

# Firms urged to prioritise employee wellbeing 5/1/2016

By Guardian Reporter

MAJORITY (75 per cent) of high performing companies measure employee health status as a key aspect of their overall risk management strategy and pursue active wellness programmes to mitigate health risks and corresponding cost of health care.

Speaking to The Guardian over the weekend in Dar es Salaam, sector expert Bhakti Shah who is the Managing Director at ImpactAfya that delivers corporate wellness solutions, said the health status of your staff directly influences their work behaviour, attendance and their overall job performance.

"Therefore would it not make sense to have a strategy for your employee well-being?" she queried.

According to her, companies can turn employee wellness into competitive advantage; "good businesses addresses significant problems by applying evidence based strategies that place their human resource as the most valuable asset," she said.

The World Economic Forum Report on the 'New Discipline of Workplace Wellness' states, an effective wellness programme has three key components, first, it should be based on robust metrics, secondly it should be guided by a strategic vision and thirdly, it should comprise of a portfolio of activities that modify and reinforce healthy habits at workplace

"To reduce health risks, the first step is to measure the health status and then developing and promoting intervention strategies based on this data," said the health

expert.

She said employee health assessment is the first step to improving an individual's health.

"It gives the employees ability to focus their attention to improve their health and direct them to the most relevant services," she added.

Biometric assessments such as Blood Pressure, Body Mass Index, Blood Sugar and Cholesterol further enhance the HRA and together they provide an excellent metrics to measure and prevent.

She advised that companies create a 'culture of health' as a commitment to healthy lifestyles amongst employees and their families.

"Companies can do this by focusing on employee health risk reduction and maintenance of low health-risk as a key component," she summed up.