



# Mental health toolkit for employers

April 2017

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## Introduction

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Mental health is an integral part of how we feel about our jobs, how well we perform and how well we interact with colleagues, candidates, and clients. With 1 in 6 employees currently experiencing mental health problems, mental health is an essential business concern. There is a strong relationship between levels of staff wellbeing and motivation and performance. Taking a positive, proactive approach to mental health at work can help you grow your staff and your organisation.

Your journey to a workplace that leads on good mental health starts here.

The ambition of this toolkit is to help your organisation support the mental health and wellbeing of your employees. It will help you take positive actions to build a culture that champions good mental health and provide a greater understanding for how to help those who need more support.

There has been a lot written about how to tackle mental ill health and promote wellbeing in the workplace. This toolkit will make knowing how to act simple; it will help you pick out the best free resources that are most useful to you and your team, and help you develop an approach that fits the needs of your staff and organisation.

Every organisation has an opportunity to support and develop a mentally healthy workforce and thankfully it doesn't need to be complicated – this toolkit will help you understand and act, step by step.

*“As someone who runs an SME, the content has been very helpful, especially the way it is drawn together at the end. The information is excellent and has helped me to generate a plan of action. It has given me plenty to think about and act on.”*

*Robert Powell, CEO, ICS Ltd, London*

## About Mental Health (1)

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What do we mean by mental health? Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social wellbeing. It affects how we think, feel, and act. Staying in positive mental health allows people to:

- Realise their full potential
- Cope with the pressures of life
- Work productively
- Have positive relationships
- Make good choices

Being in good mental health is therefore important to individuals, organisations and society and adopting approaches that help keep us in good health, and being resilient to the pressures of life, is essential. Mental health, like physical health, can fluctuate on a spectrum from good to poor.

Mental health problems can affect any of us irrespective of age, personality, or background. They can appear because of experiences in both our personal and working lives – or they can just happen. Even though it is very common, some people still find it difficult to talk about. It can seem too personal or complex. There is still a stigma associated with mental health problems, through a lack of understanding. You might feel very happy to tell a colleague about a physical injury you've sustained, but when it comes to changes in your mental health, people can keep this to themselves through fear of being treated differently or judged.

It is important to create a culture in every business that promotes positive mental health and helps prevent people from experiencing mental ill health or helps them better manage mental health problems. As you will see, one of the key ways to do this is to ensure everyone can talk about mental health (see Step 5) but 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.

However, even with the most robust preventative plans, it is likely some people will still experience mental health problems, for a range of factors, so it is also essential for every business to know how to provide support. This might include knowing how to spot the early warning signs, being confident to signpost colleagues to appropriate support, how to adjust someone's work or role, and ensuring there is a process to help people return to work smoothly after a sickness absence, *see Step 6 and Step 7*.

## About Mental Health (2)

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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



# Step 1 – Making a Commitment

## Lead from the top

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Prevention and early intervention are the most effective ways to support workforce mental health, rather than tackling problems after they arise. The steps needed to encourage this cultural shift are, in most cases, simple – but they need to be driven at a senior level to help implement lasting change.

Every business must understand that driving a culture where mental health is prioritised cannot be achieved where it is an add-on but only when it is a fundamental part of how the business is run. Unless leaders within your organisation visibly act to promote good mental health then any efforts to affect an organisational change will be undermined.

By leading from the top and agreeing actions at a senior level, employees who will drive the changes will feel that they have the support and authority to tackle stigma and promote positive mental health. Employees are also more likely to open about their own mental health if there is a clear signal from the business leader or senior management.

### **ACTION**

- Appoint a 'Mental Health Champion' who is responsible for your mental health policy
- If your organisation is large enough, these Champions should be supported by a working group that develops ideas and seeds them through the organisation.
- The Mental Health Champion can create a Mental Health Plan (See Step 2) by following all steps in this toolkit and making regular updates on progress.
- Ensure mental health and is raised as part of each Board meeting or at least every six months with senior team reviewing progress.
- Ensure mental health is communicated across your company to normalise the topic and promote positive, preventative approaches to good mental health (see more on this in Step 5).

**TIME TO CHANGE** is the UK's biggest programme to end stigma and discrimination faced by people with mental health problems. The programme is run by the charities Mind and Rethink Mental Illness. It aims to empower people to challenge stigma and speak openly about their own mental health experiences, as well as changing the attitudes and behaviours of the wider public.

