

# Bolder Healthier Workplace Champions

## Mental Health Webinar

Birmingham Public Health 2022



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# Mental Health in Winter - a time to be alert!



Everyone has down days, but when someone is feeling low, or have been feeling worried for weeks or even months, it could be a sign of mental health issues.

In winter we often see people struggle more than in summer. Some of this can be because of SAD or seasonal affective disorder which [affects more than 2 million people in Britain](#). But also the festive season can be a lonely or difficult time for people without social networks and the end of year often is a time for reflection which isn't always positive.

People may be in more debt due to spending during the festive season, and sometimes there is a longer wait until the next pay day. This year there is the added pressure of the costs of heating.

So plenty of reasons to be a bit more alert about mental health at this time of year.

# What are mental health problems?



[Watch the video on YouTube](#)

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# What do we mean by mental health?

Mental health refers to cognitive, behavioural, and emotional well-being.

Looking after mental health can preserve a person's ability to enjoy life. Doing this involves balancing life activities, responsibilities, and efforts to achieve psychological resilience.

Stress, depression, and anxiety can all affect mental health and disrupt a person's routine.

## Poor Mental Health

Can affect daily living, relationships, and physical health.



Affects around 1 in 4 people every year



Can be caused by factors in people's lives, interpersonal connections, and physical factors.

# Mental health for employers toolkit

[Business in the Community](#) (BITC) has produced a [toolkit](#) to help organisations support the mental health and wellbeing of its employees. It aims to help employers take positive actions to build a culture that champions good mental health and provide a greater understanding of how to help those who need more support. They state:

“Mental health is an integral part of how we feel about our jobs, how well we perform and how well we interact with colleagues, customers and clients. With one in 6.8 people experiencing mental health problems in the workplace<sup>1</sup>, 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.”

# Mental health – key numbers

## The scale of the problem for employers



Mental health issues in the workforce cost UK employers up to **£45 billion** a year

This includes:



**£7 billion** in sickness absence



Presenteeism cost **£26.6 billion to £29.3 billion**



**£9 billion** in replacing staff who leave their jobs because of their mental health



**Mental health and employers**  
Refreshing the case for investment, Deloitte 2020

## The scale of the problem for employees

**2 in 5** employees report experiencing poor mental health symptoms related to work in the last year



**30%** of the UK workforce have been formally diagnosed with a mental health condition at some point in their life

**13%**

Just **13%** feel able to disclose a mental health issue to their line manager

**51%** of employees feel comfortable talking about mental health issues in the workplace



**62%** of managers faced situations where they put the interests of their organisation above the wellbeing of colleagues

# Understanding key terms

## Mental Health

Mental health is a state of mental and psychological wellbeing in which everyone realises their own potential, and can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to their community.

## Wellbeing

Wellbeing is defined by the Department of Health and Social Care as feeling good and functioning well, and comprises each individual's experience of their life and a comparison of life circumstances with social norms and values. Wellbeing can be both subjective and objective.

# Understanding key terms

**Mental wellbeing**, as defined by Mind, describes a dynamic mental state. An individual with good mental wellbeing is able to:

- Feel relatively confident in themselves and have positive self-esteem
- Feel and express a range of emotions
- Build and maintain good relationships with others
- Feel engaged with the world in general
- Live and work productively
- Cope with the daily stresses of life, including work related stress
- Adapt and manage in times of change

