



What makes us healthy?

Jobs and income

Having good working conditions, fair contractual conditions, and stable employment that pays at least the real Living Wage all have a big impact on our health.

We all need good work, a level of control over our work and enough income to live healthily.



People who are unemployed or in low paid jobs are more likely to have physical and mental health issues, as well as lower self-esteem. ¹ **The benefits system can help with income but benefit sanctions can be particularly harmful to people's health.** ² People with lower incomes are more likely to report their health as 'bad' or 'very bad'.³



Inequality, discrimination and structural racism mean that some groups of people are more likely to experience unemployment and low pay, including people from black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds, disabled people and women. **These groups, and LGBT+ communities are also more likely to experience discrimination and harassment in the workplace.**



“The Living Wage means for me that I get to enjoy a better quality of life not just for me but also for my family. I also feel that my employers really value me and the work that I’m doing.”

Rehana Begum, Centre Manager for Aspire and Succeed, Local Conversation in Lozells

“We have worked with our learning-disabled employees to produce a new employment e- booklet to make HR processes more accessible. This document could be life changing for many learning-disabled employees because it will increase opportunities for secure work, and it will help organisations employ people with a diversity of skills and talents.”

Mandy Haigh, Manager, LEEP1, Active Communities



People with the lowest incomes would need to spend **almost three-quarters of their disposable income on food** to follow Public Health England's healthy eating advice, compared to 6% for the wealthiest 10%. ⁴

Black and minority ethnic women are around twice as likely as white workers to be employed in insecure jobs. ⁵



1. UCL Institute of Health Equity and Public Health England, *Promoting good quality jobs to reduce health inequalities*, 2015
2. London School of Economics, *Benefits Sanctions are harmful and ineffective*, 2018
3. Health Foundation, *Relationship between income and health*, 2021
4. Scott, J Sutherland, J and Taylor, A, *Affordability of the UK's Eatwell Guide*, 2018
5. Trade Union Congress, *BME women are twice as likely to be in insecure jobs as white workers*, 2020