

# Colleague Wellbeing Strategy

2025 - 2028



# Executive summary

Colleague wellbeing is a strategic priority at whg, and our **Colleague Wellbeing Strategy**, alongside others, assists us in developing our resilient, high-performing and productive workforce; a crucial asset in the delivery and achievement of our **2030 plan**. Within the competitive workplace market, this strategy will assist us in delivering our goals, whilst being known as an employer of choice that supports the wellbeing of our colleagues.

Colleagues with improved wellbeing have a direct impact on wider business outcomes. This includes reducing labour turnover, increasing productivity, and improving performance and customer satisfaction. Our colleague engagement metrics demonstrate this. Additionally, we know that colleagues are more likely to be motivated to deliver and develop their capabilities in the workplace, where such strategies are in place.

The wellbeing of our colleagues is not a new focus; through our colleague engagement programme, we know that colleagues talk positively about working at whg, and our recent colleague engagement scores confirm this. This is supported by a range of people policies and development programmes. The purpose of this strategy is to set out how we will continue, building on the successes of recent years. Better understanding of the impact and return on investment of our wellbeing offer, will also ensure its sustainability and adaptability, now and in the future.

We strive toward a workforce and workplace where colleagues can recognise and respond to their wellbeing at work. Offering a self-serve approach that is reflective of the different job profiles across our organisation, whilst continuing to meet the needs of the business.



## Trustworthy

You can rely on us.  
We are honest in everything we do.



## Respectful

Valuing people and treating everyone with empathy and fairness.



## Accountable

Taking responsibility for our actions and owning the delivery of our promises.



## Collaborative

Achieving great things by working together.



## Excellent

Striving to be the best and delivering the best outcomes for customers and the organisation.



## Executive summary (cont.)

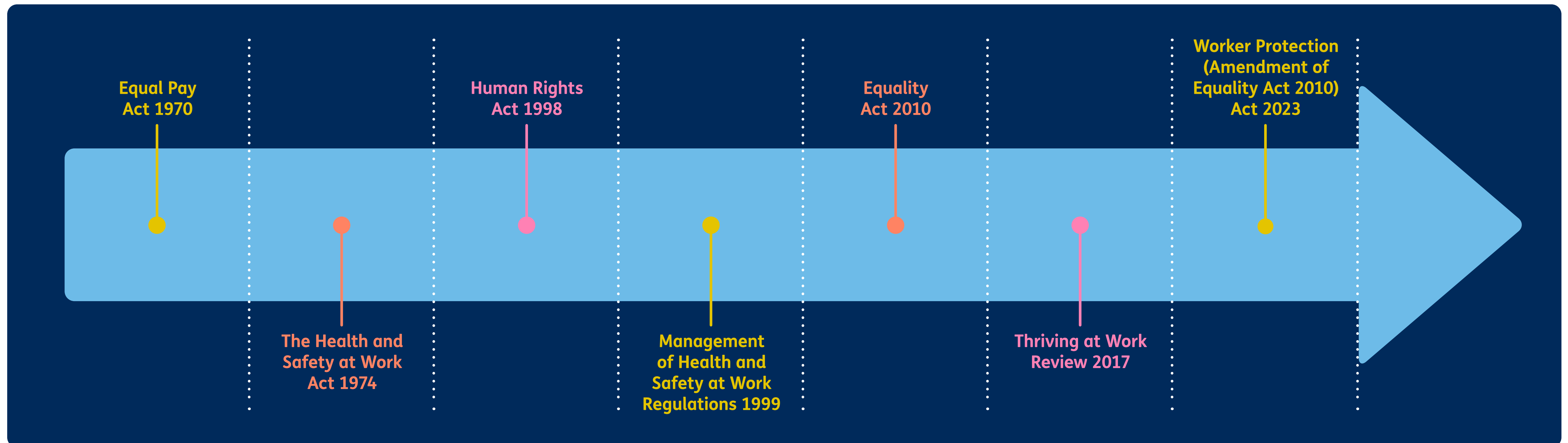
We all have wellbeing and for which, individuals themselves are primarily responsible. We provide the policies, resources and tools from which colleagues can self-service their own requirements, where relevant and reasonably appropriate. We will further develop the framework around our colleagues to assist them in taking accountability for the wellbeing choices that they make. This is delivered through our Employee Value Proposition.

