal benefit to the national work and health agenda:

- Putting its knowledge into action through influencing and raising awareness
- Working in partnership with all concerned with work and health
- To utilise the influence that individual member bodies have, such as through patronage or size and scope of their membership, to bring about this benefit

Council for Work and Health  
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