



MEN'S MENTAL HEALTH

A guide for employers on how to support male employees with mental health and wellbeing.

According to the Labour Force Survey, 17 million workdays are lost each year due to mental health problems, on average each person suffering took around 16.5 days off.

Yet men are still less likely to receive mental health support, despite the fact that three times as many men as women die by suicide each year.

So as employers, what can you do?

Ask for input

If you are considering how to better support your male workforce, asking them what resources they would use and how they could be better supported is a great place to start. Opinions could also be gathered anonymously if this would make people feel more comfortable coming forward.

Raise awareness

Promoting awareness days such as Suicide Prevention Day, World Mental Health Day and Mens Health week is a great way to raise awareness, help people feel they are not alone and spark discussions.

You should also ensure that any support you offer as a business regarding mental health is well publicised and promoted on a regular basis so employees know what support is available and how to access it. If you're promoting the above awareness days, this is a great opportunity to also remind employees of the support available.

32%
**of men attribute poor
mental health to their job**

(Priory Group)

Show men it's good to open up

As employers, we should continue to teach and show men that it's OK to open up and talk about their feelings. This might sound easy, but in a culture where men are less likely to talk, how do you do this?

You could start by encouraging managers to simply ask 'how are you' in one to one's and meetings. This might seem obvious, but its often ignored in favour of ploughing straight into discussions about work. Managers can also look for signs, such as colleagues who were previously extrovert becoming quiet and withdrawn, or a highly productive person delaying completing tasks. Ensure your managers and leaders have the tools to feel comfortable having these discussions in a meaningful way and talking about mental health.

You can also discourage use of any unhelpful words like 'man up' and encourage all people, especially male colleagues, to express their emotions and focus on mental health and not burn themselves out.

31%

of men feel the culture in their organisation makes it possible to speak openly about their mental health problems, compared to 38% of women.

([Mind](#)).

Consider the use of mental health first aiders

We spoke a lot about Mental Health First Aider's or MHFA's in April when we were focussing on Mental Health awareness, and if you're looking at expanding the support you offer, MHFA's are a great place to start.

MHFA's are colleagues who are trained to have an in-depth understanding of mental health and the factors that can affect wellbeing. They have the skills to spot the signs of someone struggling and step in and reassure that person and offer appropriate support.

Having trained MHFA's in your organisation can help raise peoples confidence when raising or dealing with issues, as well as reducing stigma. Encouraging male colleagues to train as MHFA's will also help to raise awareness about male mental health and encourage anyone struggling to reach out.

In addition to helping those who are in need, the MHFA role offers a lot of benefits to individuals who undertake the training and often there are personal reasons as to why they want to support.

50-54

Men aged 45-49 are most at risk of suicide.

(Office for National Statistics)

Focus on wellbeing and encourage pyhsical exercise

Encouraging men to take time to look after their emotional and physical health is important and physical health has been proven to massively improve mental health.

Encourage your employees to get involved by running incentives, such as lunch time walks, sports teams or even a step challenge. These activities are a great way to get active but can also bring a sense of togetherness if colleagues get involved together

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