We will continue to work with partners that can assist our colleagues, and our wider organisation, to promote good wellbeing across all aspects of the four pillars – Physical, Mental, Social & Financial. This framework is an enabler for this strategy, with this focus we strive toward developing the capability, performance, and engagement of our colleagues. Through this, the services that we provide to customers are of quality and delivered with purpose.



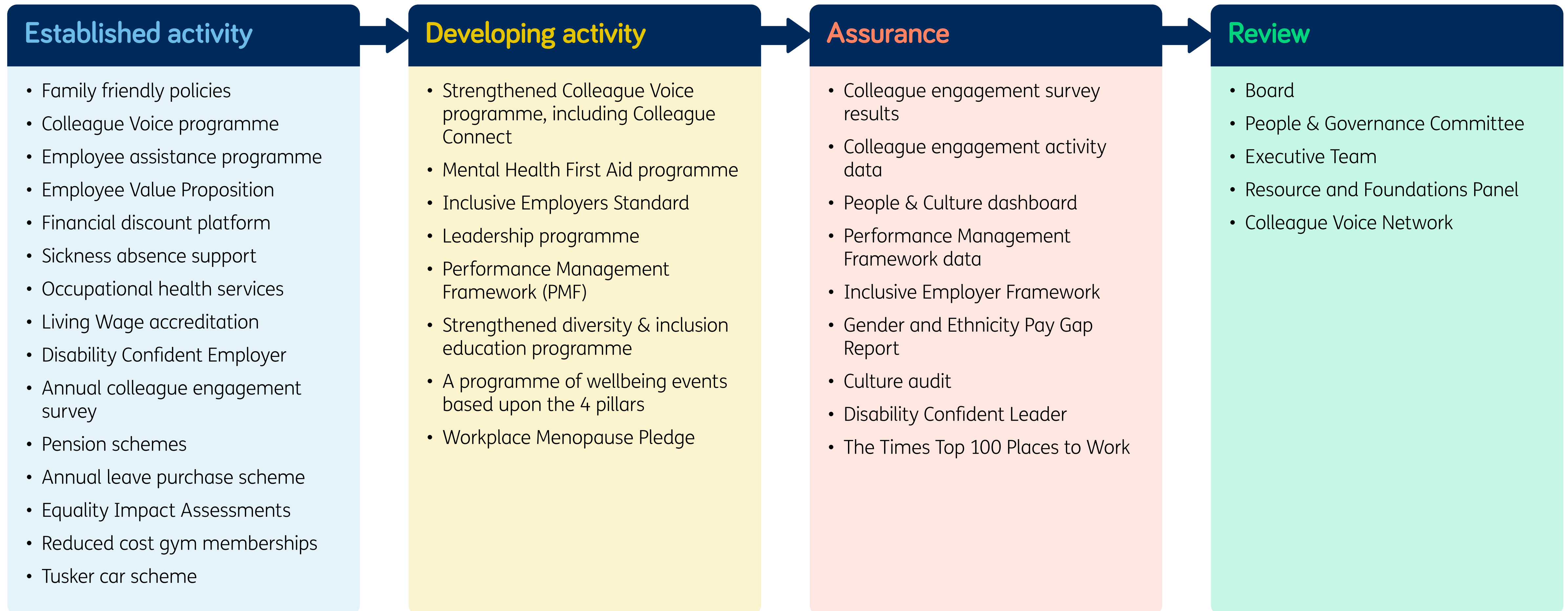
# Key legislation and guidance that informs colleague wellbeing

The Colleague Wellbeing Strategy complements our Health and Safety Policy and practices and is a separate provision. Colleagues are required to continue to work within the prescribed Health and Safety Framework, ensuring that whg complies with its duties under the legislation.



Our strategy also draws on best practice, academic research, and national guidance.

# The journey so far



# Colleague wellbeing - What will this mean?

**We will be known as an employer of choice with an offer that enables colleagues to recognise and respond to their wellbeing in the workplace, this assists us in developing our resilient, high-performing and productive workforce.**

**We will do this by:**

- We will be known as an employer of choice who cares about colleague wellbeing and recognises the role that it can play in the services we provide to our customers.
  - Our colleague wellbeing offer is a strategic tool within our Employee Value Proposition and is an enabling pillar of our overall people agenda to be a strong, resilient, stable and skilled workforce.
- We will provide an impactful framework for colleague wellbeing that is responsive to our colleagues' experiences and the work that we do.
  - We will support our colleagues to recognise and respond to their health and wellbeing, taking accountability and responsibility and applying healthy professional boundaries.
  - We will provide managers with the tools and resources to respect and support wellbeing at work. Wellbeing discussions will be held within the Performance Management Framework (PMF).

