

Improving health and work: changing lives

The Government's response to Dame Carol Black's review of the health of Britain's working-age population is welcomed by BAOHSF. The response which has been overseen by the Health, Work and Wellbeing Steering Board acknowledges that although generally work is good for your health, 'poor' quality work can positively harm or exacerbate physical and mental health problems. The response has brought together lots of departments across Government. In Bradford we will be trying to get some local response from across partnerships, especially from Bradford and Airedale tPCT.

The Forum is particularly interested in the early intervention services, the Fit for Work pilots, the support to address individual employees' health issues especially SMEs and the funding of innovative health and well-being measures in the workplace.

In Bradford it is felt that a key focus of a Fit for Work pilot (which we have been invited to apply for by Dame Carol Black) would need to focus on 'retention'. A service which took referrals from GPs of people who were off sick but in danger of losing their jobs would be something that BOHP/WHAT (Bradford Occupational Health Project/Workers Health Advice Team) might be interested in providing (they are currently looking

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 Page 4 Sensible Risk Assessment seminar, Contacts, seminar booking form



Six of the brave eight who managed to make it through the snow for the Sensible Risk Assessment Seminar

into putting a proposal together, but any proposal needs to be in line with the ethos of these organisations and not just about getting people off benefits.

The three key aspirations of Improving Health and Work: Changing Lives are given a big tick by BAOHSF, these are:

- Creating new perspectives on health and work;**
- Improving work and workplaces;**
- And supporting people to work.**

Creating new perspectives

A new electronic fit note for GPs is to be introduced, potentially this could help monitor occupational illness and diseases and hopefully help identify hot spots and areas of concern such as work related cancers. There is a push to have better informed GPs on occupational ill health and a national education programmed for GPs will help with this.

Improving Work and Workplaces

BAOHSF welcome the aim to improve work and workplaces and

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the Forum is pleased to see that the response states that the government can do more to support employers to ensure workplaces are healthy and safe, promote the well-being of their workers and facilitate a return to work.

The business health check tool and a national strategy for mental health and employment are seen as good ideas. The Forum does have concerns over the suggestion for the expansion of the NHS Plus Service, as it has maintained that occupational health and safety advice, support and information should be FREE and the NHS Plus is not.

There is an opportunity to bid for funding to design, market and deliver local 'gateways'/access points, which BAOHSF would be well placed to do .

A challenge fund, which will encourage local initiatives that improve workplace health and well being, through innovative approaches to ensure worker engagement, is to be set up.

Supporting people to Work

The provision of early intervention services for the working age population is welcomed.

BAOHSF is looking into what a Fit for Work service would involve in Bradford. BOHP/WHAT is already exploring the IAPS (Improving Access to Psychological Services) scheme's aims and targets for West Yorkshire. We are interested in finding out more about the Employment Advisers in GP surgeries; again this is something that we have been recommending for Bradford for many years.

More funding for the Access to Work scheme is welcomed.



Employment Action Group - 'Every Disability is Different'

The Forum has become a working group member of the newly formed Employment Action Group, this is one of 5 action groups of the Bradford Strategic Disability Partnership.

The Forum has agreed to host a **seminar** around Dispelling the Myths of employing a disabled person.

The group would like to raise expectations of disabled youth and Forum members are looking into how they can help with this.

Access to a help and advice line for employers on issues around the employment of the disabled is needed. Such a service could provide support to help employers make reasonable adjustment to keep people in work if they become disabled.

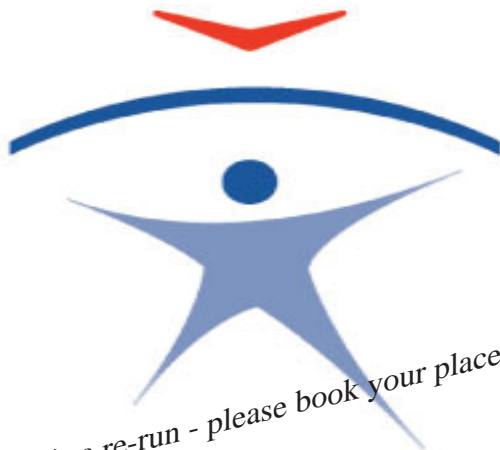
The Employment Action Group can provide disabled people who can sit on recruitment panels if any employer in Bradford would like to know more details about this please contact Bradford Area Occupational Health and Safety Forum.

HSE slot

Risk Assessments don't have to be long and complex! See the HSE website www.hse.gov.uk/risk to view a wide range of example risk assessments that you can use as a template.

The HSE has launched a consultation on its new strategy and is seeking your views on how best to meet the challenges of the changing world of work. The Forum is making a response, if you would like to make a response go to www.hse.gov.uk/strategy/index.htm

Sensible Risk Assessment



This is a re-run - please book your place



City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council
www.bradford.gov.uk



**Free seminar Tuesday 24th February 2009
9.30-12noon at Manningham Mills,
Bradford, BD9 5DB**

Come along and learn about sensible risk assessment of the workplace, including practical steps to risk management, a business case study of a team approach to risk assessment and the positive role of safety reps in assessing risks at work

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Tel: 01274 393949

see the Forum website at www.baohsf.org.uk

To book a place at the seminar fill in this form and post or just email jane@baohsf.org.uk

Name (s) _____

Organisation _____

Address _____

Business Type _____

Post Code _____ E-mail _____

Tel. _____ Fax _____

Send to Bradford Area Occupational Health and Safety Forum, 13 Scott Street, Keighley, BD21 2JH