



Health

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Nomura supports mind health of young employees

Describing what it takes to be regularly recognised as one of the UK's healthiest workplaces, Kirsty McLean, Head of Wellbeing for HR EMEA at the financial group Nomura highlights the importance of supporting younger workers.



Kirsty McLean,
Head of Wellbeing HR EMEA,
Nomura

We've created a more
psychologically safe and caring
workforce.

In terms of people and culture, our focus is on enabling people to flourish and be the best version of themselves. We provide lots of health and wellness support to our 2,600 employees, including an onsite gym, free health assessments and AXA Health healthcare scheme. We also recognise the positive impact of good mind health on people's wellbeing, so wanted to create a caring workplace that looks after people through all life stages.

As AXA Health's 2024 UK mind health workplace report shows, one in two 18–24-year-olds feel lonely some or all the time and have the highest rates of social isolation. A particular focus of Nomura is making sure our young interns feel supported and have a sense of connection. We recognise that vital to proactively supporting this group is not just focusing on their physical and mind health, but also their social health to make sure they feel socially connected and included when they enter the workforce and throughout their employment.

We also wanted to do more for other groups, including parents and carers and neurodivergent employees, so they feel psychologically safe talking about the challenges they are facing and asking for support. The overall aim was to create a caring workplace culture that enhances our ability to attract and retain employees and encourages people to bring their whole self to work.





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The solution

One of the first things we did to make our younger workers feel more supported was to create a new employee wellbeing hub aligned to our global pillars of wellbeing, including physical, mental, social and financial wellbeing. This has made it incredibly easy for them to access our networks, including the sports and social networks, ranging from football, netball and running clubs to a cycling club. We even included free bike servicing and a bike area to lock their bikes at work, including changing rooms and shower facilities to make it easy for them to join those communities.

Managers are also provided with psychological safety training, to help them feel more comfortable talking to employees and about their mental health. This has reassured managers their role isn't to counsel employees but to signpost them to support, such as onsite GP, Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) or in-depth counselling through AXA Health's mental health assessments and support service if they need help or advice.

To support other groups, and as part of our AXA Health healthcare scheme, we have put in place neurodiversity assessments to help employees and their loved ones, including children, to get access to a diagnosis and further support such as coaching on managing conditions ranging from ADHD to autism within four months, instead of having to wait over a year. We also have a parents and carers network and a series of lunch and learn sessions for people to share their stories and make others feel safe talking about their challenges.





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The results

Young workers feel significantly more supported and able to speak out about any mind health challenges than ever before. Especially when they see their manager being open about having to leave work early to deal with a life challenge. We've created a more psychologically safe and caring workforce where people feel able to be more open about their lives outside work and bring their full self to work.

The lunch and learn sessions have been particularly well-received and helped to destigmatise poor mental health, so people who might have felt isolated before now feel more closely connected to colleagues. Helping people who might be struggling, by giving them easy access to the onsite GP and referral into AXA Health counselling by end of next working day means people are getting the support they need at the earliest opportunity. This helps them to stay in work and recover quickly.

Parents, carers and neurodivergent employees also feel more supported on a practical and emotional level. The support provided by AXA Health to help us understand our wellbeing data has also helped us to win several prestigious wellbeing awards and determine future areas of focus, which has enhanced our reputation as a great place to work and our ability to attract and retain people.

As I mentioned during the roundtable webinar that AXA Health ran with Make A Difference, most important of all, the benefits provided by AXA Health have helped us to create a culture of care. Employees know they can quickly gain access to support, making them more likely to share any struggles they're having so they can start to thrive once more.



Key takeaways for employers

1. **Understand** the challenges facing younger employees, ranging from social isolation and loneliness to cost of living
2. **Create** a psychologically safe workplace by encouraging individuals and managers to bring their whole self to work
3. **Review** data including utilisation, claims and engagement scores to refine your wellbeing offering and workplace culture

Download the report



Read **AXA Health's 2024 UK mind health workplace report** for the latest insights on supporting your workforce

[READ NOW](#)

Watch the roundtable



Listen in to **AXA Health's CEO discussion on mind health in the workplace** with a panel of experts including Kirsty McLean

[WATCH HERE](#)