# Colleague wellbeing - What will this mean? (cont.)

- We will build on the strength of our inclusive culture, ensuring that colleagues with long-term mental and physical health conditions are empowered to access the support and services they require at work through our People Policies and the wellbeing provision offered in our Employee Value Proposition.
- We will celebrate the diversity of experiences across our workforce and provide opportunities to shape and influence through our Colleague Voice Network.
- We will provide a sustainable and adaptable approach to colleague wellbeing, supporting our workforce and wider organisation to be resilient; fit for the future and the ever-changing context.

## Measures of success

We will maintain our performance as an excellent employer, with a Wellbeing Risk Index score of 15 – 30.  
The current score is 17.

By 2028, we will reduce sickness absence (days lost) that are work-related from 13% to <11%

By 2028, we will increase the number of colleagues having regular wellbeing discussions as part of their PMF from 84% to 90%



# Colleague wellbeing - We will do this by:

Delivering a programme that focuses upon the 4 Pillars of wellbeing. Collectively these pillars enable our multi-generational workforce, now and in the future, to be resilient and respond to the changing requirements and context. Across this we will apply the lens of Diversity & Inclusion, purposefully considering the lived experiences of our colleagues and the intersectional experiences within this.

## Physical wellbeing



- Providing policies and procedures that can assist colleagues to respond to their physical health needs in the workplace.
- Raising awareness and delivering programmes that relate to physical wellbeing in the workplace.
- Continuing to focus on our environment and working practices.
- Supporting colleagues through life transitions and enabling them to respond to changing needs and implement adaptations, where possible.

## Mental wellbeing



- Providing a Performance Management Framework that enables open conversations around stress and mental wellbeing to build our resilient workforce.
- Raising awareness of the importance of professional boundaries and developing personal resilience.
- Ensuring equity of access to support, advice, and signposting services.

## Social wellbeing



- Providing an inclusive programme of colleague events that bring colleagues together.
- Continuing to grow our Colleague Voice Network to provide opportunities to help shape and influence the colleague experience.
- Continuing to improve the relationships we have with each other across the organisation and sharing where there are possible opportunities to collaborate and connect.

## Financial wellbeing



- Providing resources to raise awareness of financial wellbeing and reduce financial stress.
- Providing fair and equitable conditions of employment.
- Ensuring that our reward and benefits policies allow opportunities to support colleagues at all stages of their life.



# Linked strategies

People	Colleague Development	Diversity and Inclusion	Communication	Health and Safety
<p>The People Strategy establishes colleague wellbeing as a strategic priority to support the delivery of:</p> <p><b>Work and workplace of the future</b> “because a strong, resilient stable and skilled workforce is essential for us to deliver high-quality services for our customers.”</p> <p>Our organisational culture is inclusive and values-led, supporting customer-focused outcomes in an agile way, creating a high-performing workforce.</p>	<p>Our Colleague Development Strategy will support the delivery of this strategy.</p> <p>We want colleagues and leaders to be accountable for their wellbeing.</p> <p>To understand how wellbeing supports high performing teams and be knowledgeable about what is available to them.</p>	<p>The Diversity and Inclusion Strategy impacts elements of this strategy.</p> <p>This develops the approach by using data that shapes our offer.</p> <p>We will know more about our colleagues and this will enable us to continue to build equity in our approach.</p>	<p>The Communications Strategy supports the successful delivery of the Colleague Wellbeing Strategy.</p> <p>We will improve awareness of Policy, practice and programmes that are available to colleagues.</p> <p>We will promote and explain our progress through a range of communication methods.</p>	<p>The Health and Safety Policy sets out our commitment to practice and compliance with regulation and legislation.</p>

Our 2030 Plan identifies work and workplace as the future as one of six large-scale transformational programmes to deliver our plan.