### **THE ROLE OF LINE MANAGERS**

The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) research consistently identifies good-quality people management, particularly by line managers, as one of the core drivers of employee engagement, wellbeing, and good mental health. However, good line management cannot exist in a vacuum. Only support and strategic leadership from the top will create organisational cultures where management styles based on openness and mutual respect can flourish. The senior management team will influence how managers throughout an organisation see their jobs and the extent to which they place a priority on people management. *Learn more about line managers and their training needs in Step 4.*

## Make a Pledge

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If you can't talk openly about something, you can't manage it. Therefore, more organisations need to be speaking publicly and across the business to help normalise discussions around mental health and end stigma around mental health at work. Every plan to promote good mental health and tackle mental health problems requires a public facing commitment that people can buy in to and for which organisations can hold themselves responsible for.

### **ACTION**

- Sign the Time to Change employers pledge, and work with Time to Change to identify what immediate actions you can commit to as a business
- The development of the pledge action plan should be led by your new Mental Health Champion but signed by your CEO or equivalent.
- Ensure your pledge includes a stated commitment that you can share publically and with all your employees - this is often the first step any business will take and provides a vital springboard into further, long-term action by simply stating a commitment to act
- Revisit your pledge on a regular basis (at least every 6 months) to ensure you are progressing against your commitments. If you are exceeding your goals then think about what other actions you can commit to.

## Engage for Success

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The leaders of any organisation play a vital role in affecting the culture and helping to ensure everyone can live the values. The way senior leaders behave influences how everyone else does through the organisation.

Engage for Success is a growing movement, promoting employee engagement as a better way to work that benefits individual employees, teams and whole organisations. It has identified four key drivers for engagement – having a strong narrative about the organisation from the senior team, engaged managers, employees given a voice and organisational integrity.

## Step 2 – Build your Approach

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### Understand the Law

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Putting plans in place isn't just a good thing to do; it helps ensure you are following your legal obligations as an employer. It is important to understand the law and ensure you are compliant.

If someone has a mental health problem that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to perform normal day-to-day activities, they are considered disabled and will be protected from discrimination under the Equality Act 2010.

The Act makes it unlawful for an employer to treat a disabled person less favourably for a reason relating to their disability, without a justifiable reason. It also requires that businesses make reasonable adjustments to ensure that a disabled person can carry out their job.

Employers also have duties under health and safety legislation to assess the risk of stress-related ill health arising from work activities and to take measures to control that risk.

#### **USEFUL RESOURCES**

- Direct Gov has more information on the Equality Act 2010:
- The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) has published a range of guides for employers to help them understand their obligations under the Act: [EHRC: Guides for employers](#)

#### **ACTION**

Understand your legal obligations as an employer

- Read up on the Equality Act 2010 and make a note of any areas you have concerns about, before developing your understanding further and making changes in your approach.
- ACAS lists several suggested adjustments, ACAS: 'Promoting positive mental health at work'



## Deciding where to Start

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It is important to understand the requirements within your business so you can set meaningful objectives. The size of your business, along with such factors as the type of industry you work in and the services you provide will all affect the approach you need to take.

It is important to understand your employees and how they can benefit from a better approach to mental health, along with the pressure points you and your employees currently face. It is also worth seeing how much benefit your business could receive from investing in mental health, to help assess the scale of the programme you want to create and help you to prioritise your options.

### ACTIONS

#### Understand your employees

- Undertake a survey with your employees to understand their pressures and aspirations. For smaller organisations, this might be a simple conversation.
- If you already run a survey with your employees, build in questions on mental health and general wellbeing.

#### Understand the rewards

- Improve your understanding about the costs of poor employee health and wellbeing to your organisation and create a business case for acting, along with an understanding on the return you will get from this investment.

#### Assess your approach so far

- If you have already introduced initiatives to promote mental health, assess how far these efforts are going by taking Time to Change's mini health check. This will help you to review your practices and then plan for the next steps.

#### Set your goals

- The three steps above will help you to set clear objectives for your mental health programme that you can measure against over time. You can prioritise actions and 'park' less important issues for later.

