



BUSINESS LEADERS
PARTNERSHIP

MENTAL WELLBEING IN THE WORKPLACE



AWARENESS
WELLNESS
THERAPY
BENEFITS
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GRIEF
STIGMA
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TRAUMA
IQ
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PSYCHOLOGY
SUICIDE
POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS
PSYCHOLOGICAL
EMOTIONS
DRUGS
COGNITIVE
ATTITUDE
TREATMENT
PHOBIA
GENETIC
ANXIETY
GRIEF
STRESS
BIPOLAR
CLINICAL
DEPRESSION
ANOREXIA
OPTIMIST
UNHAPPY
MENTAL
HEALTH
SELF HARM

2017 Edition

FOREWORD

Having good mental health is integral to how we feel about our job, how we perform and how we interact with colleagues, customers and clients. With one in four employees experiencing the challenge of mental ill-health and its effect on their wellbeing, motivation and performance; understanding and supporting our colleagues towards better mental health should be a staff welfare priority, and a business priority.

The purpose of this guide is to provide information to help all businesses understand the importance of good mental health in the workplace. It gives a brief overview to help organisations to consider their current practice as well as advice and signposting links to sources of support. But its main aim is to get managers and employees to talk openly about mental health issues, to improve the workplace culture and create and maintain a healthy workforce with all the benefits that brings.



DR PHILIP SMITH MBE

CHAIR

MILTON KEYNES BUSINESS LEADERS PARTNERSHIP

WHAT IS MENTAL HEALTH?

Good mental health is the mental and emotional state in which we feel able to cope with the normal stresses of everyday life. It includes our emotional, psychological and social wellbeing and affects how we think, feel, and act.

If we are feeling good about ourselves at work we can interact well with colleagues, work productively and make a valued contribution to our team and workplace.

Good mental health is more than the absence of a mental disorder, it is a state of wellbeing in which the individual realises his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, work productively and fruitfully and is able to make a contribution to community (World Health Organisation 2008 www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs220/en).

It doesn't mean that we will never experience feelings or situations that we find difficult, but we have more resilience to cope when times are tough. Mental ill-health can include common disorders (including anxiety, depression and obsessive compulsive disorder OCD), personality disorders, psychoses and eating disorders or disorders related to substance misuse (alcohol and drugs).

WHY IS MENTAL HEALTH SO IMPORTANT?

Mental ill-health is one of the biggest causes of sickness absence and health-related productivity losses in UK organisations. Mental ill-health represents almost a quarter of all ill-health in the UK and is the largest single cause of disability.



MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES ARE IMPORTANT IN THE WORKPLACE BECAUSE:

1. 1 in 4 people of working age have a diagnosable mental health condition.
2. Each year mental ill-health costs the economy £70 billion through lost productivity, social benefits and healthcare.
3. More than 15 million days were lost to stress, depression and anxiety in 2014 – an increase of 24% since 2009.
4. 19% of long term sickness absence in England is attributed to mental ill-health.

Promoting good mental health can boost productivity and lower sickness absence thereby improving the workplace culture. The majority of people living and coping with a mental health condition can continue to work productively.



Supporting mental health in the workplace is about good business practice, staff that have positive mental health are more productive- a positive approach to mental health can see a significant impact on business performance.

THE CHALLENGE

Despite mental ill-health being very common, we can find it difficult to talk about, believing it be too personal and complex. And there is still a stigma associated with mental health problems, often through a general lack of our understanding in society about it. Staff might be happy to tell a colleague about a physical injury they've sustained but are probably less comfortable talking at work about their mental health. Consequently when it comes to experiencing their own changes in mental health, people can keep it to themselves through fear of being treated differently or being judged.

It is important to create a culture in every business that promotes positive attitudes towards mental health, by helping people better manage mental health challenges and alleviating mental ill-health in the workplace.

GOOD MENTAL HEALTH IS GOOD FOR PEOPLE AND FOR BUSINESS

As well as the benefits good mental health brings to individuals in their personal life, it is also good for business. Employees with good mental health and wellbeing tend to have better performance, productivity and attendance at work, with increased commitment and job satisfaction.