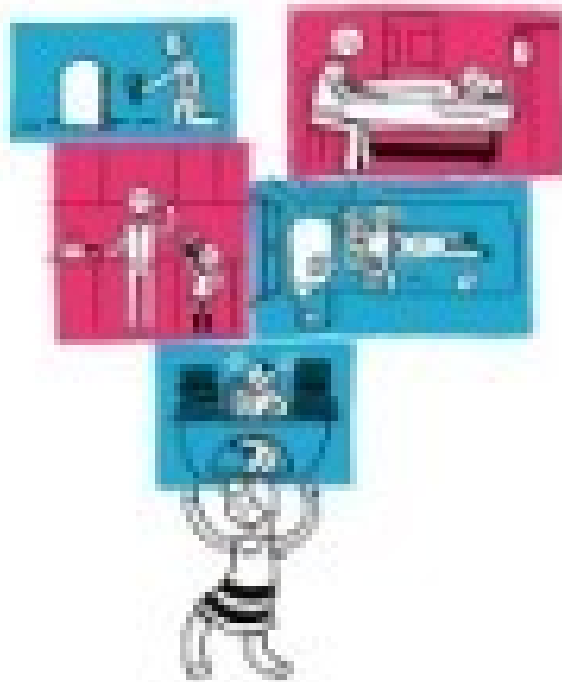


# Understanding key terms

- **Work related stress** is the response people may have when presented with demands and pressures that are not matched with their abilities, leading to an inability to cope, especially when employees have little support from supervisors and little control over work processes.
- **Presenteeism** is defined as attending work whilst ill and therefore not performing at full ability. Presenteeism can be both positive and negative and due to a variety of factors.

# What is stress?

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[Watch the video on YouTube](#)

# Bolder Healthier Workplace Champions



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# What to do in a crisis

- If urgent mental health help is needed you can ring **0121 262 3555** or **0800 915 9292** for advice and support.
- This line is **available 24 hours, 7 days a week** and can be used whether you are known to our services or not.
- You can also email [help@birminghammind.org](mailto:help@birminghammind.org) or get in contact the webchat service [Helpline - Birmingham Mind](#)
- If someone is in immediate danger, call **999**.

## Coping during a crisis

The mental health charity Mind has information on [ways to help yourself cope during a crisis](#). This includes calming exercises and a tool to get you through the next few hours.

# What is the role of Bolder Healthier Champions?

**Talk** about the impact that mental health is having on colleagues in your workplace

**Connect** people you work with to support through web pages and services

**Feedback to us** where more help is needed so we can continue to improve the support for citizens

**Talk** about the impact that mental health is having on colleagues in your workplace

Bolder Healthier Champions **should not:**

- Provide anything other than approved information
- Receive personal information from people

# Supporting a colleague

It can be a difficult prospect to try and have a chat with a colleague who might be struggling with their mental health

What is most important is that you care, and you are authentic with them.

Plan your chat with them, they may need time and don't want to feel rushed.

Use a private space for the chat if possible.

Find out more in the [How to support mental health at work guide](#) by the Mental Health Foundation

# Active listening



Listen carefully to what people are saying



Be open - keep eye contact if they want and turn towards them



Acknowledge what they are going through



Ask direct and appropriate questions



Have helplines to hand if necessary

# Looking after the mental health of yourself and others

## Top tips to improve your mental wellbeing

- Write (or type) your thoughts and feelings in a journal or diary
- Plan some recovery time to follow an upcoming difficult period
- Even if you're having trouble sleeping, you can still rest your body and mind
- Talk to your peers, family or friends about how you're feeling
- Keep active, enjoy the outdoors and eat regularly



Keep a diary to avoid 'bottling things up'



Plan ahead for difficult times



Relax & rest even if you can't sleep



Talk to someone



Take care of your physical health



# Spotting signs - is your employee or colleague in distress?

- 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?

# How can you provide brief support in everyday interactions?

- Provide a **brief intervention**
- Use open questions with the **Ask, Assist, Act** model

## Use an example: For non-urgent mental health support

### Ask

How are you?

How are you feeling at the moment?

What's been happening for you recently?

### Assist

You mentioned you are feeling low, do you know why you feel like that?

Would you like some more information on services that may help you?

### Act

- **Mind** The charity for better mental health' has an extensive range of self help resources available.
- The **NHS** has a range of self-help tools available.
- Birmingham City Council **Wellbeing resources** and support gives access to **Mental Health Services**.
- Their GP may be able to support them in various ways.

# How can you provide brief support in everyday interactions?

- Provide a **brief intervention**
- Use open questions with the **Ask, Assist, Act** model

Use an example: For a colleague who's looking tired

## Ask

How are you?  
Are you sleeping okay?  
Are you feeling tired?

## Assist

Do you know why you're not sleeping well?  
Are you getting enough rest?  
Would you like any information about mindfulness?

