

ATTITUDES TO MENTAL HEALTH AT WORK

STRESS CONFERENCE 2013 WORKSHOP SESSION

1

WHAT IS MENTAL HEALTH?

It is the mental and emotional state in which we feel able to cope with the normal daily stresses of life

When we feel good about ourselves, we work better, interact well and make valuable contributions in daily tasks

One might feel in good mental health generally but still also suffer stress or anxiety at times

It can range from feeling 'down' to common disorders such as anxiety and depression or in limited cases to more severe mental cases including bipolar disorder and schizophrenia

2

THE BACKGROUND

Mental illness is common. It affects thousands of people in the UK, and their friends, families, work colleagues and society in general.

One in four people will experience a mental health problem at some point in their lives.

Around one in ten children experience mental health problems.

Depression affects around one in 12 of the whole population.

It costs UK employers £30 billion a year through lost production, recruitment and absence

Rates of self-harm in the UK are the highest in Europe at 400 per 100,000.

450 million people world-wide have a mental health problem.

3

COMMON MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS

Mental ill health feels just as bad or worse than any other illness – trouble is you can't see it

It often seems too personal, too deep and complex to discuss with work colleagues

If you cannot talk about it, maybe you find it difficult to listen too?

4

SICKNESS ABSENCE AND MENTAL HEALTH

- 19% of workers take a day off sick because of stress, but 90% of them give a different reason for their absence.
- 10% of workers have resigned their job because of Stress, and 25% are thinking about it.
- 20% of workers feel they cannot tell their boss if they feel overly stressed at work.
- Over 50% of managers would like to do more to improve mental wellbeing in their workplace, but 46% report it is not a priority for their organisation.

Mind Research findings 2013

5

PROMOTING GOOD MENTAL HEALTH AT WORK

Spot the signs – being observant, listening, being aware to situations, choosing the right moments to intervene and raise questions

Engage with the problem – there are good practical steps to take to aid coping strategies, also legal obligations to bear in mind. Making reasonable adjustments to the working environment and practices

Keeping a watching brief- Not just passive observation, but at times that may be the best option. Promoting awareness and creating a culture in which there is openness and employees may feel able to talk. Maintaining good open communication channels

6

ACAS AND MINDFUL EMPLOYER GUIDANCE

<http://www.acas.org.uk/media/pdf/j/2/Promoting-positive-mental-health-at-work-accessible-version.pdf>

MINDFUL EMPLOYER is a UK-wide initiative run by Workways, a service of Devon Partnership NHS Trust. Tel: 01392 677064
www.mindfulemployer.net

Mind is the leading mental health charity in England and Wales. It campaigns to create a better life for everyone with experience of mental distress. Tel: 0300 123 3393 www.mind.org.uk

Rethink is the largest national voluntary sector provider of mental health services with 340 services and more than 130 support groups. It helps over 48,000 people every year through its services, support groups and by providing information on mental health problems.

Helpline: 0300 5000 927 www.rethink.org

7

WHAT INFLUENCES MENTAL HEALTH?

Many managers will be concerned that by addressing mental health issues they may get drawn into areas of difficulty and for which they are not qualified. The self-perpetuating cycle associated with mental illness is that we don't know much about it and so we don't talk about it

Mental wellbeing: what influence does a manager have?

Factors you can control in work: • Workload • Work variety • Work relationships • Involvement • Culture of disclosure • Communication • Bullying

Overlapping factors you can try to influence: • Money • Status • Friendships • Sense of purpose • Stress • Coping strategies • Lifestyle choices

Factors you cannot control outside work: • Childhood experiences • Family relationships • Addiction problems • Finances • Genetics • Crime • Housing • Bereavement

8

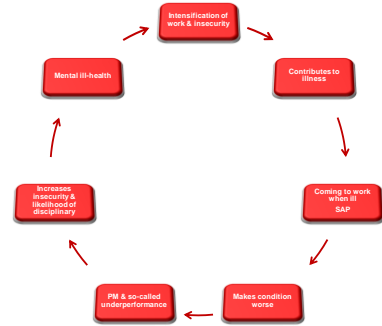
UNDERSTANDING MENTAL HEALTH IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE

CIPD research has shown that

- 37% of sufferers are more likely to get into conflict with colleagues
- 57% find it difficult to juggle multi-tasking
- 80% find concentration difficult
- 62% take longer to complete tasks
- 50% are potentially less patient with customers/clients

9

THE VICIOUS CIRCLE



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11