

HEALTH
HERO[®]



What is a **men's health MOT** and how can you build one into your workplace?

[One in five men die before they're 65.](#) The reasons behind these deaths are diverse, encompassing both mental and physical conditions - some of which could be prevented with the right intervention.

Yet, **many men find it difficult to talk about these problems.** Without airing their concerns, they'll struggle to receive the care they need to stay mentally and physically fit.

As an employer, you have the power to tackle this. In this guide, we'll walk you through the typical healthcare challenges men face. Then, we'll introduce you to a men's health MOT - a simple, yet effective, tool for encouraging the men in your business to stay healthy.



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The state of men's health

When we say 'men's health', what comes to mind?

You may think about conditions only experienced by cisgender men, such as prostate and testicular cancer. While it's important to focus on these conditions, they're only a small piece of a larger puzzle.

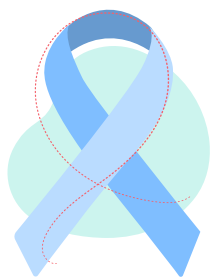
Men's health is much more complex. More than you and your male employees may realise.

To shine a light on their biggest healthcare challenges, we've split this section into physical and mental health risks.

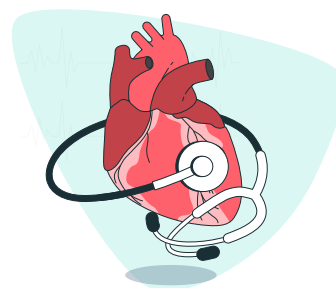


Physical health risks

Most health conditions are indiscriminate and affect all genders. That said, men are more prone to contracting certain conditions. Consider the following:



Men are 14 percent more likely to develop cancer than women.



One in eight men die from coronary heart disease, compared to one in 14 women.



The average life expectancy for men is 79.4 years - four years less than women.



Men are twice as likely to have undiagnosed Type 2 diabetes than women.

Mental health risks

Did you know that one in eight men in England have a common mental health condition?

According to the Mental Health Foundation:



Men are three times more likely to commit suicide than women.



Men between the ages of 40 and 49 have the highest suicide rate in the UK.



Men are less likely to seek psychological service referrals than women.

These statistics only skim the surface. When it comes to stress, 34 percent of men agree they feel 'constantly stressed and under pressure'. Eight percent went as far as to say **job-related stress affects or hurts their lives.**

The cyclical relationship between body and mind



It can be all too easy to separate mental and physical health. After all, they often have different treatments. But it's important to recognise their symbiotic relationship.

Take stress as an example. Men with high stress levels are more likely to experience higher blood pressure. This, in turn, can lead to an increased risk of heart disease, which

is a leading cause of vascular dementia. Not to mention, many physical illnesses can take a toll on a person's mental health.

The question is - how can your workplace help men tackle these issues?

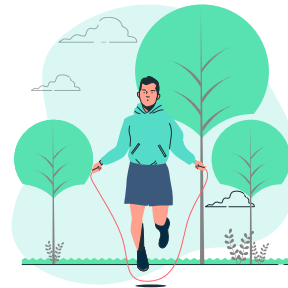
What is a men's health MOT?

In short, a men's health MOT assesses a man's mental and physical health and flags any problems.

These MOTs come in the form of self-assessments or clinician-led assessments. They include information on how to:



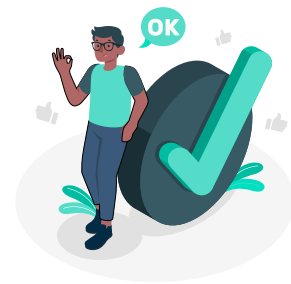
Measure blood pressure and calculate BMI.



Exercise more and eat healthier.



Identify mental health challenges and reduce their impact.



Understand the signs of prostate and testicular cancer, as well as other conditions.

The idea is to **promote awareness, encourage self check-ins, and educate men on the health risks they may face.**

After performing these assessments, men are advised to call a healthcare professional if they're concerned about any symptoms. It's also worth noting that men between the ages of 40-76 should have an [NHS Health Check](#) every five years.



How can you build this MOT into your workplace?

You may wonder why this concerns you. After all, you're an employer, not a general practitioner.

But it's as simple as this: **your male colleagues can't perform at their best if they ignore their mental and physical health trouble**

Indeed, addressing wellbeing at work can increase productivity by up to 12 percent.

And targeting physical conditions before they worsen can reduce workplace absences down the line. Ultimately, providing support for your male colleagues has the added benefit of helping your business.

