

Health and wellbeing award

Winner

Arconic

The impact of shift-working on employees' mental and physical health should not be underestimated. Nowhere is this more true than in manufacturing, where shifts are long and intense. The pattern for staff at Arconic's Birmingham site is four days on (comprised of two 12-hour day shifts and two 12-hour night shifts), then four days off. The metals manufacturer recognised this posed a serious threat to health and wellbeing by it disturbing the circadian rhythms of an increasingly ageing workforce (68% over the age of 40 and 20% aged 55-plus). These disruptions can have serious effects on weight, behaviour and physical and mental health.

In late 2016, Arconic's HR manager worked together with the health and safety manager and an on-site wellness centre team (made up of an occupational health nurse, an occupational health advisor and a healthy lifestyle advisor), to identify the health and wellbeing status of the workforce and put together a strategy for the next two years. They wanted to discover key areas that required improvement in order to plan health promotion campaigns that would specifically focus on improving these areas. And so the health check roadshow was born.

Employees were screened for 15 different health markers using the most up-to-date techniques. Everyone who took part received a copy of the results with individual recommendations and suggestions to visit the nurse where necessary. The health checks took place in staff canteens to make it easier to attend, and the wellness centre team were always present to make fostering a trusting relationship with the rest of the workforce easier. The team also took this opportunity to give out questionnaires about the wellness centre's availability and services.



The data from the health check roadshow demonstrated that Arconic needed to focus its attention particularly on body fat percentage, hydration and cholesterol. From this it established a targeted strategy around four key areas: environmental, occupational, social and health. A mix of old and new interventions went into the four areas, covering physical, mental, social and financial health. As well as these ongoing interventions the business delivered several campaigns around weight loss, physical activity and hydration, and featured well-

known external campaigns such as Movember and National Heart Month. To drive awareness of, and participation in, the strategy, HR partnered with the area managers of the operations departments to ensure optimum communication with the front line.

The results have been fantastic. Since the strategy was launched, employees have collectively lost 138kg, 30% of people identified with 'critical hypertension stage two' blood pressure have been reduced to a less critical rating, and 61.5% of people screened

in 2017 have achieved Arconic's target of a total cholesterol reading of 5mmol/l or less. Appointments to see the occupational health nurses increased by 194% during 2016-17, and 42% of all on-site employees now belong to the work gym (the highest number since it opened in 2014).

As well as the health benefits for employees, there have also been business benefits. Sickness absence has dropped to the lowest level since 2014, employee engagement is up 5% compared to the company's other UK sites, and 83% of staff said they were proud to work for Arconic in its most recent engagement survey.

Arconic plans to continue to run roadshows to reassess the areas requiring the most focus. While 2016's was primarily physical-health-based, it plans to put greater emphasis on mental health, possibly by including psychological tests in its screenings.

The judges thought this was a well-targeted, strategic and comprehensive strategy, and one that was particularly impressive considering the context in which the business operates.

Shortlisted

Frimley Health NHS Foundation Trust

Three

United Learning

Volkswagen Financial Services