Tips for Communicating Return to the Workplace to Employees

At laya healthcare, we recommend considering our C.A.R.E. approach (Communicate, Anticipate, Respond, Engage). Effective communication with employees is key. It's crucial to get this right. Many employees will not know what to expect when they return to the workplace, so it's important to set the scene for them to prepare them physically and mentally.

Here are five tips when it comes to communicating with your employees in a way that eases the transition:

1. Set Clear Expectations from the Start

The Government's Return To Work protocols suggest setting up a Covid-19 Response Team, and communications should be top of the list of critical priorities of this team. Communicate clearly on what will happen before an employee returns to the office (pre-return screenings e.g. Covid-19 testing), when they return and the clear 'asks' of them in respect of what health and safety guidelines they will need to observe for the foreseeable future e.g. wear PPE at work, no hand shaking etc!

2. Say it again, and again.

Repetition and clarity are powerful when it comes to communicating the basics of health and safety to employees. The famous 'Rule of 7' suggests that a message needs to be heard seven times before a person takes action, meaning that repetition makes for effective communication.

3. Listen. Be consultative.

Survey your employees to discover their biggest wellbeing concerns and barriers they perceive in their return to the workplace. Create actionable insights that address their primary concerns.

4. Consider all visitors to site.

Consider communications required for non-employees e.g. essential visitors, contractors.

5. Root your communication in Occupational Health and Safety legislation

Professor John Gallagher, Ireland's foremost expert on Occupational Health advises this. Working closely with the extended team of Occupational Health Advisors at laya healthcare to help businesses create their Return to Workplace Health & Safety Framework. A great framework is aligned to guidance from health authorities including European Centre of Disease Control (ECDC), World Health Organisation (WHO), National Public Health Emergency Team (NPHET) and the Health Service Executive (HSE).

Need our help with Pre Return to Work preparation or Wellbeing Risk Assessments Covid-19 testing? Talk to your Account Manager today or go to layahealthcare.ie for more information.