So, how can you incorporate a men's health MOT in your business?

1. Acknowledge the elephant in the room

Many men struggle to talk about their health challenges, particularly when it comes to their mental health. But that doesn't mean you can't encourage them.



Take the first step by:

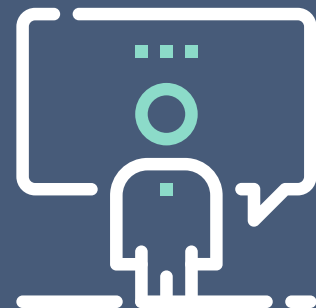
Supporting men's health initiatives. Men's Health Week happens every year - typically in June -with each event focusing on a single theme, such as COVID-19's affect on men's health. This can be a great opportunity to raise awareness, hold company fundraisers and share resources.



Take stock. Give your male colleagues an anonymous survey, asking them key questions about their health. How many times have they gone to work feeling mentally or physically unwell? Have they ever hidden an illness from their colleagues? Have they ever felt lonely? The answers to these questions will highlight the state of men's health in your business and act as the foundation for your efforts.

Share stories or invite a public speaker.

Thirty-four percent of men say they'd be more comfortable talking about depression if a friend spoke about it first. *All it takes is one man to share his experience.* This could be a senior executive in your business or an external influencer. Either way, holding these conversations can de-stigmatise conversations around men's health and open the door to further discussions.



2. Share your own MOT

If you want to build a men's health MOT into your business, it's as simple as adopting one or creating your own. (The Men's Health Forum have their own [interactive assessment here](#).) For men who are less likely to share, this can be a great way to assess their health without the need to talk to anyone.

To make sure you cover work-related health issues, we'd advise creating and sharing additional resources. For instance:



Advice on the [proper work setup](#) to avoid back and neck pain.



Tips on how to avoid eye strain.



Resources on how to have a healthy work/life balance, catered to both office and remote workers.



Information on your company's policies, including sick leave, [wellbeing days](#) and healthcare benefits.

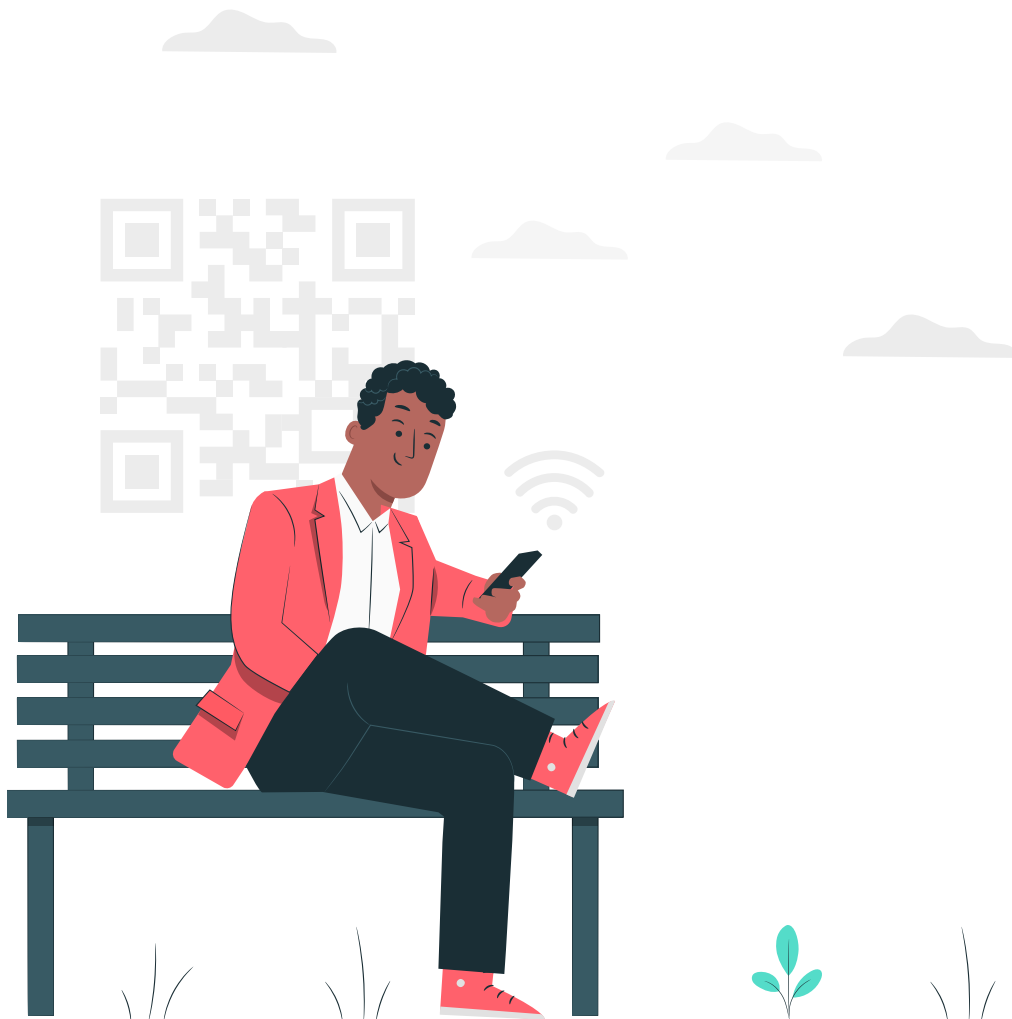
3. Provide tailored, clinically-approved advice