For businesses this translates into reduced staff absenteeism, improved staff retention and economic performance. It makes good sense for employers and managers to understand these benefits and support and encourage staff to maintain good mental health and wellbeing, as well as putting policies in place before challenges arise.



LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

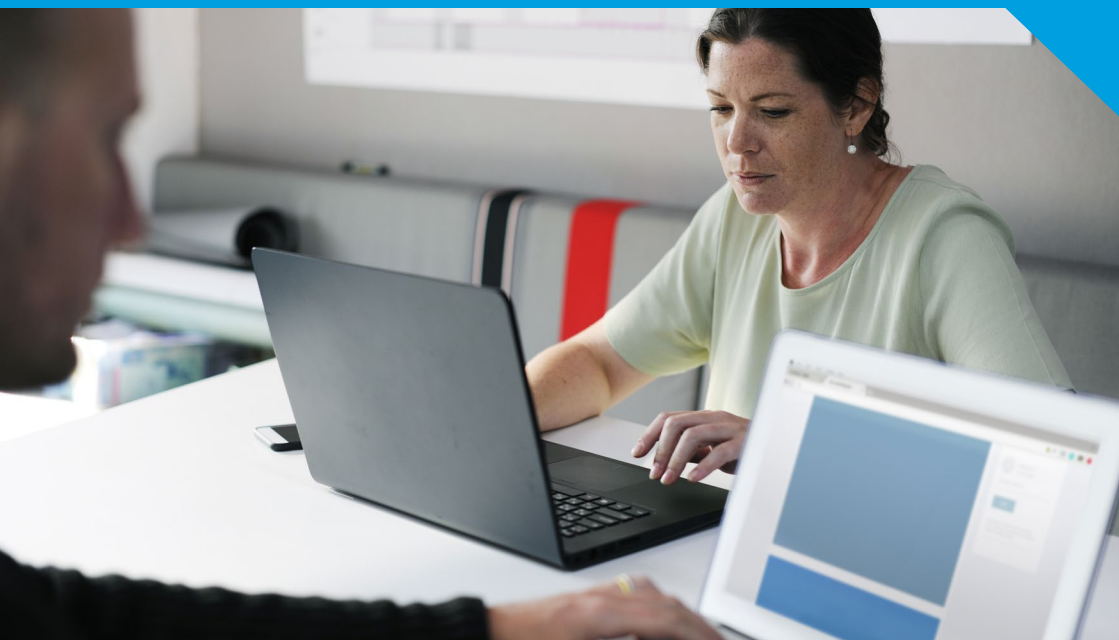
All employers have a legal responsibility under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 to ensure the health, safety and welfare at work of their employees. This 'duty of care' includes responsibility for minimising the risk of stress-related illness or injury to employees. Mental illness can be classed as a disability and is covered by the Equality Act 2010.

Organisations that take a positive, proactive approach to mental health can benefit from:

- Attracting the best talent
- More engaged and motivated staff
- Retaining staff, less turnover
- Reduction in absence
- Improved professional reputation

(BITC 2016)

<https://wellbeing.bitc.org.uk/all-resources/toolkits/mental-health-employers>



WHAT CAN YOU DO TO PROMOTE POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH IN THE WORKPLACE?

- Tackle stigma and discrimination around mental health
- Promote awareness of mental health issues within your organisation
- Create a culture where employees feel they can talk to you about their concerns or signposting staff if they are unable to talk to their employers
- Encourage a good work/life balance
- Ensure employees have manageable workload and control over their work
- Ensure staff have the right skills for the job
- Train all existing and new managers on mental health, your plans and build their confidence in supporting staff with mental health problems
- Promote positive working relationships and social activities
- Have an attitude that starts at the top of an organisation that it is ok to talk about and seek support for mental health needs

Maintaining good mental health is also assisted by many factors, including having clear job roles, responsive line managers, a healthy approach to diet and exercise, and many other factors. Learning about mental health can enable managers to support and reduce mental health problems in employees.

