

The bi-annual newsletter of the Wellbeing at Work, Kingston (WWK) Research Group

In this issue:

- NHS-go App
- ‘Return to work’ Research
- Email Strategies
- Conference Update
- Course Successes
- Member News

Second Issue of ‘engage’, the WWK newsletter

Welcome to the second edition of the WWK’s bi-annual newsletter. We hope that this publication will provide you with a brief but fascinating insight into the research that members of the group have been engaged in, and how this relates to you and your work. WWK takes a practitioner-academic approach to research, so we always love to hear from you. Do tell us what you think about our latest projects, and what more we can be doing to promote wellbeing at work through our activities.

Emma Russell, Head, WWK Research Group

NHS-Go App—Independent Evaluation

The NHS-Go App was launched in 2016 by the NHS’s Healthy London Partnership, in order to provide Children and Young People in London with access to age-relevant health information and services. Emma, Ally and Jo from the WWK are working with J9 Consultancy to provide an independent evaluation of the app for the NHS. We are running focus groups and 1-to-1 interviews with young people to understand more about their experience of using the app, and how it might be improved. We will also be conducting a larger-scale survey to understand what pages young people are using, and how their interactions with these may lead to improved health knowledge or behaviours. Working with Professor Tom Jackson’s team (L’boro) of specialist technology reviewers, we have also been able to provide an in-depth evaluation of the technical functionality of the app. The results of our research are due in the Autumn, when the Healthy London Partnership will be using WWK’s evaluation to improve the app, aiming to ensure that future use makes a relevant and purposeful impact on the health of children and young people.



“The Wellbeing at Work, Kingston (WWK) Research Group is a centre for attracting and developing research into key business and organisational issues that impact the wellbeing of people at work. Comprising academics from Kingston University, our mission is to use research to make a difference to working people - to improve the quality of working life and to help organisations foster practices that tangibly enhance wellbeing, productivity and success.”

DWP Return to Work Research Project

Jo, Rachel and Professor Rob Blackburn (Small Business Centre) have just been awarded funds to undertake a study of interventions used by small and medium-sized enterprises to encourage employees to return to work after a period of mental health sickness absence. Along with colleagues at Loughborough University and Affinity Health at Work consortium, this large-scale project aims to unite research findings with practitioner needs—in order to develop a toolkit for helping small businesses to support and facilitate healthy and positive returns to work. The research project has just kicked off and is due to complete August 2018.



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FOCUS: Strategies for Managing Email

Emma’s report on ‘Strategies for Effectively Managing Email at Work’ will be published by Acas this August. In this commissioned report, Emma conducted a systematic literature review, along with a series of sense-checking interviews with email users. By considering how work culture, technology and person factors interact to impact strategic responses, a number of popular myths about email use were exploded. Firstly, it was found that rather than being a time-wasting device, **most email exchanges at work are considered to be ‘work critical’** and essential for people to get their tasks done efficiently. Secondly, the notion that we should only check our email a couple of times a day was found to be linked to feelings of overload and a lack of control; **regularly checking and processing email (e.g. every 45 minutes) was linked to effective working** and higher levels of well-being. Finally, the notion that using email is bad for work relationships was questioned. Email was found only to **reflect and potentially accentuate existing levels of trust in any working relationship**. Where trust does not exist, people use email to collect audit trails, hold people accountable and misinterpret intentions. Where trust is good, email can be used to share information, create norms for acting and build positive exchanges. For more details, and a range of practitioner-focused recommendations, please visit: www.acas.org.uk.

Conference Update



A number of us visited the EAWOP conference in Dublin this May, 2017. It was great to attend some inspiring sessions on the latest state-of-the-art research in the field of well-being and work, and to meet with colleagues across the discipline. We also did our fair share of presenting. Alison presented a poster on her newly launched MAP app—a tool for improving daily wellbeing; Ruth presented a paper on applicant sense-making following interview rejection. Emma and Jo presented a paper on Leaders with Purpose, and (along with Ally) a poster on leadership training amongst NHS Commissioners.

We were also well-represented at the KBS 2017 faculty forum, with WWK showing 5 posters and presenting 1 research paper on email and personality.

Contact Us

We want to hear from you!

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Course Successes

The Leadership and Management in Health Masters programme (on which Ally and Hans teach) has just been rated in the top 10 across the whole of the UK (no. 7). Congratulations to all involved. The new Professional Doctorate in Occupational Psychology, introduced by Rachel and Jo this academic year is now full for 2017-18 and is going from strength to strength. Watch this space to apply for the 2018-19 course.

Member News

We are pleased to welcome **two new PhD Research Assistants** to the group. Amy Lloyd-Houdley and Nina Williams are working on the NHS-Go app project and doing a great job.

Forthcoming papers: Look out for Emma’s paper on Conscientiousness as a resource for dealing with email in *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*: DOI: 10.1111/joop.12177/full ; Louisa and Rachel have a paper on exercise and weight management coming out in the *Health Education Journal*; Rachel, Jo and Kate are contributing to a series of articles in *OP Matters*, the magazine for Occupational Psychologists; Ally’s blog on *CPEC and Community Resourcing* was published in the *South Asia Journal*: <http://southasiajournal.net/cpec-and-the-case-for-community-capacity-building/>