

# Insights



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**CORINTHIAN**



For now. For the future.



## A welcome return to normality

As we start to welcome back some form of normality to our lives and the sun shows its face more frequently, I hope you are all feeling more optimistic and hopeful at what lies ahead.

There is no denying that the last year has taken its toll on us all, as we navigated our way through a situation that none of us could have ever imagined being in. Each of us may have faced different struggles, but I'm sure that most would agree that their mental health has suffered in some way.

With Mental Health Awareness Week coming up, what better time to talk about it! For something that affects 1 in 4 of us, there is still a lot of shying away from the subject and unfortunately, negative treatment towards those with a mental illness too.

As Corinthian's Mental Health First Aider (MHFA), I provide the team with a monthly wellbeing email containing resources

and tips on caring for your mental and overall health. I focus on a different topic each month and encourage colleagues to improve their awareness with quizzes or a stress test. My aim is to normalise conversations around mental health in the workplace and provide support to colleagues, albeit on a remote basis for now!

The wellbeing of our staff is important to us at Corinthian, as we believe it should be to every employer. We hope that you enjoy the following articles.

*Maria*

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# What is a Mental Health First Aider, and why are they important?

## Overview of MHFA

Mental Health First Aid goes beyond providing support in a crisis. Compulsory mental health first aid in every workplace is now a step closer to becoming a legal requirement.

MHFAs are trained to spot the early warning signs of emerging mental ill-health; develop confidence to have a supportive and proactive conversation; and be confident in guiding someone to the appropriate professional help.

Their role is to listen rather than advise and are an initial point of contact. It is about being there in the moment for that person. It can be really rewarding for the individuals who train in this role and are able to use their skills to support others.

On their training journey they will develop skills such as non-judgemental listening and how to show empathy. These skills can be transferred to many other aspects of work and life.

Many people experience mental ill health but do not know where to turn for help. They may fear asking for help. MHFAs are another step an organisation can take in moving towards an open and supportive culture.

## The promotion of wellness

Mental health first aiders are trained to understand what promotes

good wellbeing and ways of being proactive around this. Having this education makes them a perfect fit to support in the delivery of an organisation's wellbeing strategy. They can lead wellbeing initiatives; open up communication channels and keep those positive messages consistent, as well as educating others around the importance of self-care too.

Signposting is a key part of the role of an MHFA, this is both internal and external signposting. Internally this could be about the organisation's Employee Assistance Programme. EAPs are so often under-utilised but they promote great education for employee wellness, as well as support in a crisis. They are a great resource which should be shouted about, yet in reality there tends to be very few employees who really understand what their EAP can provide.

The Health and Safety Executive highlight that employers have a duty of care to their employees in terms of both their physical and psychological safety.

An employer may also have legal obligations in relation to the Equality Act 2010 in terms of making reasonable adjustments with regards a staff members mental health. Having a good understanding of how different mental health conditions could affect someone day to day can really help make this process much easier and more effective.

Like physical First Aid, the aims are similar:

- **Preserve life**
- **Provide comfort**
- **Promote recovery**

## Further benefits

Yarker et al in 2020 identified the following as key drivers which determined how likely an employee was to thrive in the workplace following mental ill health absence leave:

- That the person receives non-judgemental support
- They have access to health and advice outside of work
- They are able to contact specific charities

MHFA training encompasses all of the above, so it can be extremely beneficial for line managers and HR managers to have the training too. It is important to have a diverse team of MHFAs as this makes them more accessible for others within the organisation.

If you would like a no obligation chat to understand how mental health first aid may work for your company we would love to hear from you! [Jennifer.rawlinson@flourishinmind.co.uk](mailto:Jennifer.rawlinson@flourishinmind.co.uk)

# Highlights of Global Travel Task Force findings

travel counsellors



The Global Task Force has outlined its framework for the re-opening of international travel. It is not the clear-cut picture we would have liked to have been announced by the Government, however it is a start.

## What do we know?

The Global Task Force has announced its framework for the re-start of international travel, with a requirement of a PCR test for pre-departure and post arrival back into the UK. There is a commitment from the Government to assess options for drastically reducing the cost of these tests including the potential of using cheaper ones.

The recommendations include the use of a three-tiered system with the initial list of countries to be published by early May along with confirmation of whether international travel can re-start on the 17th May for leisure purposes, the date set by the government as the earliest potential date for travel.