### TOOLS

Tools to help you understand your employees needs better:

- Survey Monkey provides a range of free employee satisfaction feedback templates
- Happy People offer a free staff survey tool to find out how your staff feel

### USEFUL RESOURCES

A resource for bosses, line managers and HR professionals:

- Mind's: How to take stock of mental health in your workplace - It provides practical advice on how to collect vital information about your employees' wellbeing in a joined-up and comprehensive way.

## Build your Programme

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Once you have identified and prioritised your objectives, they can be put together into a plan for the year ahead for your business. The remaining sections of this toolkit will help you to build your actions, and they do not need to be complicated. As you will see, there is a lot that doesn't cost money and can be adapted for any business (from free toolkits to piggybacking on national awareness days).

Many businesses will find the Workplace Wellbeing Charter a useful starting point in building their approach. It provides employers with an easy and clear overall approach to make workplaces a supportive and productive environment in which employees can flourish.

Once you have built the plan, it is important everyone knows about it – the communication of your initiatives is key to their success. If employees are not aware of them or do not participate in them, they have failed.

### ACTIONS

1. Make sure mental health and wellbeing are included in your policies covering areas such as:
  - Absence and sickness
  - Health and safety
  - Working time / TOIL / overtime
  - Performance management and personal development
  - Recruitment, change management and redundancy
  - Equality, diversity, inclusion, bullying, harassment, whistle blowing
2. Create a positive mental health plan
  - Develop a scheduled programme of activity to promote good mental health and introduce measures to assist those with poor mental health, by analysing the results of your need and assessing your strategic priorities.
  - Use elements from the rest of this toolkit to help build this plan and make use of the Workplace Wellbeing Charter to help provide the framework for your approach
  - Ensure your senior team is fully bought into the plan and feel confident they can help implement it.
3. Communicate this programme to your employees
  - Consider 'launching' your programme with an event with employees or by ensuring the approach is communicated in team / company meetings and in line manager catch-ups.
  - See more about communicating your programme in Step 5.

*Whatever the size of your organisation, you must start somewhere*

## Step 3: Positive Culture

### Set up the Culture

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A workplace environment and working culture that promotes wellbeing can reduce the risk of mental health problems. This is reinforced by cultivating an open, supportive organisation where people understand the importance of wellbeing and feel able to talk about physical and mental health.

Many of the factors that support workplace wellbeing are simply good management practices, including:

- Actively and transparently engaging and communicating with employees
- Preventing bullying and discrimination
- Ensuring your staff can use their skills and perform their work to the best of their abilities
- Preventing bullying and discrimination

Work overload, job insecurity, poor career progression, poor quality of work and poor communication all have a strong negative influence on employee mental health. Supportive supervision, whether from managers or co-workers, as well as positive interactions with customers/clients has positive benefits.

#### **ACTIONS**

Ensure you have effective and positive management standards in place. This includes:

- Regular reviews – structured appraisal systems (as well as informal catch- ups) help you see if employees are happy in their job, to discuss any issues and determine what support they might need.
- Setting objectives – having clearly defined goals, roles and responsibilities support mental health and wellbeing. Employees should be involved in setting their own objectives.
- Work hours – everyone needs a healthy work-life balance. Reasonable hours, agreed deadlines, offline time and flexible working can all reduce stress and boost wellbeing.

### Encourage Healthy Behaviours

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Simple steps like taking a lunch break, exercising (including going for a walk), getting enough sleep, taking time out to relax and eating a healthy balanced diet can help our mental health.

Health and wellbeing programmes, events, activities and awareness campaigns can all help make your staff happier and healthier. They can also help to build emotional resilience — which helps people deal with difficult or stressful situations both in and out of work. These initiatives are always most successful when senior management are involved, and act as role models.

## ACTIONS

### Get physical:

- Encourage walking and cycling to work
- Organise sports events
- Subsidise gym memberships (you may be able to negotiate something with your local gym so that it doesn't cost your business)
- Provide advice and information on sleep, sensible drinking and how to quit smoking
- Encourage employees to take the One You quiz – see page 28

### Be sociable:

- Organise company events and activities, with or without a health element, to strengthen relationships between staff.

