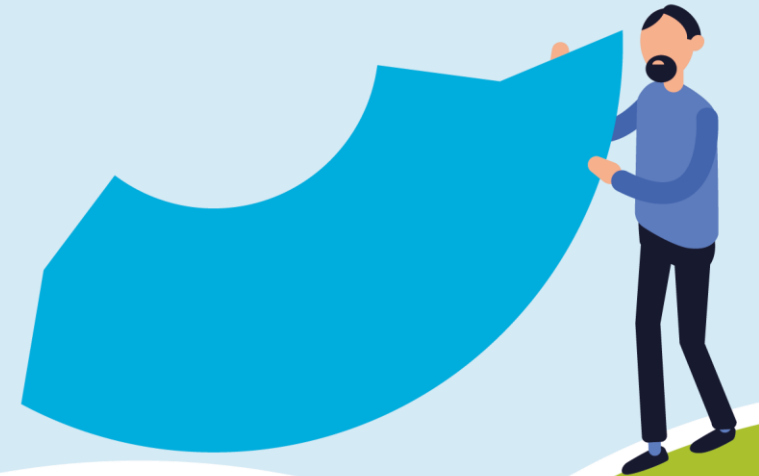


# Improving Workplace Health

**John Gear – Suffolk County Council**

Public Health  
& Communities



# Context

- Suffolk Health and Wellbeing Board agreed a priority to improve workplace health for 2022-23
- The Best Health and Work Partnership (BHAWP) convened to deliver the Board's ambition
- Through COMF funding, the BHAWP set out a programme to support employers to improve workplace health
- Including:
  - Baseline research to establish key areas of focus
  - Creating an innovation fund to support employers
  - Delivering an integrated comms and engagement campaign



# Baseline research to establish key areas of focus

To identify the post-Covid mental health and wellbeing needs and priorities of **Suffolk businesses** through a series of **surveys & focus groups** which would then inform other areas of the project



# Creating an innovation fund to support employers

A £100k innovation fund was made available to support mental wellbeing interventions in the workplace through one or more of the following priorities:

- **Training** - Activity that focuses on **managers being able to have and encourage meaningful supportive discussions** with staff regarding mental health and wellbeing
- **Cost of Living** – Projects and work that **assist employees and their families to access support** to reduce the associated impact on mental health and wellbeing
- **Policies and Practice** – Projects to **support smaller businesses develop mental health and wellbeing policies** and good practice within their own scope of work
- **Targeted Support** – Projects that aim to **improve mental health and wellbeing across sectors** of work where there has been a greater impact of Covid 19 e.g., Construction Industry, Hospitality, Routine and Manual work



# Selected Projects: Support for the VCSE Sector

Organisation	Summary	Target Audience	Number of Beneficiaries
YMCA Trinity Group	<p><b>Core training for managers to raise awareness of MH</b> and support them to <b>deal with the challenges they and their teams face</b> in their work.</p> <p>Needs-led training <b>to increase the confidence of frontline staff to deal with rising client needs.</b></p> <p>Supporting 5 organisations (up to 38 employees in each)</p>	VCSE	Approx. 190 staff
Babergh & Mid Suffolk District Council	Accredited Mental Health First Aid ( <b>MHFA</b> ) training course <b>for the VCSE workforce</b> in Babergh and Mid Suffolk	VCSE staff and volunteers	30 participants



# Selected Projects: Innovative Project

Organisation	Summary	Target Audience	Number of Beneficiaries
Marie Curie	To <b>improve workplace support for bereavement and end of life conversations</b> , ensuring every employee is able to provide and receive good last aid. <b>Co-develop a package with SME's</b> that enables better support for employees around end-of-life issues and bereavement.	Small & Medium Businesses	400 direct beneficiaries. 20 participants per business



# Selected Projects: Workplace Wellbeing Training

Organisation	Summary	Target Audience	Number of Beneficiaries
Suffolk Mind	<b>Training courses, 1:1 coaching and tailored print and digital materials for managers to help them understand about mental health and emotional needs</b> and are unsure about how to have conversations with their staff. <b>Particularly those at risk of stress and mental ill health.</b>	Construction, transport & logistics, hospitality, and wholesale & retail.	120-160 line managers. Approx 800 employers



