
Evaluation of the Wellbeing Premium Programme



**West Midlands
Combined Authority**

Contact **The Wellbeing Premium Team** on **0121 214 7861** or
by email to wellbeingpremiumtrial@wmca.org.uk.

When we invest in keeping our team healthy, not only do they **thrive**, but their **productivity soars**, they have **better engagement**, and their **happiness is elevated**; **everyone wins**.



What is the West Midlands Combined Authority?

The West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) is a legal body with powers of decision making granted by parliament. The WMCA has a number of key priorities. These are economic growth, skills, transport and housing, as well as reforming public services and reducing the region's welfare bill. To ensure that these priorities are dealt with the emerging WMCA established three commissions; Land Commission, Mental Health Commission and Productivity Commission.

For more information about WMCA please visit: wmca.org.uk

What are the aims of the evaluation?

We would like to invite you to take part in a research trial looking at health and wellbeing in the workplace. The West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) has been commissioned by the government to evaluate the effectiveness of a Wellbeing Premium Programme to help Small to Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs) to improve the health and wellbeing of their employees. The trial will be carried out in partnership with RAND Europe, Warwick Medical School and Warwick Business School who will provide specialist research and analysis skills.

It is important to know why the trial is being done and what would be involved. Please read the following information carefully.

The trial will assess:

- Whether receiving a financial incentive, along with guidance and a toolkit, results in employers doing more to support the health and wellbeing of their employees
- Whether an SME receiving the incentive develops greater awareness and participation in health and wellbeing activities among employees.
- Whether a financial incentives helps SMEs overcome the barriers they face in improving the health and wellbeing of their employees.

Why your organisation?

Your organisation has been identified as potentially eligible to take part in this randomised control trial. Organisations that are eligible for participation will meet both the following criteria to have:

- Between 10-250 employees; and

- Bases located in one of the seven metropolitan boroughs of the West Midlands (Birmingham, Coventry, Dudley, Sandwell, Solihull, Walsall and Wolverhampton) as the Thrive at Work supporting toolkit has been developed for these regions.

All organisations registering their interest for the trial must be registered with Companies House.

A total of 148 SMEs will be recruited onto the trial; however not all SMEs that express an interest to participate in the trial will be selected. As we are looking for SMEs across a range of sizes and sectors we will assess all expressions of interest for eligibility and then randomly select the required number of organisations based in each size band for participation in the trial. The size bands are shown below:

- 10-19 employees
- 20-49 employees
- 50-99 employees
- 100-249 employees

Every organisation in a particular size band will have an equal chance of being selected for the trial, and an equal chance of being selected into intervention or control groups.

If your organisation is not eligible to take part in the trial it can still sign up to the Thrive at Work Commitment via the Thrive at Work website at wmca.org.uk/thriveatwork and be eligible for the Thrive at Work Wellbeing Awards.

What are the possible benefits of taking part in this study?

Evidence suggests that organisations can see a financial benefit from investing in employee health and wellbeing through reduced sickness absence, staff turnover and improved productivity and job satisfaction.

All organisations taking part in the study will receive the Thrive at Work Commitment, which is a health and wellbeing commitment for employers and a supporting toolkit to assist employers to make positive changes to their health and wellbeing offer for employees. All organisations will have the chance to receive Thrive at Work Wellbeing Award and be celebrated at an awards ceremony if they achieve the Thrive at Work criteria.

In addition half of participating organisations will be randomly selected to receive a financial grant to help



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implement the Thrive at Work Commitment. Of these half will receive 100% of the grant amount, and half will receive 50% of the grant amount.

A proportion of this grant will be given at the beginning of the trial and the remainder at the end depending on achievement of Thrive at Work criteria. More details of the criteria can be found on the Thrive at Work website at wmca.org.uk/thriveatwork.

The final level of the grant award is still to be determined and will be given on the discretion of the WMCA, and subject to the organisation adhering to and signing a declaration of commitment. The maximum possible grant any one organisation could receive will

be capped at a maximum of £12,500; however it is important to remember that half of the organisations participating in the trial will receive no grant, and for those that do in the majority of cases it will be substantially less than this. For example for an SME with 20 employees in the half-grant group the maximum possible they could receive if they achieved all the relevant Thrive at Work criteria could be £2,500.

The table below illustrates the different intervention groups that organisations will be randomly allocated to:

	Thrive at Work Commitment & Toolkit	Grant Amount (Part Upfront, Part on completion)	Assessments (Baseline, Midline, Final)	Network Meetings (Per Group)
Intervention Group 1	Yes	Full	All	All
Intervention Group 2	Yes	Half	All	All
Single Control Group	Yes	No	All	All
Double Control Group	Yes	No	Final Outcome Assessments Only	Final Debrief Meeting Only



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What is Thrive at Work?