### Give back:

- There's strong evidence that volunteering and being involved in the community is good for wellbeing and mental health. Encourage staff to volunteer year round

### Provide a healthy environment: - Wellbeing can be influenced by factors such as:

- Air quality
- Lighting
- Temperature
- Noise
- Layout
- Food offer

### Develop wellbeing activities:

- Take part in national physical exercise initiatives, such as Cycle to Work day

### Develop a knowledge resource for all employees:

- Host all relevant free resources in one, easily accessible place for all employees (including web links to trusted sites) and regularly communicate this resource to your employees.

## Step 4: Support and Training

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### A structure that works

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To implement your approach to mental health, it is important to have structures in place that allow for information on mental health to be shared with all, for feedback to be passed back up to the top and for everyone to feel there is a structure in place that will promote their health and protect them if they become unwell.

The structure needs to ensure that everyone can access all the organisation's information on mental health, and allow them to easily find what their rights and responsibilities are.

### The Importance of Training

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An essential part of making this work is training employees so they have the competence and confidence to bring the mental health policies and programmes to life.

Training for line managers is particularly important as they are the ones who balance the aims of the organisation with staff health and wellbeing. They are critical in driving change and may well be the first point of contact to notice when an employee is experiencing difficulties. They should be equipped with skills in effective leadership, workplace health, stress risk assessment, mental health awareness and the management of sickness absence. Intervention at an early stage may allow adjustments to be made to the workplace to enable the employee to continue with their work.

Training can take many forms: induction processes, staff handbook modules, specialist supervision, intranet hosted or even lunch and learns. Training can be internal but there are also a range of options for bringing in effective external support to deliver training to be better at understanding and responding to their own and others mental health issues.

Managers also have a vital role in making sure your approach reaches beyond members of the immediate team – it is important to ensure care is also given to remote workers, support staff, volunteers, and ancillary workers.

#### **ACTIONS**

##### **Get the right structures in place**

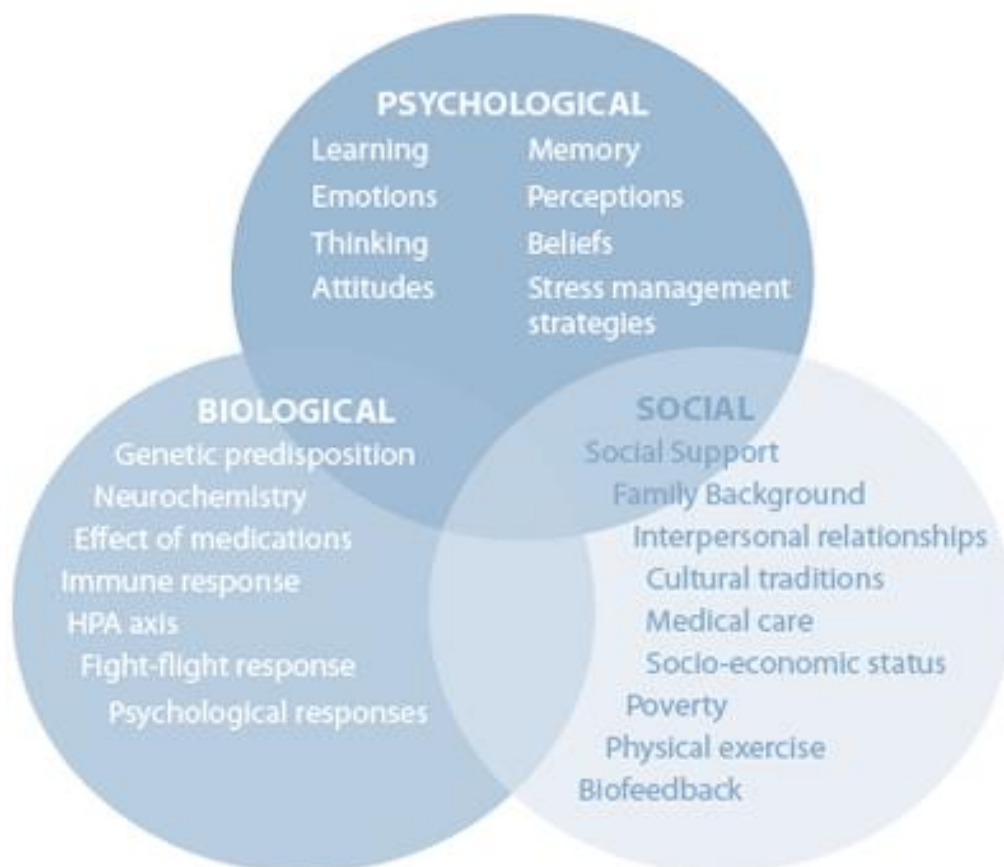
- Ensure there is a clear structure within your organisation for sharing of sensitive information on mental health and that everyone is aware of who they can speak to about their own mental health.
- Make sure any new employees are aware of your mental health policies and procedures by making positive references to them during their induction.

