

# Best New Workplace Approach to Mental Health

## Winner

### Flywire New Employee Mental Wellness & Engagement Initiative, Flywire

This award is given to a workplace that has recently recognised the importance of mental health in the workplace and within the past 12 months has taken first steps to change the culture at the workplace

Flywire is a fast-growing global payments company with offices in 12 countries. Its success has not come without challenges, including burnout and stress.

In 2019, the company formed a Wellness Committee and expanded support for employees' (FlyMates') personal and professional development. Covid-19 brought to the fore many needs that had likely been present already; stress and anxiety, parenting challenges, loneliness, chronic illnesses, family loss and dealing with life changes. Kelly Hartman, Chief People Officer at the time, had seen the warning signs before Covid-19 and convinced her peers on the executive team that the company needed to be doing much more.

Flywire's Mental Wellness & Engagement programme asked for full executive team participation, adequate resources and budget, and executive Team KPIs to make mental wellness a strategic focus. Resources were made available in local languages and various time zones.

The first thing Kelly did was reach out to FlyMates across the organisation to better understand their needs. The company needed to address the regional, cultural and social differences within its global employee base. This involved one-on-one conversations and confidential



Staff work in the Flylodge quarantine house during lockdown. From left: senior data engineer Dan Ladd, business intelligence specialist Cooper Tilton and data scientist David Herook

employee surveys. Equipped with this information, Kelly and her team created different personas around which to tailor programmes. These personas included: parents; FlyMates living alone; couples, people with issues relating to sexual orientation; people with cultural or social differences; those with disabilities; carers for elderly or sick people; and those supporting family members financially.

A wide range of initiatives were launched. The company set up free confidential counselling services, with six psychologists based around the world available to FlyMates in every region.

# Highly Commended

Enginuity

## Shortlisted

→ Guide Dogs People and Wellbeing Strategy (PaWS)  
**Guide Dogs**

→ NWG Living Well  
**Northumbrian Water**

→ Progressing the mental health and wellbeing strategy at TSB  
**TSB**

They are complemented by teams of counsellors and wellness coaches in each region who speak local languages and are available 24/7. Training was offered to champions across the company to help them become mental health first aiders.

The pandemic made looking after employees' need for social interaction even more important. Online wellness workshops helped keep them connected, covering topics including laughter & anxiety management, financial planning, cooking, professional development and many more. The FlyLodge offered 12 employees with negative Covid-19 tests the chance to stay in a quarantine house during lockdown, and spend five days working remotely together, playing games and participating in theme nights

Forums were launched on topics such as BLM, the rise of Asian hate and LGBTQ discrimination. Disconnect days encouraged employees to switch off completely from work. FlyBetter days were paid volunteering days that built on Flywire's history of giving back to its local communities and enabled employees to get together during the pandemic.

## Achievements

Flywire's huge investment in its Mental Health & Wellness initiative has delivered tangible results. More than 75% of FlyMates worldwide are participating in at least one of the programmes, while 15% are accessing psychologist resources. In employee surveys, 93% say that their managers genuinely care about their wellbeing, 98% say that their manager allows them to be flexible in work whenever need arises and 89% believe that Flywire is a great place to work. The success of the strategy has also been reflected in strong employee retention rates and business performance. ■

## Judges' comments



The company has demonstrated the importance of mental wellness by appointing a C-level executive focusing on this topic. Well done to Kelly for taking the time to better understand the employees' individual needs, rather than assuming a one-size-fits-all approach.



Clear strategy with executive team support to provide resources and commitment to the strategy.



Embedded a range of support, both reactive and preventative, to support colleagues. I really like the disconnect days for colleagues to recharge and re-set.