SLEEP FATIGUE & RECOVERY BIOMETRICS PROJECT

Summary

A comparative study of 120 participants using wearable technology combined with data insights , education, coaching & peer support. Study led by LJMU within Merseyside Police managed by the NPWS Oscar Kilo.

Organisations

National Police Wellbeing Service (NPWS) Oscar Kilo
Merseyside Police
Liverpool John Moores University (LJMU)

Challenge

The challenge to improve the health and wellbeing of police officers and staff in England and Wales is a major issue for contemporary policing, particularly in a climate of financial constraint. An ever-growing body of evidence indicates that officers and staff experience high levels of mental and physical ill health, due to the challenges inherent in police work. These issues affect individual lives, and also the delivery of policing, in terms of morale, effectiveness, sickness, and retention. Workforce data highlights year-on-year increases in staff being classified as non-deployable i.e. are unable to perform 100% of their full duties and so far the main response has been to 'do more of the same' despite the lack of evidence of their efficacy.

Innovation or research

The Police STAR funded study set out to challenge these established practices by combining behavioural change theory with the latest Wearable Health Technology (WHT) to explore exciting new ways of working that can be used to impact on this mission critical problem. The study combined WHT, mobile first educational content, health checks and peer to peer support and resulted in very encouraging findings which are being taken forward by the NPWS.

Findings

The following findings present huge opportunities for policing:

- 91-93% of participants said the WHT was useful for increasing health awareness
- 62-68% of participants agreed that the WHT had helped them identify the need to make health behaviour changes
- 50-71% reported that the WHT contributed to them making actual changes to improve their sleep, health and wellbeing
- 48% reported an increase in making a conscious effort to practice good sleep habits

More exercise and movement were reported across all groups

- 60% reported more resilience at work
- 57% reported increased ability to manage stress
- 48% reported increased performance at work
- 55% reported increased performance at work
- 42% reported an increased desire to work in a police environment (less intention to leave)
- 38% reported they would be less likely to report sick

Using Baxter et al 2015[1] it is estimated that implementation of the wellbeing programme could save Merseyside police £3.9m annually (absentee savings + turnover savings).

Next steps

There are 3 further developments to build on the exciting findings from the Police STAR funded study, ensuring there are large scale legacy benefits and impact across policing.

Operation AKESO 1- Operation AKESO 1 (Greek goddess of recovery and good health) will provide the full study package and be promoted as a higher cost targeted intervention to recover staff who are restricted/ adjusted and/or returning to work with limitations to performing full duties.

Operation AKESO 2- Operation AKESO 2 will use the latest and most sophisticated WHT - the Ultrahuman Ring Air - and be used to address priority workplace health issues such as menopause and trauma prevention.

3. ResetU app - NPWS have taken all the learning from the Police STAR funded study and commenced a refresh build of the SFR120 app which will be provided to 12,000 staff from September 2025. The app provider is capable of using feedback to develop new features and improvements at very low cost per user. NPWS have a vision to provide ResetU to 120,000 staff over 3 years using a funding model which convinces forces to match fund by shifting spend from existing low uptake wellbeing investments.

1 Baxter, S. et al. (2015). Development of the Workplace Health Savings Calculator. BMC Research Notes, 8:457. https://doi.org/10.1186/s13104-015-1402-7