MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS

workingwell trust

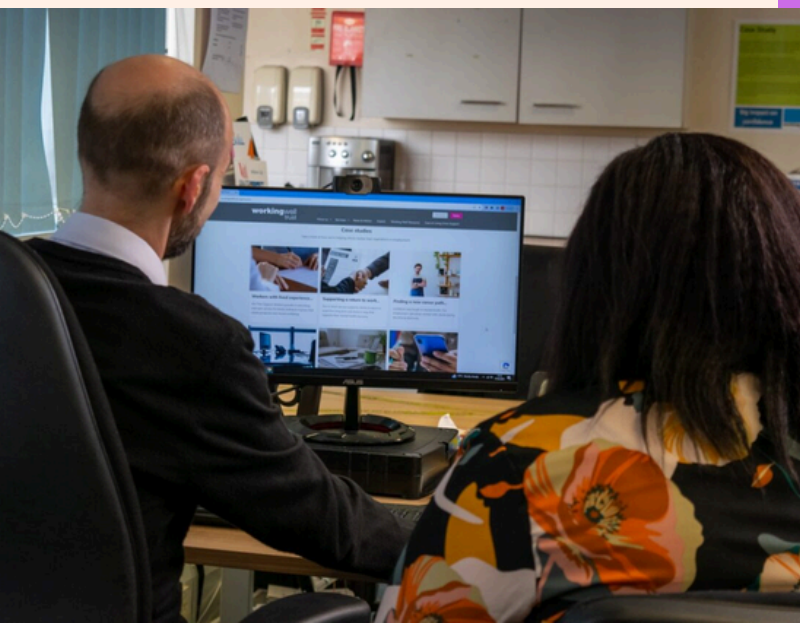# CONTENTS

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS WEEK

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Mental Health Awareness Week

Mental Health Awareness week runs from the 13th to the 19th of may. It is a week where we look to promote awareness and educate others about mental health.

The goal is also to reduce the stigma around this topic and explore how we can all support people's mental health at home and in the wider community

Work and Mental Health

How Work Effects Mental Health

For most of us, work has positive and negative effects on our lives and mental health. Work can give people a sense of self worth, motivation and happiness. It can also cause stress and anxiety. It's important for organisations to help support employees to find the right balance

Studies have shown that when there are good work conditions, work has a positive impact on a persons' wellbeing. This is more evident when compared to the well-documented negative impacts of unemployment

Supporting Mental Health at Work

In recent years, mental health and it's effects on the individual and society has become a big topic. There has been a steady rise in the rates of mental illness in England, and a faster rise in people seeking mental health support.

At the Working Well Trust, we want work to be a positive aspect of everyone's lives. But this requires work from everyone to make the working environment inclusive, supportive and open to change.

We have some suggestions on how your organisation can help improve and support wellbeing at work, leading to better outcomes for mental health.

We also have practical ideas for how you can support your own wellbeing at work

Supporting Mental Health at Work

Steps to create positive wellbeing at work

Consider Reasonable Adjustments

Making small, practical adjustments for employees is an easy and effective way to improve wellbeing and job performance.

Some ideas for reasonable adjustments:

1. Being flexible with working hours.
2. Ordering equipment to help those with different needs e.g. adjustable desks, electronic writing pads.
3. Making tasks clear - writing daily tasks down, making expectations clear.

Consider:
Do employees know they can ask for reasonable adjustments? Is your organisation proactive in offering them to employees with disabilities?

Supporting Mental Health at Work

Create a culture of openness

1. Create a mental health policy so that employees know the company is committed to supporting and promoting wellbeing
2. Have appropriate policies around bullying, harassment and other negative experiences so that employees feel safe at work.
3. Make it safe to speak about mental health. People should not fear losing their job, being harassed or judgement from opening up to a senior leader about their health.
4. Support employees with back to work plans if they have had a break due to poor mental health.
5. Actively support employees experiencing poor mental health with reasonable adjustments

Consider:
Do employees know who to speak to about heir mental health? Do they know how to reach this person? Do they believe it will be sensitively handled?

Set realistic standards

1. Recognise and promote the importance of work/life balance. Targets should be achievable without constant overtime.
2. Make the job role and expectations as clear as possible.

Supporting Mental Health at Work

Effectively Communicate Change

Change can be stressful, especially to those suffering from poor mental health. How change is communicated can have a drastic benefit to employee wellbeing.

1. Make employees aware of the reasons for change and communicate the changes to their aims and objectives.
2. Outline a timetable for change and keep employees informed.
3. Allow employees to ask questions and discuss concerns when appropriate.
4. Ensure employees are aware of how their work might change. Where appropriate, provide training and support.

Consider:
How do you track employee wellbeing? Are employees well informed of important changes?

Support employees to perform

- Create a comprehensive induction process to help employees start right.
- Provide training and assess this continuously.
- Consider mentoring or 'buddying.'
- Use forms and other tools to collect constructive feedback on the companies wellbeing support

Supporting Mental Health at Work

Supporting your own wellbeing at work

It's important for organisations to create an environment where your wellbeing is valued. Sometimes work is not always able to make everything as easy as we would like, and sometimes we are working somewhere where we feel not enough is being done to support our wellbeing.

This is why it is important to also consider steps to support your own mental health at work.

Supporting Mental Health at Work

Speak to Someone

If your company has clear policies around wellbeing, or if you have a good relationship with a line manager or senior, speak to them about what you are finding difficult in your role.

Think about what you want to disclose and how open you want to be. You may not want to discuss everything with a senior at work. Think about what changes you would like to see and how it could improve your wellbeing at work.

If you do not feel comfortable speaking to someone at work, make sure there is someone else you can speak to: friends, family, a therapist or counsellor. It's important to not carry it all on your own.

Supporting Mental Health at Work

Ask For Help

Asking for help can be difficult, but it is often helpful to have others in your corner. You may need to ask your line manager for some short term or long term adjustments to help you manage your mental health.

Your company may offer occupational health support or have an employee assistance programme. These can be accessed discretely and help you manage your mental health at work.

Supporting Mental Health at Work

Look after your basic needs

It can be a challenge to look after ourselves when we are not mentally well. But starting with small steps can haev a positive effect on your mental health. Try to get outside and exercise. It can be as intesne as full work out or as calm as a short walk.

Eat well when you can. It can be helpful to meal prep the night before when coming into work. These are not quick fixes, but it can help you take steps in improving your mental health.

Supporting Mental Health at Work

Take Breaks When Needed

Putting in effort at work is important, but so is taking breaks. Working long hours over multiple days a week can take it's toll, so remember to plan time into your day to rest and refocus.

Be kind to yourself

We all have times when we are struggling. Be kind to yourself! Try not to make judgements about yourself that you wouldn't make about a friend. Accept that you may not be working at your best right now, it's okay to not always be at 100% at work

Supporting Mental Health at Work

If you are looking for work and require help, speak to us at https://workingwelltrust.org/ to see if you are eligible for support.
We have teams in Enfield, Tower Hamlets and Kingston.

If you are looking for support with your mental health, reach out to your GP or contact a local charity such as MIND, Samaritans or CALM