Thrive at Work is a workplace commitment with criteria and guidelines on creating a workplace that promotes employee health and wellbeing, focusing on key organisational enablers such as health and safety, manager training etc. in addition to health areas such as mental, musculoskeletal and physical health and promoting healthy lifestyles. It will include a supporting toolkit of available local and national resources, policies and services that would support implementation of the commitment and intervention uptake by employees by making it clearer and easier for them to raise awareness and take action to improve employee health and wellbeing. The toolkit will include a health needs assessment template which employers can apply to their organisation at their discretion to determine which areas of the Thrive at Work are most pertinent to them.

Thrive at Work will be made accessible to employers and employees via a PDF and also an interactive, mobile-friendly website. There will be login areas for employers to create an account, access the resources and update progress on the Thrive at Work Commitment. They can also choose to receive materials (such as prompts, reminders, progress updates etc.) on a regular basis via the website or e-mail. Behavioural change will be built in to these materials to encourage awareness and action. Network meetings in some of the trial groups will also facilitate learning and change.

Organisations that achieve at least the universal offer (Bronze) on the Thrive at Work Commitment will receive the Thrive at Work Wellbeing Award.

Thrive at Work is designed in recognition that one size does not fit all and although it specifies criteria and guidelines, and supports and nudges organisations to implement change, it allows flexibility in the way that businesses implement the guidelines and decide how best to allocate resource to meeting the criteria.

What does the evaluation involve for organisations?

In order to take part organisations must be:

- Agreeable to being randomised into one of the four trial groups;
- Receptive to implementing health and wellbeing behaviour changes within workplaces (with or without financial incentives);
- Willing and able to provide organisational level data; and

- Willing and able to allow employees time to complete questionnaires, and to be interviewed.

An important aspect of the evaluation is to understand how organisations change over the course of the study period, and in order to do this interviews and surveys will need to be conducted at various points during the trial.

What does the evaluation involve for an employer?

There will be some requirements of the organisation should you be selected to be part of the trial. These would include:

- Signing a declaration of commitment to commit to implementing the Thrive at Work Commitment as far as possible and using any grant money received towards this implementation.
- Cooperating with the research process including allowing researchers access to your organisation and giving staff time to be interviewed.
- Providing a list of all employee numbers or other identifiers so that employees can be randomly selected for interview.
- Distributing the electronic or paper consent forms that we will send you to the selected employees so that they can provide consent to participate in the trial
- Clearly recording any costs and keeping copy of receipts/invoices incurred when implementing the Thrive at Work Commitment.

Further details on the above will be provided in the declaration of commitment for those organisations selected to take part in the trial.