### Offer training on mental health

- Train all existing and new managers on mental health, your plans and to build their confidence in supporting staff with mental health problems.
- Ensure that supporting employee mental health is embedded within the line managers' job descriptions at every tier of the organisation and that they are aware it is a central part of their role.
- Ensure training is inclusive – record training sessions to share with remote workers.

### USEFUL RESOURCES

- Mental Health First Aid's line manager's resource provides helpful guidance and advice to employers who would like to improve how they support employees experiencing mental health issues and how they can improve mental health within the workplace
- CIPD's factsheets include guidance on performance appraisal and how individuals and line managers should engage in a dialogue about their performance and development and the support they need in their role



## Step 5: Managing Mental Health

### End the silence

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Making sure everyone can talk about mental health is an important step your business can take to help people manage it. Much progress has been made in reducing the stigma of mental health, but we still need to do more.

Despite many employees feeling their employer or line manager would be supportive if they shared a mental health issue, a significantly smaller number of people do disclose concerns. Some say this is because they fear discrimination.

A progressive approach to mental health encourages employees to be alert to their own health and to flag concerns and to share their concerns and issues before they become serious. This works best when staff feel they can do this without fear of judgment by colleagues. In turn this can have a positive impact on business performance.

Employees need to feel confident that they can be open about their mental health problems, to know that support is there if they need it and that anything shared would be in confidence.

### Manage common problems

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Feelings of stress and anxiety can be common but it is possible to manage them without them having an impact on an employee's ability to do their job. There are steps your business can take to provide the support that employees need. These include:

- Providing Information
- Flexible Working
- Reallocating Work
- Better Transparency
- Opportunities for Feedback

#### **ACTIONS**

##### Tackle stigma

- Ensure mental health can be discussed openly and without fear of judgement

##### Open the conversation

- Develop an internal communications approach or campaign to promote the importance of mental health in the organisation.
- National events like Mental Health Awareness Week (in May) can be good opportunities to launch your own events