Of course, generic advice can only go so far.

Yes, you can tell your male colleagues to check their BMI and eat healthier. You can also suggest reaching out to friends or family if they're feeling low. These are all useful tips that'll have a positive impact. But for more specific or serious problems, tailored clinical advice is necessary.

As an employer, this is beyond your remit. But you can still give access to validated clinical advice.

Personalised healthcare applications, such as [Symbio](#), allow your employees to select their unique health priorities and receive advice. It's a long-term solution that encourages your male employees to monitor their mental and physical health.



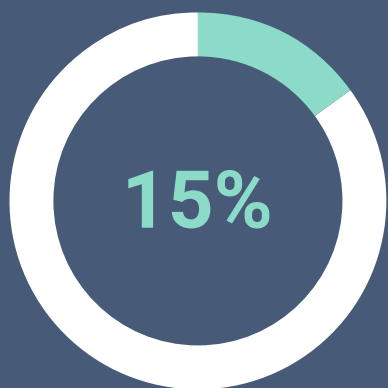
4. Provide access to *valued* health services

Increasing awareness and providing advice will help your male employees identify their personal health challenges. But, without accessible healthcare services, it'll be difficult for them to improve them.

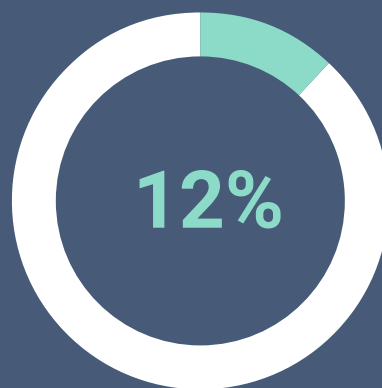
Indeed, many people in the UK are finding it increasingly difficult to access GP services and book appointments.

Your organisation can alleviate these difficulties with healthcare benefits. However, before you make your selection, it's important to consider *how* men would like to access these benefits.

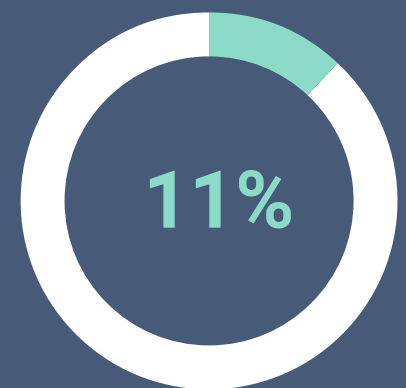
According to Mind UK, 22 percent of men would feel more comfortable seeking help for their low moods if support and information was available online. A further:



would like an assurance of anonymity.



would prefer access to help at more convenient times of the day.



would like to access help at places other than a GP surgery.

With these statistics in mind, it makes sense to choose health benefits that offer 24/7 virtual GP services, as well as a range of anonymous, holistic and digital support services. That way, your men's health MOT doesn't just flag problems - it fixes them.

Make men's health a priority

There's no arguing with the statistics - men are more likely to die prematurely and experience mental and physical illnesses.

But there are ways to prevent or reduce the impact of these conditions.

By destigmatising conversations around men's health, as well as encouraging MOT checks, you can help the men in your workplace assess their own mental and physical wellbeing.

But you can take this one step further. By improving your healthcare benefits, you can empower your employees to seek professional help for any problems they encounter.

At HealthHero, we provide holistic and accessible healthcare services for businesses just like yours. With the help of our accessible **Symbio app**, 24/7 virtual GP services, and Employee Assistance Programmes, you can ensure your employees lead healthier, happier lives.