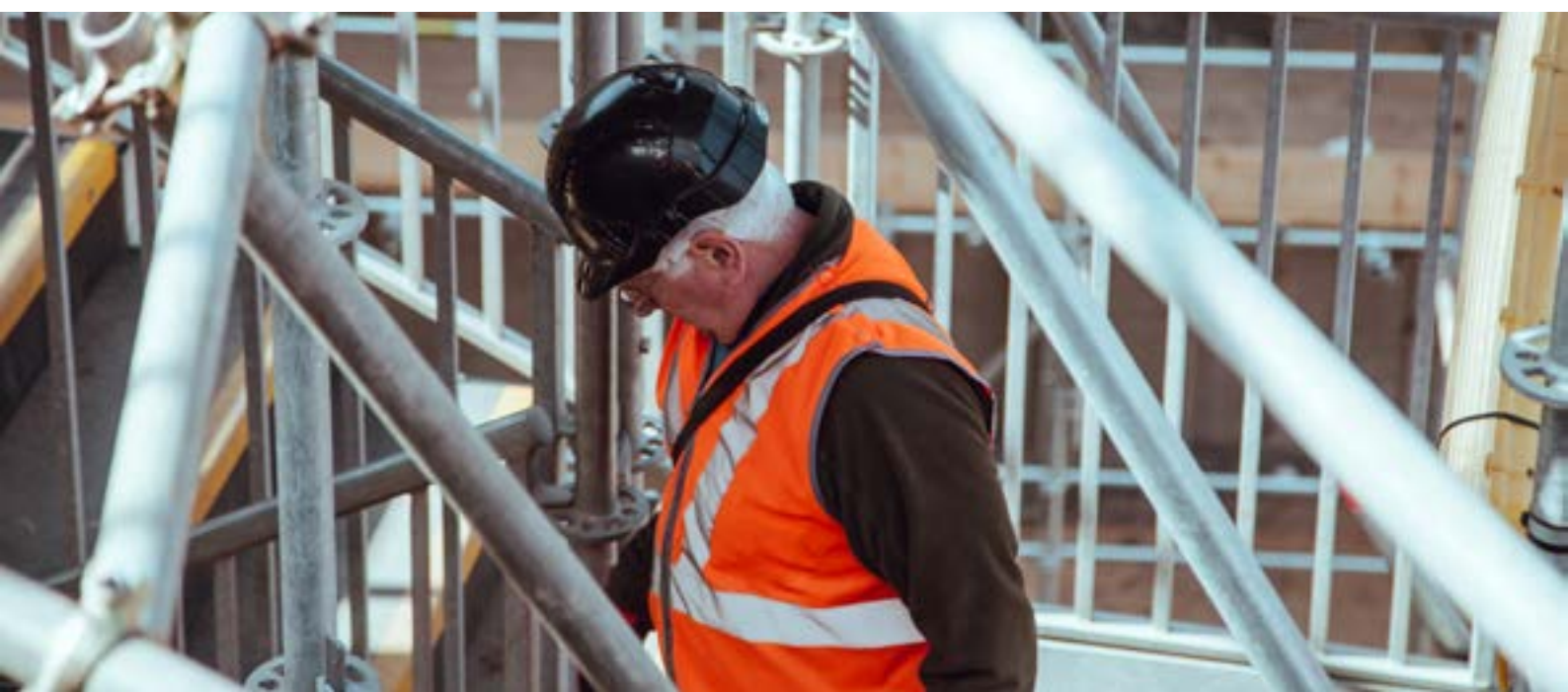


What research activities will be taking place?

To undertake interviews and surveys we would like researchers to visit your organisation to administer these to a randomly selected group of employees. The assessments will take place at the beginning, middle and end of the trial for the majority of organisations, but only at the end for the double control group.

The table below illustrates the key dates of the evaluation activities described above.

Key Dates	Activities for intervention organisations	Activities for single control organisations	Activities for double control organisations
Jun 2018 - Aug 2018	Organisations sign up to participating in the evaluation		
Jun 2018 - Aug 2018	Organisations are contacted to provide employee details		
Aug 2018	Pairing of SMEs and Randomisation		
Sep 2018 - Nov 2018	Baseline assessments are carried out		
Sep 2018- Dec 2019	Intervention period- 12 months from allocated start date for each SME		
Oct 2018 - Dec 2018	30% of Grant amount received by organisation		
Dec 2018- Dec 2019	Network Meetings- Quarterly		Final Network Meeting
May 2019 - Jun 2019	Midline assessments are carried out		
Sep 2019 - Dec 2019	End outcomes assessments are carried out		
Sep 2019 - Dec 2019	Accreditation assessments carried out		
Dec 2019 - Jan 2020	Final Grant amount received by organisation		



What does the evaluation involve for employees?

Employees that are eligible for participation include:

- Employees that are 16 years of age or older; and
- Have an employment contract with the employer.

In order to take part employees must be:

- Able to provide written consent. They can withdraw this consent at any time during the trial.
- Willing and able to complete questionnaires, and to be interviewed.

A number of your employees who will be selected at random will need to spare some of their time to be interviewed. Up to 15 employees from each organisation will be selected for interview and each interview will take approximately half an hour, although the interview with the organisational lead for the programme may take slightly longer.

Provision of employee data

For randomisation purposes, participating organisations will be asked to provide a list of all employee numbers to the WMCA. More details about how to provide the list using a secure portal will be sent separately once an organisation has signed up to the trial.

For each set of interviews the employer will need to alert and make available those employees who have been selected and have consented to be interviewed on the designated day.

How will the data be used?

We are committed to protecting the privacy of anyone who takes part in this study and keeping everyone informed of how your information is used. The West Midlands Combined Authority is responsible for ensuring the security and privacy of any personal information you provide. For more detail on data protection, the information you provide, and the rights of participants in the study please read our Thrive at Work Privacy Notice which can be found on our website [wmca.org.uk/thriveatwork](https://www.wmca.org.uk/thriveatwork).

What will happen to the results of the study?

Reports of the research will be written. Organisations/ employees names, and any identifiable characteristics, will not be used in any reports.

If you would like to receive a copy of the electronic report then please let the trial team know by e-mail on wellbeingpremiumtrial@wmca.org.uk. Results of this study will also be written up as a manuscript for publication in a peer-reviewed academic journal.

How does my organisation take part in the evaluation?

Organisations that would like to take part should either register their interest via the Thrive at Work website at [wmca.org.uk/thriveatwork](https://www.wmca.org.uk/thriveatwork) or by completing the enclosed reply form and returning it to us in the pre-paid envelope by no later than 14th September 2018.

On the reply form please nominate a member of staff in your organisation with whom the trial team can liaise directly with regarding the trial. The reply form also asks you to indicate the number of employees you anticipate will be working at your organisation in 2018 and 2019.

How do I get further information?

Should your organisation have any concerns or questions regarding the evaluation then please do not hesitate to contact **The Wellbeing Premium Team** on **0121 214 7861** or by email to wellbeingpremiumtrial@wmca.org.uk.



Growing healthier,
happier workplaces





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