60% of employees say they'd feel more motivated and more likely to recommend their organisation as a good place to work if their employer took action to support mental health and wellbeing.

(Source: Mind)



CREATE A POSITIVE CULTURE AND PROMOTE FIVE WAYS TO WELLBEING IN YOUR WORKPLACE

A review of the most up-to-date evidence suggests that building the following five actions into our day-to-day lives is important for wellbeing: Be Active; Keep Learning; Give; Connect; and Take Notice

**Be
Active**

Do what you can.
Enjoy what you do.
Move your mood.

**Keep
Learning**

Embrace new
experiences. See
opportunities. Surprise
yourself.

Give

Your time.
Your words. Your
presence.

Connect

Talk and listen.
Be there.
Feel connected.

**Take
Notice**

Remember the
simple things that
give you joy.

Evidence suggests there are five steps we can all take to improve our mental wellbeing. If you give them a try you may feel happier, more positive and able to get the most from life.

**For more information or to find out how you can
incorporate 5 Ways into your life please visit:
www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/5waysmk**



WHO CAN I CONTACT?

The Milton Keynes Public Health team has launched Work Well MK, an easily accessible information hub aiming to support workplaces in MK of all sizes to maximise the health and well-being of their employees. Here you will find ways and links to resources for workplace wellbeing.

www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/public-health/work-well-mk

FOR MORE DETAILED INFORMATION ON:

TACKLING STIGMA

www.time-to-change.org.uk/take-action/work-place

England's biggest programme to end the stigma and discrimination faced by people with mental health problems works with organisations, engaging them on the issue and generating tools and resources for them. More than 260 organisations have made a public commitment to tackle mental health stigma by signing the pledge, including BAE Systems, British Gas, BT, Channel 4, E-ON, Lloyds TSB, and PepsiCo.

MENTAL HEALTH TOOLKIT FOR EMPLOYERS

wellbeing.bitc.org.uk/all-resources/toolkits/mental-health-employers

Produced in May 2016 by Forster Communications for Business in the Community in association with PHE this toolkit has been designed for employers and provides a wide range of information relating to mental health. The toolkit provides eight steps and covers support and training, managing mental health, providing the right support and helping people recover.



WORKPLACE HEALTH MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng13

This guideline covers how to improve the health and wellbeing of employees, with a focus on organisational culture and the role of line managers.

MENTAL WELLBEING AT WORK

www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ph22

Evidence-based recommendations on promoting mental wellbeing at work.

MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID (MHFA) TRAINING

www.mhfaengland.org

Mental Health First Aid is an educational course which teaches people to recognise the signs and symptoms of mental health issues, provide help on a first aid basis, and signpost for further support.

MINDFUL EMPLOYER

www.mindfulemployer.net/about

MINDFUL EMPLOYER is a UK-wide initiative run by Workways, a service of Devon Partnership NHS Trust. Developed, led and supported by employers, the MINDFUL EMPLOYER initiative is aimed at increasing awareness of mental health at work and providing support for businesses in recruiting and retaining staff.
Tel: 01392 677064

LOCAL SUPPORT:

MIND BLMK

www.mind-blmk.org.uk

Mental health and wellbeing charity for Bedfordshire Luton and Milton Keynes, providing community support and service, training, consultancy and information.

RETHINK

www.rethink.org/services-groups/services/milton-keynes-community-support-service

Local community support service to aid recovery and improve wellbeing in the community.

IAPT

www.cnwl.nhs.uk/service/milton-keynes-talking-therapies

Milton Keynes Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) is a free, confidential NHS service providing psychological treatment for depression and anxiety disorders. Referrals can be made by a GP or through self-referral at www.talkforchange.org.uk

SAMARITANS

08457 90 90 90 (24 hours a day)

Available 24 hours a day to provide confidential emotional support for people who are experiencing feelings of distress, despair or suicidal thoughts.
www.samaritans.org

