



## **IT'S TIME TO PUT YOUR HEALTH AND WELLBEING AT WORK FIRST**

A new survey commissioned by leading office ergonomics experts, Fellowes, has revealed that many employees experience physical discomfort on a daily basis (22 per cent) due to the neglect of their health and wellbeing.

More than three quarters of UK employees (80 per cent) are resorting to making homemade solutions for their ergonomic needs, as a result of risk assessments not taking place. If you currently have a pile of glossy magazines propped underneath your display screen or have your feet resting on a cardboard box under your desk, you're contributing to this statistic!

Despite over half of companies (62 per cent) acknowledging that as employers they have a duty to influence the physical and mental health of their staff, the research revealed that trained staff are less likely to undertake workstation assessments than non-trained staff and 31 per cent of employees are left in charge of conducting their own self-assessments.

Bad working habits are bad for business and as 90 per cent of all company costs are people costs, it is essential that organisations look after their greatest assets.

Fellowes has put together a list of top tips to help improve your health and wellbeing at work.

- **Find out from your employer who is responsible for organising and carrying out your workstation risk assessments**

Fellowes' latest report revealed that in 46 per cent of companies it is the HR department's responsibility to monitor and implement a health and wellbeing strategy. However, in some organisations this is left to other members of the team including line managers and heads of departments. Once you have this information you should book in time with this person/department to discuss your requirements.

- **Don't speak up when it's too late!**

A lot of health issues that are connected with bad working habits develop over time, so although you might not think you have any problems, they might be evolving behind the scenes. It is important to arrange regular work station assessments to prevent medical issues

arising. More than half (55 per cent) of employers admitted that reducing sick days is one of the main factors that influence them to manage the health and wellbeing of their staff.

- **Take care with your chair**

By law, office chairs (those used at a computer) must meet a certain minimum standard. Your seat-backs must be adjustable in both height and tilt. The chair must support your lumbar contour and you must be able to sit back in it comfortably. If you feel you need more support, consider a separate back support. More than a quarter of those surveyed (32 per cent), expressed that their chair is not adequate or properly adjusted to meet their needs.

- **Use a foot support**

A common mistake employees make is sitting with their legs crossed or in an awkward position. Using a foot support to ensure that thighs are positioned approximately parallel to the floor and feet at a 90 degree angle, encourages movement to increase circulation while sitting and a neutral posture by elevating the feet and legs. Although 41 per cent of companies have invested in foot supports in the past 6 months, there are still more than half of employees that are missing out on the benefits.

- **Avoid 'mouse shoulder'**

Make sure you can use your mouse without stretching and with your elbow comfortably bent. Putting the mouse too high or too far away means that the upper arm is forced away from the body when you use it. If the position is held for a long period of time, the entire 'mouse' side of the body is affected, from the neck to the upper back. 16 per cent of employees admit that their keyboard and mouse are in the incorrect position.

- **Do your research!**

You'll be amazed at what products have been invented to make your life that little bit easier. From wrist supports to document holders, there's a solution for everything. There are also several laws that exist regarding health and wellbeing in the workplace, so if your employer isn't taking your needs seriously, they might when you start pointing these out. Fellowes recently discovered that 21 per cent of office based staff aren't aware of any legal requirements when assessing a display screen, are you one of those people?

For more information regarding health and wellbeing at work, you can download Fellowes' latest guide here: <http://www.ergo.fellowes.com/downloads.php>

For all media enquiries, please contact Grace Goodhind on 01625 822 281 or [grace.goodhind@mccann.com](mailto:grace.goodhind@mccann.com)

**Notes to Editors:**

The survey involved 832 respondents from across Europe and was carried out across 17 sectors in small to large businesses. 46 per cent of respondents work for large organisations (250+ employees).

### **About Fellowes**

[Fellowes](#), Inc. offers an extensive range of products to equip the workspace, including paper shredders, binders, laminators, desktop accessories and record storage solutions.

Founded in 1917 by Harry Fellowes and headquartered in Itasca, Illinois, Fellowes, Inc. employs more than 1,200 people throughout the world and has operations in 15 countries. Visit [fellowes.com](http://fellowes.com) for more information.