# Wellbeing Glossary

**This section provides definitions for some common wellbeing-related terms that you might see throughout this strategy and other whg wellbeing resources**

# Glossary

- **Absenteeism:** The habitual or frequent absence of colleagues from work, often due to illness or other personal reasons, which can impact productivity.
- **Accessibility:** The “ability to access” the functionality of a system or entity and gain the related benefits.
- **Adaptability:** The ability to adjust and thrive in changing work environments, promoting resilience, innovation, and growth.
- **Annual leave:** The link between annual leave and wellbeing is a well-established one. This is paid time that colleagues are entitled to take away from work for a specified number of days each year.
- **Anxiety:** A state of heightened worry, fear, or unease often associated with uncertain or challenging situations, affecting mental wellbeing.
- **Burnout:** Physical and emotional exhaustion resulting from chronic workplace stress, leading to reduced performance, detachment, and overall dissatisfaction.
- **Cognitive wellbeing:** The state of clear thinking, focus, and mental acuity that enhances problem-solving, decision-making, and creativity.
- **Collaboration:** The cooperative effort of colleagues to achieve shared goals, fostering creativity, efficiency, and a positive work atmosphere.
- **Colleague support:** The assistance, collaboration, and encouragement colleagues receive from their coworkers, contributing to a positive work environment and wellbeing.
- **Culture:** The shared values, behaviours, and environment that define how an organisation operates and how colleagues interact.
- **Diversity:** Recognising that everyone is different in a variety of visible and non visible ways, and that those differences are to be recognised, respected and valued. Diversity typically means proportionate representation across all dimensions of human difference.
- **Display Screen Equipment (DSE):** DSE are devices or equipment that have an alphanumeric or graphic display screen and includes display screens, laptops, touch screens and other similar devices.
- **Emotional wellbeing:** The state of balanced emotions and positive mood that contributes to overall mental health and job satisfaction.



# Glossary (cont.)

- **Employee Assistance Programme (EAP):** Support services offered to help colleagues address personal, emotional, and work-related challenges.
- **Employee engagement:** The degree of emotional investment, motivation, and dedication an employee feels towards their work, which increases productivity and job satisfaction.
- **Environmental wellbeing:** Reducing your environmental impact by going greener can be beneficial for an individual's wellbeing.
- **Ergonomics:** The design and arrangement of workspaces and equipment to optimise colleagues' comfort, efficiency, and physical wellbeing.
- **Financial wellbeing:** Refers to our sense of financial security and stability. It includes how informed we are of our choices related to our finances and the experiences we have related to this. This is inclusive of how we experience access to support, advice, financial planning and our freedom of choice in relation to our personal financial matters.
- **Flexibility:** The availability of adaptive work arrangements that accommodate individual needs, contributing to improved work-life balance and colleague satisfaction.
- **Happiness:** The degree of emotional contentment, joy, and positive wellbeing that contribute to a person's fulfilment experience.
- **Health:** A 'state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity' as defined by the World Health Organisation (WHO).
- **Health promotion:** Initiatives and programs aimed at fostering healthy habits, physical fitness, and wellbeing among colleagues.
- **Holistic wellbeing:** The comprehensive approach to wellbeing that considers physical, mental, emotional, financial and social aspects, aiming for overall balance and health.
- **Hybrid working:** Combines remote and in-office work, providing colleagues with flexibility in where and how they work.
- **Inclusivity:** Creating a diverse and welcoming environment where all colleagues feel valued, and respected, and can contribute their unique perspectives.
- **Job demands:** The tasks, responsibilities, and challenges colleagues must manage, influencing stress and wellbeing.
- **Job satisfaction:** The contentment and fulfilment colleagues experience in their roles and within the organisation.