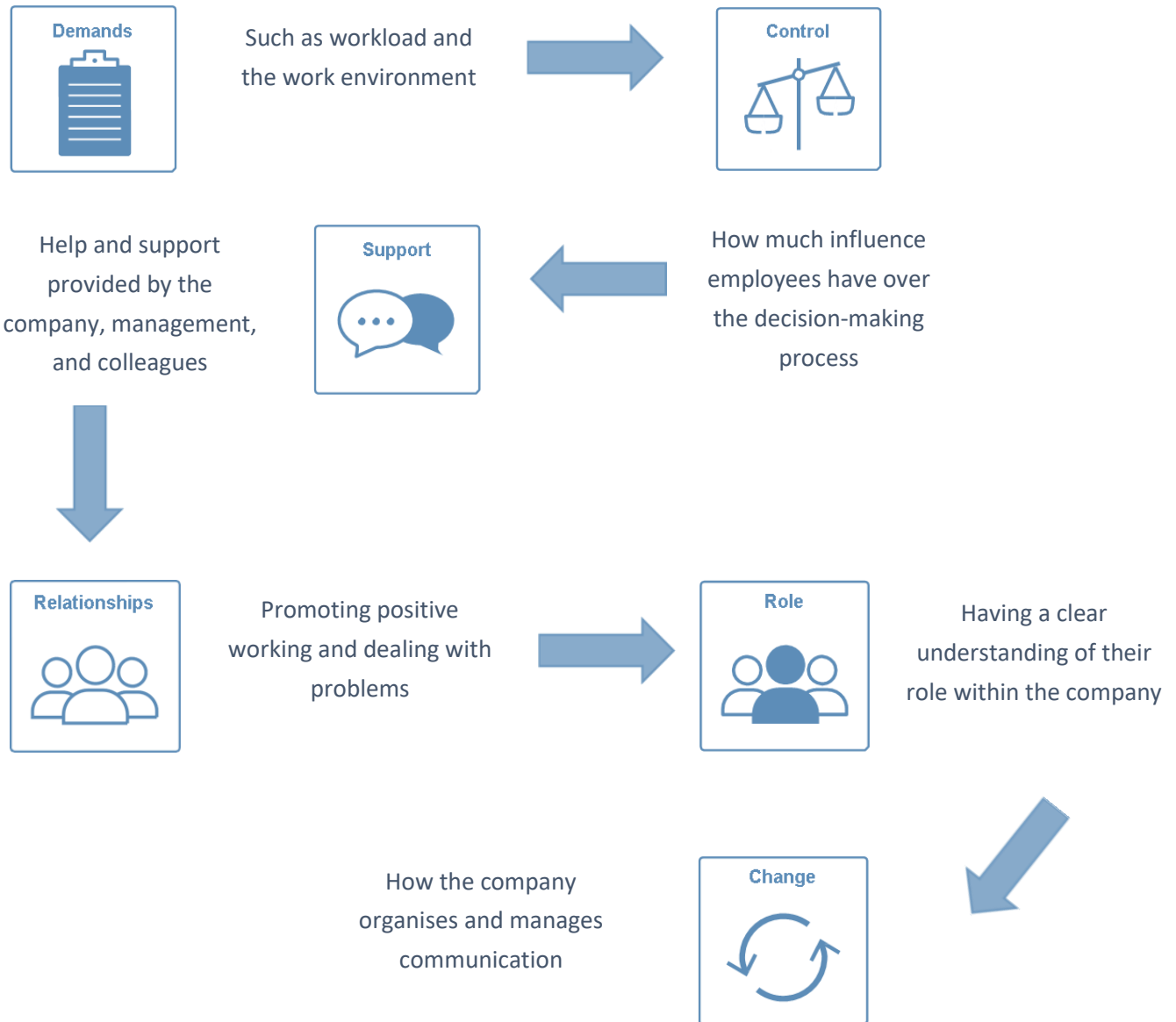
##### Adopt standards on stress

- Adopt the HSE Management Standards to reduce stress in your workplace.

##### Help manage wellness

- Develop Wellness Action Plans to help ensure employees can stay healthy or manage any mental health concerns that they are experiencing

## Six main causes of stress in the workplace



### USEFUL RESOURCES

- How to be mentally health at work – a guide from Mind
- Advice for individuals from Mind on dealing with stress
- Training, resources, and links from Acas on stress and mental health at work



## Step 6: Providing the Right Support

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The steps outlined so far will all help to promote the positive mental health of your employees. But even the most supportive workplaces can't prevent some people from experiencing mental health issues. Just as some people experience physical ill health, some will experience mental ill health.

*Early intervention is important. You can help by equipping all employees – but especially management and senior staff – with the knowledge to spot the signs that either they themselves or someone they know may be struggling, and to signpost them towards appropriate sources of support. You should also encourage staff to be open about their mental health, and to seek support when they need it.*

*Remember, though, that there are often no obvious outwards signs that somebody is experiencing a mental health problem. It's vital to maintain close contact and good communication so you know how people are really feeling. Symptoms will vary, as individual experiences of mental health problems are different, but there are some potential indicators to look out for. You can take steps to make sure you are engaged and ready to provide support when it is needed. See the link below which provides the tools to recognise Mental Health*

[http://www.mind.org.uk/media/44253/Managing\\_and\\_supporting\\_MH\\_at\\_work.pdf](http://www.mind.org.uk/media/44253/Managing_and_supporting_MH_at_work.pdf)

## Handling sensitive conversations

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It is important to make sure everyone knows what to do, and what not to do, when an employee or colleague begins to talk about their mental health. Build the skills and confidence to be able to approach someone who may be experiencing difficulties. Focus on the person, not the problem. Ask if they need any short-term adjustments to their work environment. They are the experts on their mental health, so they are best placed to know what they need.