## Act

Suggest practical tips to help sleeping.  
Encourage them to try something that they find relaxing or learn some new relaxation techniques.  
Explain that whilst mindfulness can be taught in person, there are a range of free and paid apps and resources

**Connect** people you work with to support through web pages and services

# Helplines

<p><a href="#">Alcohol Change UK</a> focuses entirely on reducing alcohol harm, working across the whole range of serious alcohol harms, from mental and physical to societal and economic.</p>	<p><a href="#">Beat</a> is the UK's eating disorder charity. Founded in 1989 as the Eating Disorders Association, their mission is to end the pain and suffering caused by eating disorders.</p>	<p><a href="#">Campaign Against Living Miserably (CALM)</a> stands together with everyone who's struggling with life, no matter who they are, where they're from or what they're going through.</p>
<p><a href="#">Hearing Voices Network</a> supports people who hear voices, see visions or have other unusual sensory perceptions - and all those who support them.</p>	<p><a href="#">Mental Health Foundation</a> finds solutions for individuals, those at risk and for society, in order to improve everyone's mental wellbeing.</p>	<p><a href="#">Mind</a> provides advice and support to empower anyone experiencing a mental health problem &amp; campaigns to improve services, raise awareness and promote understanding</p>
<p><a href="#">National Self Harm Network</a> is a forum to support individuals who self harm to reduce emotional distress.</p>	<p><a href="#">Rethink Mental Illness</a> offers practical help on a wide range of topics such as community care, welfare benefits and carers rights.</p>	<p><a href="#">Samaritans</a> are available day or night, for anyone who's struggling to cope, who needs someone to listen without judgement or pressure.</p>

# Actions for employers for good mental health in the workplace



## 1. Make a commitment to mental health:

- Ensure senior level buy-in
- Be visible to employees (e.g. sign Time to Change or the Mental Health at Work Commitment)
- Have a senior Mental Health Champion
- Engage and consult employees about the approach



## 2. Build your approach:

- Understand the legal situation
- Assess employee needs
- Update policies, make plans to improve, and take action
- Co-produce a plan with employees



## 3. Create a positive culture:

- Support and value employees
- Promote healthy behaviour at work
- Reduce stress linked to work using HSE Stress Standards
- Review (and redesign if necessary) job roles
- Support social activities
- Communicate about wellbeing



## 4. Provide support and training:

- Share information freely
- Recognise importance of line managers
- Provide line manager training
- Build into induction
- Encourage dialogue at performance reviews



## 5. Manage mental health:

- Proactively tackle the stigma
- Openly discuss mental health
- Support employees with reducing stress (e.g. adopt HSE management standards)
- Signpost all information



## 6. Provide the right support:

- Train managers to be confident with sensitive conversations
- Be ready to make reasonable adjustments
- Provide a confidential support service



## 7. Help people to recover:

- Support employees back to work
- Make adjustments
- Use Fit for Work and Access to Work initiatives



## 8. Go further:

- Regularly evaluate your approach
- Share best practice with other employers

# Resources for employers

Mental health toolkit  
BITC

Crisis management in the event of suicide

Reducing the risk of suicide toolkit

Musculoskeletal Health Toolkit for Employers

Drugs, alcohol and tobacco toolkit

Sleep and recovery toolkit

Physical Activity, Health Eating and Healthier Weight

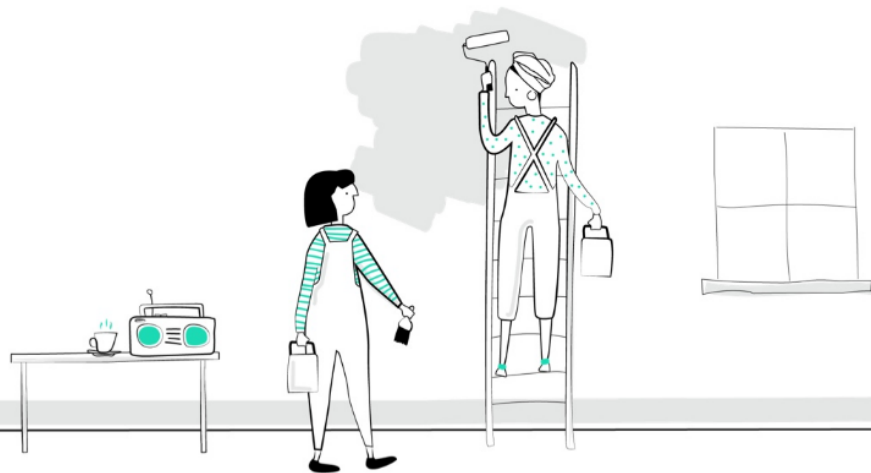
Domestic Abuse Toolkit for employers



# Toolkits

Throughout Mental Health at Work you'll see 'toolkits' - collections of resources that go well together to give you a good introduction to a particular theme or topic. You can browse through the whole list below.