# Glossary (cont.)

- **Leadership support:** The guidance, resources, and encouragement provided by supervisors and leaders to help colleagues excel in their roles and manage challenges.
- **Leaveism:** Colleagues using allocated time off, such as annual leave, to work or if they are unwell, or working outside contracted hours.
- **Mental health:** The psychological wellbeing of colleagues, including emotional resilience, stress coping mechanisms, and addressing mental health challenges.
- **Mental Health First Aid (MHFA):** An international training programme, to assist individuals in recognising the signs and symptoms of mental ill health, enabling them to initiate appropriate support responses.
- **Mental wellbeing:** Can be described as a combination of how we feel about, and how we engage with, all the many elements of our lives. How we feel includes our experiences of our emotions and sense of satisfaction, whilst our engagement centres upon such things as our relationships with others, and how we view and experience our purpose in life and our independence. This pillar includes psychological, emotional and cognitive wellbeing.
- **Motivation:** The inner drive and enthusiasm that compels colleagues to achieve their goals, increasing performance and job satisfaction.
- **Nutritional wellness:** Initiatives promoting healthy eating habits and nutrition education among colleagues.
- **Peer support:** The encouragement and assistance offered by colleagues, enhancing wellbeing and creating a supportive work environment.
- **Performance Management Framework:** Performance management is about helping our colleagues to be their very best and using effective performance-led conversations to help us improve how we work. Our Performance Management Framework (PMF) sits within the My HR system to help you monitor and record colleagues' progress and set new objectives to support the delivery of Our 2030 Plan.
- **Personal development:** The ongoing process of improving skills, knowledge, and self-awareness to achieve personal and professional goals.
- **Physical activity levels:** The amount and intensity of physical exercise and movement an individual engages in, influencing their physical wellbeing.



# Glossary (cont.)

- **Physical wellbeing:** Is about caring and advocating for our physical bodies. This includes how we sleep, eat, move, and take care to prevent or manage physical health conditions. Ensuring our physical safety, taking all necessary precautions to prevent accidents and injuries. The environment which are in, is also included here.
- **Presenteeism:** Where colleagues are present at work but not fully productive due to health issues, personal problems, or other factors impacting overall performance.
- **Productivity:** The effectiveness and efficiency of colleagues completing tasks, influenced by motivation, focus, and work environment.
- **Psychological safety:** A climate where colleagues feel comfortable expressing their opinions and taking risks without fear of negative consequences, promoting open communication and innovation.
- **Reasonable adjustments:** Changes an employer makes to remove or reduce a disadvantage related to someone's disability.
- **Recognition:** The acknowledgment and appreciation of colleague contributions and achievements, boosting morale, motivation, and job satisfaction.
- **Remote work:** A work arrangement where colleagues fulfil their responsibilities from locations outside the traditional office, often enabled by technology.
- **Resilience:** A person's capacity to bounce back from adversity and maintain wellbeing, enabling colleagues to handle challenges and setbacks effectively.
- **Responsibility:** Recognising that wellbeing is a personal and individual matter, this includes acknowledging and accepting accountability for one's actions, decisions, and their consequences.
- **Retention:** Strategies and practices aimed at retaining valuable colleagues, enhancing job satisfaction, and reducing turnover.
- **Retention rate:** The point of measure that depicts how long individuals or groups of colleagues stay with an organisation.
- **Self-awareness:** The understanding of one's strengths, weaknesses, values, and emotions, contributing to effective communication and personal growth.
- **Self-care:** The practice of taking an active role in protecting your own wellbeing and happiness, in particular during periods of stress.



# Glossary (cont.)

- **Sleep hygiene:** The practices and routines contribute to healthy sleep patterns, enhancing cognitive functioning and overall energy levels.
- **Social connections:** Colleague relationships and interactions contribute to a supportive and inclusive work environment.
- **Social wellbeing:** Relates to our sense of belonging, social inclusion and social stability. It's about the way we communicate with each other, and how we connect and feel valued within our social networks.
- **Stress:** The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) defines stress as 'the adverse reaction a person has to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed upon them'. While a certain level of pressure is common (and indeed can be beneficial) for many job roles, a prolonged state of stress can be significantly detrimental to our wellbeing.
- **Stigma:** Misconceptions or misunderstandings of wellbeing issues that can be dismissive, offensive or hurtful.
- **Team building:** Activities and strategies to improve team cohesion, communication, and member collaboration.
- **Time management:** Actively allocating time to tasks and activities, ensuring consistency and productivity.
- **Wellbeing:** The overall state of health, happiness, and contentment that colleagues experience in the workplace, encompassing physical, mental, social, and financial aspects.
- **Wellbeing initiatives:** Organised efforts by organisations to promote colleague health, happiness, and work-life balance through various programs and activities.
- **Work satisfaction:** The overall contentment colleagues feel in their roles, influenced by job fit, opportunities, and recognition.
- **Work-life balance:** The equilibrium between work-related responsibilities and personal life commitments, ensuring that colleagues have time for leisure, family, and self-care.
- **Workplace support:** Resources, tools, and assistance organisations provide to help colleagues manage their tasks, challenges, and career development.



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