### **ACTIONS**

Start by having an informal chat – but if there's a problem, plan a more formal meeting with the employee:

- Find a private place where you won't be interrupted – perhaps a neutral space outside work.
- Switch off your mobile!
- Ask open questions: "How are you doing now?", "You've seemed a bit withdrawn lately. Is anything the matter?".
- Give them time to answer, and listen to what they say – don't make assumptions.
- Give advice and support, where appropriate.
- Agree a plan of action and schedule a follow-up meeting.

You may not reach this stage in a single meeting – people may not open straight away. Don't worry – reassure them that your door is always open, and that the support is there if they need it. Remember, once a conversation has taken place about someone's mental health, it should be returned to see how the employee is progressing.

### **USEFUL RESOURCES**

- Acas has produced a guide to managing difficult conversations
- Friends Life produced a toolkit to help give everyone the confidence to talk, whether you are suffering yourself or believe someone would benefit from a conversation

## Knowing what support to offer

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If an employee is living with a medical condition, you have a legal responsibility to consider making “reasonable adjustments” to enable them to remain in work.

These might include:

- Flexible hours or home working
- Adjusting their job description and reassigning tasks
- Moving their workplace
- Providing extra training or mentoring

Most reasonable adjustments are simple and inexpensive, and are just good people management and part of your general duty of care to your employees. But in some cases, employees with a mental health condition may need further professional support. *Note that given the changing nature of mental health problems, these adjustments must be reviewed periodically to see if they are still appropriate or indeed necessary any longer.* If appropriate, encourage them to speak to their GP.

## Spot the signs

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- Does the individual appear overly stressed, disturbed, or distracted?
- Do they appear dazed, withdrawn or shutdown?
- Are they fidgety, restless, or jumpy?
- Are they talking incoherently or laughing incongruously?
- Do they seem over-excited, euphoric, irritable, or aggressive?
- Do they appear to be having illogical or irrational thought processes?
- Do they keep repeating themselves or obsessing?
- Do they appear to be taking information in?
- Do they seem to be responding to experiences, sensations, or people not observable by others?

### ACTIONS

#### Spot the signs

- Ensure senior team and all line managers are equipped to spot the signs that someone is experiencing a mental health problem or that they may need help.
- To do this, explore the training options outlined in Step 4.

#### Manage sensitive conversations

- Ensure you and all your managers are prepared with the knowledge for how to respond to employees that express concerns for their mental health.
- Also, be able to facilitate these conversations when signs of distress are spotted, to open the conversation on what support can be provided.

#### Provide the right support

- Ensure you have the support mechanisms in place to help anyone who is experiencing mental health, whether this is adjusting their workload, signposting them to your resources or even directing them to professional support.

## Employee Assistance Programmes or EAPs

An EAP is a benefit programme intended to help employees deal with personal problems that might adversely impact their job performance, health, and wellbeing. This includes issues such as relationship problems, money worries and other pressures.

Support is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, by telephone, although increasingly EAP providers are also providing their services through the internet. They also generally include short-term counseling and referral services for employees and their household members.

The Employee Assistance Professionals Association (EAPA) is the professional body for EAPs. Its website contains details of providers and consultants as well as news and information on employee wellbeing. You may also find that your insurance provider can provide an EAP as part of your package.

<http://www.eapa.org.uk/>

### OTHER USEFUL RESOURCES

<http://www.nhsemployers.org/your-workforce/retain-and-improve/staff-experience/health-work-and-wellbeing/protecting-staff-and-preventing-ill-health/supporting-line-managers/managers-guide-on-supporting-workplace-mental-health/supporting-staff-who-are-experiencing-mental-health-problems#1>

[http://www.mind.org.uk/media/43330/line\\_manager\\_Webinar\\_FAQs\\_final.pdf](http://www.mind.org.uk/media/43330/line_manager_Webinar_FAQs_final.pdf)

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/sites/default/files/what-works-for-you-new.pdf>

[http://www.acas.org.uk/media/pdf/l/a/Promoting\\_positive\\_mental\\_health\\_at\\_work%28SEPT2014%29.pdf](http://www.acas.org.uk/media/pdf/l/a/Promoting_positive_mental_health_at_work%28SEPT2014%29.pdf)

<https://www.cipd.co.uk/knowledge/culture/well-being/mental-health-support-report>



## Step 7: Helping People Recover

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### Absence and return to work.

