

Case Study

---

# BACK IN ACTION UK GENERATES ESTIMATED SAVING OF £540,000 ANNUALLY



PHYSIOTHERAPY | WELLNESS | WORKPLACE HEALTH



## INTRODUCTION

Back in Action UK were consulted and onboarded by a household name UK brand in the manufacturing industry to help them reduce their levels of MSK (musculoskeletal injury) which were affecting productivity and incurring high cost.

## CHALLENGES

Levels of MSK related sickness were significant for the client, the consequences of which were costs both in lost productivity and the covering of replacement wages. Estimated to be an even higher cost than MSK sickness was presenteeism where suitable duties were often not productive.

The physical demands of roles for most individuals involved prolonged static standing and walking resulting in injuries associated with lower load repetitive movements. Other roles involved heavier lifting, pulling and pushing as traditionally found in back-of-house in retail. Finally, there were significant ongoing workplace organisational changes going on which were impacting morale.



## Back in Action UK's Assessment

Our team identified a number of issues in our assessments. At a more senior level Operations Managers were not educated as to the role of physiotherapy and when they should refer employees for treatment. Onsite Occupational Health nurses too, were not skilled in MSK assessment or treatment which resulted in delayed or missed referrals to the prior physiotherapy service.

The prior service had also been very hands on, with not enough emphasis on encouraging useful

self-management and self-efficacy. In addition, assessment and management of chronic MSK conditions was not part of the previous scheme, resulting in productivity losses due to chronic conditions that were not being addressed.

There was little structure to phased return to work and modified duties which we felt was a missed opportunity for early return to work or work based rehabilitation. Finally, the company had an aging workforce which meant chronic conditions and deconditioning were prevalent.

## What Our Team Did

Back in Action UK implemented a number of initiatives. Firstly, training was delivered to occupational Health and Operations Management to increase appropriate referrals and subsequently improve workforce health and productivity. Our physical demands analysis of each role was also combined into a modified duties register that allowed management and local GP's to offer phased return to work or suitable duties to prevent time away from work.

The service was also opened up to employees with chronic conditions who were invited to come for initial assessment and treatment if appropriate. This initiative was aimed at encouraging useful self-management behaviours and increasing function and productivity. We also used our own injury trend data to carry out risk assessments on high risk tasks within the business and issue a hierarchy of controls to mitigate the risk leading to a decrease in injuries. Lastly, warm up programmes were completed at the start of the working day or shift to address age related deconditioning as well as a traditional warm up function.



# RESULTS

## The results of our work were as follows;

- A decrease in mean MSK absence length from 17 days to 3 days. This was in part achieved through the creation of a Job Dictionary containing the physical demands of each role plus a suitable duties register. Both are used by management, Occupational Health, Back in Action UK, and GP's to better manage return to work planning.
- Training of management and Occupational Health to enable them to use the physiotherapy service more effectively. This has led to an increase in referrals, meaning treatment is received earlier and outcomes improved.
- Treatment of chronic injuries which has led to a decrease in flare ups of chronic conditions.
- An estimated saving of £540,000 pa based on reduced frequency of injuries, decreased absence length per injury, decreased presenteeism and decreased cost of covering staff.

**T:** 020 7480 5976  
enquiries@backinactionuk.com  
www.backinactionuk.com