## The three tiers and what they mean?

### Green

Arrivals need to take a pre-departure test as well as a PCR test on or before day two of their arrival back in to the UK, but will not need to quarantine on return (unless they return a positive test result) or take any additional tests; halving the cost of tests on their return to the UK.

### Amber

Arrivals will need to quarantine for a period of 10 days and take a pre-departure test, a PCR test on day two and eight, with the option for

“Test to Release” on day five to end self-isolation early.

### Red

Arrivals will be subject to restrictions currently in place for “red list” countries. This includes a period of 10 days isolation in a managed quarantine hotel, pre-departure testing and PCR tests on days two and eight.

\*Travellers will also need to comply with Covid requirements of their destination country.

\*The allocation of countries to each tier level will be kept under constant review. Formal reviews of all restrictions will take place on the 28th June and checkpoints no later than the 31st July and the 1st October.

\*The current permission to travel form will be removed alongside the easing of restrictions, meaning passengers will no longer need to provide a valid reason for leaving the UK.

\*A “Green Watchlist” will also be created to highlight countries at risk of potentially being moved from the low-risk green category to amber.

\*Other developments include plans to digitise the current “Passenger Locator Form”, enabling checks to take place at e-gates by Autumn 2021.

\*The UK is to play a leading role in the development of “International Standards” around a digital travel certification system with assessment ongoing of how certification could ease outbound and inbound travel.

\*This impacts more than just holidays, many families and friends have been separated from each other for some time, plus corporate travel trip have been on pause for many businesses.

There has never been a better time or more key time to place your travel plans in the hands of an experienced professional who can support and guide you every step of the way; Pre, during and post travel.

It may be illegal to travel right now but it is NOT illegal to book travel for later dates in the year. Make sure you opt for the most flexible booking terms, ensure you have comprehensive travel insurance that includes Covid, and your money is protected! Here at Travel Counsellors, we ensure all the above is done as standard. As we work remotely this allows us to be there for you whenever you need us; pre, during and post-travel.

It has and continues to be a challenging time for everyone. However we are finding customers are craving something to look forward to and the chance to spend some quality time with friends and family again both in the UK and overseas.

Now more then ever travellers should call in an expert. To see how we can help you with your future travel plans for both leisure and business travel with flexibility contact us **james.houtby@travelcounsellors.com**



## Wellbeing and health cash plans

### What are health cash plans?

Health cash plans are schemes that allow you to pay a monthly fee and in return you are entitled to have your routine medical and dental expenses covered. For example, you might pay £10 a month and that could cover up to £100 of dental costs, £100 of physio appointments and £100 of opticians' appointments.

While it may sound similar to health insurance, they are not the same thing and you may even have both at the same time. This is because health insurance will only cover conditions that develop after you take out a plan, whereas a cash plan can be used to cover ongoing and routine appointments.

Many employees enjoy health cash plans as a perk of their job, and they use them to help with the costs of routine health appointments. However, with the Covid-19 outbreak and the initial lockdown in the UK in March 2020, routine dental and optical appointments were put on hold.

Now, a year into the pandemic, routine appointments are available, and cash plans are still a useful employee benefit?

### Health cash plans and wellbeing

Another way that cash plans have come into play, is in supporting mental health. Almost half of employees feel like the pandemic has made their job more stressful, with 42% of employers having lost an employee due to inadequate wellbeing support at work. Cash plans are a way to offer additional support whilst employees are working remotely.

One way to make sure cash plans can continue to offer support for employees is to extend the claim period, offer payment holidays, and to pay claims in the correct benefit year, when they were rescheduled due to the pandemic.

### Cash plans in a virtual world

The pandemic and subsequent lockdowns have meant many healthcare providers had to rapidly transition to an online space.

By December 2020, 89% of GP consultations were delivered online using video technology.

Online counselling calls have also increased by 903% and counselling services have seen a 44% increase in anxiety calls.

With stress and anxiety at an all-time high, cash plans can provide a vital bridge to counsellors and preventative healthcare. This on demand approach to healthcare will likely remain in the future and health cash plans have the potential to enable a proactive solution to looking after employee's health and wellbeing.

If you would like to discuss Health Cash Plans, please don't hesitate to get in touch, we'd love to help you.

For more information contact us:  
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