Sometimes employees who experience mental health problems will need to take time off work to get better. Employers should provide the support people need while they're off sick and on their return to work. Adopting supportive policies will help you to reduce sick leave, retain valued employees and meet your legal obligations.

Your approach will be informed by the nature of the problem and the number of days spent away from work recovering. It is important to maintain close contact with anyone off sick, but not to put pressure on them to return before they are ready.

Tell your employees what they can expect from you to help them return to work. Make sure they understand their own contractual duties to you, including what procedures you require for absences from work. It is important to have a fair and consistent approach to return to work. The sooner you take positive action, the more likely it is that your employees can return to work successfully.

### ACTIONS

Understand your obligations as an employer

- Ensure you are familiar with all your legal obligations under the Equality Act (see Step 2).

Understand what resources are out there to help

- Turn to these support frameworks when an employee is off sick.

Follow the recommended support protocols

- Use the Fit for Work programme to support employees. (See Below)

Record sickness absences

- It is important to know the cause of sickness absence, in case it is work-related.

If it is, you can put in place organisational measures, i.e. modified work, including Reasonable adjustments that will help them and those who are sick in the future to return to work.

**Fit for Work** - This service, commissioned by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), provides occupational health advice and assessment to employers and employees. It is of particular value to SMEs that do not have their own occupational health provision. There is a telephone and online support service for employers, and an assessment and support service for employees. An employee can be referred to the Fit for Work service if they have been on sickness absence for four weeks. GPs can refer sooner if they feel that their patient is unlikely to return to work within the four weeks. The employee will receive an occupational health assessment over the phone and will be provided with a specially tailored return to work plan with recommendations on workplace adjustments. This will be sent to the employer after employee consent has been granted. Employers adopting treatment plans recommended by Fit to Work can claim a £500 tax rebate per employee, per year, on the cost of treatment

## Is there any other available support?

- Local authority public health teams can offer advice and support to employers looking to take the first steps on implementing workplace health programmes.
- Engagement with the local Job-centre Plus will enable local employers to take part in schemes to find work for people with health issues or disabilities.
- Organisations like the local Chamber of Commerce or the Federation of Small Businesses may be able to offer advice and support. Some trade associations and professional bodies, such as CIPD, also have advice and support on workplace health.
- If you work as a supplier for a large business then talk to them about the potential to access their staff health and wellbeing support.
- Remploy runs a free and confidential 'Workplace mental health support service', delivered in partnership with Access to Work.

<http://fitforwork.org/>



## Step 8: Going Further

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To achieve excellence in mental health, it may take time, but investing time in ongoing development of your approach will produce several rewards. Excellence means happier, healthier staff with greater productivity, morale and staff retention, and reduced absence. It means mental health and physical health being managed effectively and positively, as equals.

To keep building momentum, it is important to measure success, refine your approach to make it even more effective and regularly share progress and activities with employees. If you involve your employees in your programme, there is a collective sense of responsibility and a collective momentum to achieve the ambitions.

The importance of getting this right is increasing – it is likely that larger businesses will actively seek to collaborate more closely with organisations in their network or supply chain that take a proactive approach to promoting and improving mental health, as it shows they are committed to the long-term success of their business.

### MEASURE SUCCESS

- Note any differences in company approach to issues since implementation of the programme.
- Develop mechanisms for feedback and use existing wellbeing data through staff surveys, turnover and absence data, as well as participation rates in wellbeing activities.
- Assess whether you have a physically and mentally more robust workforce with a healthier lifestyle.
- Ensure that talking about and supporting mental health becomes a normal way of working by reviewing whether mental health conversation and management are part of everyday working practices.
- Make use of the Workplace Charter Standards to see how you have progressed against the plan you established in Step 2.

### REFINE YOUR APPROACH

- Adjust programmes as needed: Do you need more training for staff, more frequent communication, more regular initiatives such as wellbeing days?
- Include everyone: ensure your approach to mental health is inclusive of remote, temporary and contract workers.
- Ensure that everyone is empowered to contribute and feel that their views are listened to and acted on.
- Ensure commitment from all parties (senior management, employees, and their representatives).
- Ensure there are arrangements to identify those aspects of the work, organisation or environment that are known to be risk factors for work related stress, and place initiatives alongside these to protect your employees.

## Contact Details

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