

Anne Mathie – Mental Wealth Training

Saturday 19th November 2016

There were 16 attendees at the workshop. Anne explained her background and experience regarding mental health and spoke a little of the work of Mental Wealth Training, delivering Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) courses for Service veterans and Adults.

Anne showed a film from Time to Change, pointing out how easy it is to start a conversation about mental health in the workplace, be that a simple lunchtime presentation or something which can be done as a group. Simple things and lead to big changes, not just for people but for businesses. The total number of working days lost to poor mental health in 2014/15 was 9.9 million, equating to an average of 23 days per case (HSE 2015). The cost of lost productivity is approximately £105bn annually in the UK. There is a clear business case for people to be more mental health aware.

One in four people will experience poor mental health in their lifetime with one in seven living with the experience of mixed anxiety and depression. Anne explained the general format of MHFA training and how it works. It does not make the participant a counsellor, merely keeps the person safe for now until more specialist help can be found. She also explained about how it came into being and is now used across the world and how it can be delivered in a flexible way to suit the workforce and their business.

It is fact that more males take their own lives than females, so it is crucial within male dominated sectors there is more awareness available (latest suicide statistics for the UK - male 4630 female 1492 6122 total).

There was a discussion on what individual employers do to maintain / promote awareness of mental health issues & support available. There were disclosures regarding mental health conditions, one which reappeared after the partner's death.

Anne explained a Wellness Recovery Action Plan. See this link for an example: <http://www.workingtogetherforrecovery.co.uk/Documents/Wellness%20Recovery%20Action%20Plan.pdf> (an older workbook)

And a guide from Mind to Wellness Action Plans: <http://www.mind.org.uk/workplace/mental-health-at-work/taking-care-of-yourself/guide-to-waps-employees/>

There was also discussion regarding a mental health risk assessment identify stressors and allow the workplace to work with the affected person and their team to support the person and hopefully prevent a period of sickness – see example below:

Stress Assessment

The group watched the film clip of The Black Dog (depression): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XiCrniLQGYc>

Anne talked about general symptoms which affect those living with the most common illnesses such as depression and anxiety which are covered in more details during the MHFA course. The group watched a film which is used during the Armed Forces MHFA course, veterans who struggled with their own mental wellbeing and their return to their new normal.