[View all toolkits](#)





# Time to Change employer pledge

- **Introduced in 2011, the Time to Change employer pledge was a commitment to changing the way we all think and act about mental health in the workplace.**
- Underpinned by a 12-month [Employer Action Plan](#) founded on the principles of the 2017 Thriving at Work Report and built upon 5 years of evidence-based interventions researched by the Time to Change Employers Team, the Employer Pledge supported employers to create a more open and understanding culture around mental health problems in the workplace.
- At the time of the [Employer Pledge's retirement](#) in June 2020, the pledge had been signed by over 1500 organisations employing over four million people across England, representing over 10% of the working population of the UK

**time to change**

let's end mental health discrimination



RMC pledged to:

- increase awareness of work-related stress and how to manage it by including a training module in all staff and volunteer inductions
- provide a chance for all staff and volunteers to discuss mental health issues during regular supervision sessions
- remind staff and volunteers to take care of their mental health by displaying a '1 minute wellbeing break' poster to be placed around work stations to suggest simple, quick activities to improve wellbeing e.g. 1 minute mindful breathing, 1 minute of using your senses etc.

## Examples of local employers who have pledged to support mental health



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## NICE and Public Health England's guideline on Mental Wellbeing at Work covers several areas including:

- how to have a conversation about mental wellbeing with an employee
- information about mental wellbeing
- how to identify early warning signs of poor mental wellbeing
- resources on mental wellbeing
- awareness of the stigma associated with poor mental wellbeing
- ongoing monitoring of mental wellbeing in the workplace



## Resources for work

The NICE guideline says training should equip managers with the knowledge, tools, skills and resources to improve awareness of mental wellbeing at work. It should also improve employees' understanding of and engagement in organisational decisions and the communication between managers and employees.

**MENTAL  
HEALTH  
AT WORK**

Mentalhealthatwork.org is a resource curated by MIND that has a number of toolkits to help. They include financial wellbeing of your employees; making your workplace autistic friendly; coping with loneliness and being anti-racist in the workplace

# An example of a supportive workplace



[Watch the video on YouTube](#)

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# A case study of a local council

A local council introduced a revised stress management policy to provide managers with support, advice and tools to effectively manage work-related stress. They based the policy on HSE's Management Standards (MS) approach.

## Tips for others

- It is vitally important that everybody works together - management, trade unions, HR etc.
- Senior management commitment is essential.
- To ensure a better response rate to the questionnaires and so provide a more robust evidence base:
  - stress-related questions were incorporated in the employee survey
  - in addition to the electronic questionnaire, paper copies of the survey were also provided and promoted by senior and lower-level management
  - individual directorates also conducted their own stress surveys

# Five ways to wellbeing (at work)



TALK & LISTEN,  
BE THERE,  
FEEL CONNECTED



DO WHAT YOU CAN,  
ENJOY WHAT YOU DO,  
MOVE YOUR MOOD



REMEMBER  
THE SIMPLE  
THINGS THAT  
GIVE YOU JOY



EMBRACE NEW  
EXPERIENCES,  
SEE OPPORTUNITIES,  
SURPRISE YOURSELF



Your time,  
your words,  
your presence

**Feedback to us** where more help is needed so we can continue to improve the support for citizens

Email the Bolder Healthier team on:  
[BolderHealthierChampions@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:BolderHealthierChampions@birmingham.gov.uk)



# Thank you for being a Bolder Healthier Champion!



**We look forward to working together to improve the wellbeing of everyone in Birmingham.**

By volunteering to receive the latest health information, you can use these messages to help you support yourself, your family, your friends and your wider community with:

- **Monthly themed webinars**
- **Tailored resource packs**
- **Health awareness training**

*If you know someone else who might like to get involved, they can read more about the programme at [Bolder Healthier Champions](#)*



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[birmingham.gov.uk](http://birmingham.gov.uk)

# Thank you for your time!



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