

**Press release
2 August 2016**

**Employers struggling to effectively manage an ageing workforce,
shows research from GRiD**

Research* from Group Risk Development (GRiD) shows that 53% of employers have taken no steps to meet the needs of an ageing workforce. Only 7% have refocused their health, wellbeing and absence-management procedures to manage those with age-related conditions, and only 2% continue to provide Group Risk benefits for those aged over 65.

We have never had greater employment**, and 50-64 year-olds now make up 27% of the total workforce. This is to be celebrated with people living and working longer but an ageing workforce can bring its own challenges. Coupled with the removal of the default retirement age, employers have had to consider how best to look after their workforce as a whole and for longer, and the research indicates that some are struggling with how to accommodate the different needs they may have.

However, employers may not be aware that a lot of help is available via Group Risk protection policies (employer-sponsored life assurance, income protection and critical illness). The added-value services that come along with these policies can offer a huge amount of support tailored to the needs of all generations, from vocational rehabilitation services to help people stay in work, help with modifications, right through to help with managing chronic conditions.

Katharine Moxham, spokesperson for GRiD says, "Group Risk isn't just there to offer financial support. Although that can be a great benefit for many, it can actually offer numerous areas of practical support which are valuable across the board. Different generations can have different needs, and the services offered alongside Group Risk policies are flexible and invaluable for employers looking to create an inclusive and supportive work environment."

Some employers are clearly embracing the needs of their older workforce. 24% have introduced flexible working initiatives. The most popular step, 11% have introduced job sharing and 10% have modified roles and procedures to accommodate older workers' needs. So while some employers have been proactive at looking at areas related to the actual job, such as modifying working patterns and training, they have been slower to focus on health & wellbeing initiatives.

Katharine Moxham goes on to say, %Employers are legally obliged to make certain employee benefits available, such as pensions. Other benefits may never be accessed, but Group Risk really is the unsung hero of the employee benefits canon. Employers that are looking to extend their benefits to this demographic would do well to look closely at them and embrace what they can offer.+

- Ends .

Research

* Group Risk Annual Employer Research, conducted in September 2015 among 501 UK businesses with between 5 and 1,000 employees. Research was conducted by Lightspeed Research for Group Risk Development (GRiD).

What steps have you taken to ensure that you can meet the needs of an ageing workforce?

We have introduced flexible working initiatives	119	24%
We have introduced job sharing	55	11%
We have refocused our health, wellbeing and absence initiatives in order to better manage those staff with chronic or age-related conditions	35	7%
We have modified roles and/or procedures to accommodate older workersneeds	52	10%
We have introduced different working patters (eg more frequent breaks)	50	10%
We have modified production lines/machinery/workstations	17	3%
We have introduced training for older workers to ensure they feel as up to speed as younger staff	33	7%
We have done nothing	266	53%
We continue to provide Group Risk insured benefits for workers over age 65	12	2%
Total	501	100%

Nb Respondents could answer more than one, hence the percentage will exceed 100%

**[ONS 15 June 2016](#)
[50-64 year-olds now make up 27% of the total UK workforce](#)

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Notes for editors

About GRiD



Founded in 1998, Group Risk Development (GRiD) encourages awareness and uptake of corporate group protection benefits . income protection, group life insurance and critical illness cover . on behalf of its members which include insurers, reinsurers and intermediary businesses. Under the chairmanship of Lee Lovett, Head of Business Development UK and Ireland Life, Munich Re, GRiD aims to enhance the industry's profile among media and stakeholder groups. The Group provides a collective voice to Government and participates in industry wide initiatives such as the qualification in Group Risk launched jointly with the Chartered Insurance Institute. In May 2009, the Group appointed its first dedicated spokesperson, Katharine Moxham, to provide expert media comment on a full range of group risk issues.

www.grouprisk.org.uk

Follow Katharine Moxham on Twitter @KMoxham