

# Why 'Wellbeing' & Not 'Well-being'?

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The World Health Organisation (WHO) and the Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion (1986) define health as:

*"...a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity"* (Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion, 1986)

So why 'wellbeing' and not 'well-being'? The National Wellbeing Service Ltd notes the Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion, 1986, and is in agreement with the following statement made by the scholarly [International Journal of Wellbeing](#):

*The decision to close the hyphenated gap between 'well' and 'being' is intentionally forward looking. We know that in some disciplines (e.g. philosophy) wellbeing is still hyphenated. A cursory glance over journals from other disciplines demonstrates that many of them are already making the transition to dropping the hyphen. We expect that the hyphen will eventually disappear from all disciplines because of how the term is usually used. Both 'well-being' and 'wellbeing' most often refer to the general subject or topic of what makes a life go well for someone; they both tend to include consideration of things that makes peoples' lives go better and worse. To avoid confusion about when 'well-being' means the opposite of ill-being and when it means the topic of what makes a life go well for someone, we propose the following. 'Wellbeing' should to refer to the topic of what makes a life go well for someone and 'well-being' should refer to the more specific concept – the opposite of ill-being.*

Healthy  
Workplaces

Manage



stress



Healthy workplaces manage stress