

Access to Work Mental Health Support Service The Employer Toolkit



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Department
for Work &
Pensions
In
partnership
with



Mental Health

What is Mental Health?

The terms 'mental illness' or 'mental ill health' or 'mental health problems' cover a wide-range of difficulties, from everyday worries and stress to depression and suicidality.

Mental health is impacted by a number of different factors including physical health, our social situation, our living and working environment and our genetics. This means that all of us are at risk of developing mental health problems at any time during our lives.

We should all look after our mental health. We should all look out for others. We should all work together to support each other to live the best life we can.

The World Health Organisation defines wellbeing as a state where everyone is able to realise their potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully and is able to make a contribution to their community.

Able Futures is here to help you promote positive mental health within your business.

Nearly half of adults believe they have had a diagnosable mental health condition at some point in their lives.

19% of men and 33% of women have had a mental health condition diagnosed by professionals.

36% of people who self-identify as having a mental health problem have never been diagnosed by a professional, which usually means they have not received support for their difficulties.*

Mental Health in the Workplace

Many employers are unsure how to introduce mental health support into the workplace. This does not have to be complicated. Able Futures has put together a three step process and is happy to talk to you about implementing it to support your staff.

1

Decide on your approach

Initially it is important for senior managers to make a commitment to supporting the mental health of all staff in the business. This may include engaging the team in training to understand what this involves. It is important for the senior managers to understand mental health in its broadest form before talking to staff.

Discussions should consider whether this support is restricted to people who disclose their mental health problems or whether the company approach is about supporting the mental health of all staff in the business.

Discussions should also include how to help staff develop a positive culture towards supporting mental health.

2

Engage in mental health education

Once the company approach has been decided contact Able Futures on 0800 321 3137 from 8am to 10.30pm, Monday to Friday to discuss our employer support on offer. Our mental health professionals can deliver a suite of education and awareness sessions including Mental Health First Aid Awareness , offering expert advice and advice on supporting a worker with a mental health condition.

We also offer employer education including tailored advice/recommendations to resolve work-related mental health issues, employer learning and networking events.

3

Management and support

Able Futures can also give individuals who need support to manage their mental health access to a dedicated mental health professional for six months of one-to-one advice and guidance and additional ongoing support for a further three months.

Able Futures mental health professionals can help your staff understand and use a wide variety of tools and techniques which can support them in their journey to better mental health.

Communication with Individuals Experiencing Mental Health Problems

Able Futures mental health professionals are highly experienced in supporting individuals who are struggling with their mental health.

Staff experiencing mental health issues can be directed to our website or freephone number where they can be supported by a Vocational Rehabilitation Consultant. Call free on 0800 321 3137 from 8am to 10.30pm, Monday to Friday or visit www.able-futures.co.uk.

Here are some things to think about when you're talking to people who are experiencing mental health issues.

DON'T SAY

Smile and
walk tall

Don't let it get
you down. Take
control

Just try to
think
positively

Medication
doesn't help.
Stop taking it
and you'll feel
better

You are what
you eat. Try
eating more
healthy food

You can't be
depressed you're
at work and
looking good

TRY SAYING

Is there anything
I can do to help?

If you want to
talk, I'm here for
you.

I don't have any
answers but I
can listen.

That sounds
really difficult.

You are
important.

Tips for Talking About Mental Health

- Ensure you have set aside time that is not going to be interrupted.
- Let people tell you what they want to tell you – don't probe for more information.
- Really listen to what you are being told. Do not listen in order to respond. Listen in order to hear.
- Do not offer counselling or make assumptions about what the person is feeling. Be empathic.
- Ask questions rather than make statements.
- Ask open questions rather than closed questions.
- Offer information about local support services.
- Suggest a visit to their GP.
- Do not be tempted to give advice. Know your limits.



Able Futures offers confidential Access to Work Mental Health Support Service to anyone in work who has mental health difficulties.

Able Futures employs professional mental health practitioners who are qualified and highly experienced at supporting individuals with mental health difficulties.

Use your time and skills to manage your business.

Let us support your staff.

Ten Practical Ways to Support Your Own Mental Health

It is tempting to think mental health problems happen to other people but statistics show that everyone can experience mental health problems.

Here are some ideas for supporting your mental health, putting them in place now will help you become more resilient.

1. Connect with people, animals, nature or spirituality. Text a friend. Call someone you haven't spoken to in a while.
2. Learn something new today. Use a new word. Try out a new recipe. Learn a new sport.
3. Be active. Walk in nature. Dance around your living room. Take the stairs.
4. Notice what is around you. The weather. The lovely smell of your cup of coffee. Appreciate your lunch.
5. A smile. A thank you. A word of encouragement. A donation to charity.
6. Drink more water.
7. Eat 5 portions of fruit and vegetables a day.
8. Develop a good routine before bed to ensure a good night's sleep.
9. Spend time engaged in a hobby you enjoy.
10. Keep a journal.



If you need help to implement any of these ideas contact Able Futures.

We are here to help.

Reasonable Adjustments

Supporting staff is not only beneficial for the individual, it makes good business sense. Our Vocational Rehabilitation Consultants are experienced in working with employers and staff to find adjustments that work for everyone.

Here are some examples of things you might offer when supporting a member of staff with mental health difficulties.

- Offer flexible working where appropriate.
- Support and training for the individual and for colleagues.
- Allow time for medical appointments
- Spread the usual break time over the day rather than in one block.
- Provide break-away spaces.
- Rearrange work stations. For instance, some people find sitting with their back to the door really stressful.
- Support with prioritising workload and provide supervision when necessary.
- Provide job coach or mentor schemes.
- Consider a phased return to work after a period of absence.
- Develop individual support plans.



Responding to a Crisis Situation

When you become aware of a mental health crisis it is important to know how to respond. Able Futures mental health professionals can help you with this.

Able Futures can provide courses which give your staff the key knowledge necessary to support someone during a mental health crisis. There is no charge for this, or any of our other services.

Below is a basic overview of the steps to take in a crisis situation.

- 1 Stay calm.
- 2 Listen to what the person is telling you. Do not try to cheer them up. If they seem suicidal ask them directly, you will not put the idea into their head.
- 3 Ask them what help they need.
- 4 Ask them if there is someone they want you to contact.
- 5 Encourage them to seek appropriate professional support.
- 6 If you believe they are in danger of hurting themselves or others speak to emergency services.

Help your staff enjoy #MoreGoodDays and sustainable futures_

For more information:

Freephone 0800 321 3137

8am to 10.30pm
Monday to Friday

hello@able-futures.co.uk

www.able-futures.co.uk/employers

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Able Futures is led by Ingeus UK Ltd