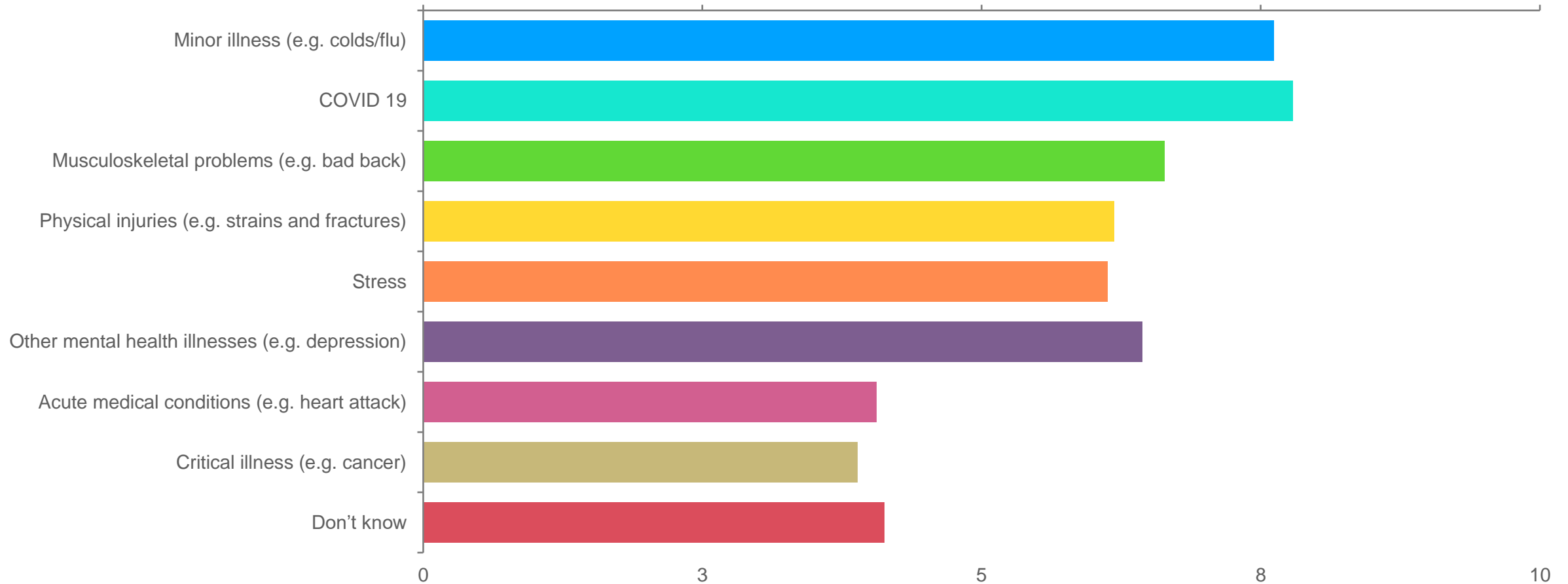
# Delivering an integrated comms and engagement campaign

- **Awareness programme to engage Suffolk employers** with targeted messages using a combination of media
- **Promote the Healthy Workplace Award** and showcasing successes by celebrating Suffolk businesses and their approach to workplace wellbeing
- Generate and sustained an informed **dialogue with the business community, local media and other stakeholders**
- Detailed insight to inform the **development of a dedicated webpage and resources to support improved workplace health**
- **Events to celebrate success and case study** examples





# What are the most common causes of absenteeism in the past three months? (Please rank in order)



# Summary of themes from focus groups (August and November 2022)

- **Challenges associated with not being physically present** with colleagues in the workplace
- **Mental health is a prevalent issue** and increasingly **linked to cost of living concerns**
- How to support **smaller employers with access to information and support?**
- **How best to equip line/middle managers** (those with staff management duties) to manage their own wellbeing and the wellbeing of those they manage?
- Supporting Women at Work (**Menopause**)



# Outcomes, Results & Learnings

- Marie Curie project –
- BMSDC project –
- YMCS Trinity project –
- Suffolk Mind project -
- SCoC - 188 responses to surveys, 2 Focus Groups, breakfast/best practice event, delivery of comms strategy
- Increased awareness amongst businesses of the importance of workplace health
- We have a better understanding of the workplace health issues faced locally



# Next Steps

- **Need for increased voices of smaller workforces & businesses**, as well as to integrate more with economic development strategies/workstreams
- We are **working with Chamber and other members of the BHAW partnership to develop a programme of work based on Suffolk working age population health data**, as well as insights and reflections that enables upscaling of effective interventions, and responds to the needs, challenges, and strengths of local workforces. This will include targeted support to workforces who need it most
- **Develop a universal resource hub** for all workplaces to access support and guidance on good work & health
- Further **develop the Healthy Workplace Awards**



# Thank you

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[www.suffolkchamber.co.uk/business-support/improving-workplace-health](http://www.suffolkchamber.co.uk/business-support/improving-workplace-health)

[www.healthyworkplaceaward.org.uk](http://www.healthyworkplaceaward.org.uk)

