



Lifelink Workwell

Mental Health: A guide for employers



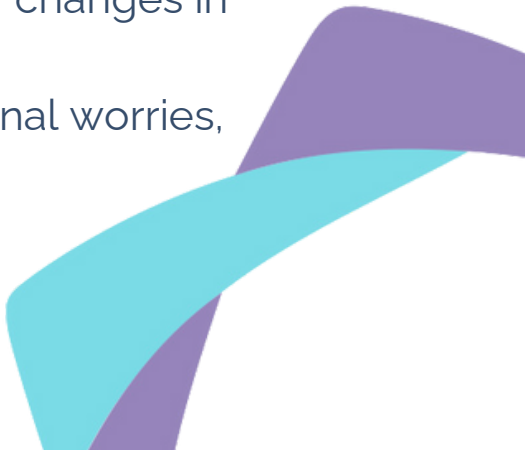


An introduction:

Supporting employee wellbeing goes beyond just having policies in place - it requires awareness, early, and ongoing intervention. However, employees' mental health in the workplace can often go unnoticed and un-supported impacting employee satisfaction, productivity and overall team morale.

What are the key signs?

Mental health struggles are wide and varied - however certain changes in behaviour, engagement, or performance can all be indicators.

- **Behavioural Changes:** Shifts in mood, or level of participation that seem out of character. This can be during work time, but also during breaks and lunchtime, or even out of work social activities.
 - **Reduced Engagement:** Withdrawal from optional meetings, team activities and avoiding conversations.
 - **Decline in Productivity:** A noticeable drop in work performance which is unusual for that individual.
 - **Physical Signs:** Looking tired or fatigued, changes in appetite or overall appearance.
 - **Increased Absence:** Frequent sick days or changes in working patterns.
 - **Excessive Worrying:** Expressions of irrational worries, paranoia, or self-doubt.
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How your organisation can help:

- **Mental Health Strategy:** Introducing or enhancing policies and practices to support employees and promote mental health wellness. Make services and resources easily available through internal communication channels such as company intranet. Train Managers on how to support employee mental health in the workplace.
 - **Supportive Culture:** Encourage leaders to model healthy behaviours and embed wellness practices into the organisational culture.
 - **Accessible Resources:** Crisis management protocols, workplace programmes which can include a range of services to support employees' needs from manager training to counselling sessions, wellbeing workshops to self-help tools.
 - **Flexible Working:** Ensure sickness absence policies and work arrangements can accommodate mental health related needs. i.e. working from home, mental health days.
 - **Reduce Stigma:** Mental health has often been a topic that has been avoided. Reduce the stigma around mental health and create a workplace that openly talks about mental health with no judgement.
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How your manager can help:

- **Employee Support Training:** Equip managers with the knowledge to identify mental health concerns, provide initial support, and escalate issues appropriately when needed.
 - **Encourage Open Conversations:** Foster an environment where employees feel comfortable discussing their wellbeing. Encourage open discussions to reduce stigma and create an inclusive and supportive culture.
 - **Recognise Early Signs:** Notice patterns in changes in behaviour, performance and engagement and understand how these can be indicators of declining mental health.
 - **Proactive Approach:** Subtly and confidently address small concerns before they escalate into bigger issues. Understand how to approach initial conversations with employees without making them feel uncomfortable.
 - **Lead by Example:** Encourage employees to take breaks and prioritise self-care.
 - **Create Healthy Workplace Relationships:** Through clear communication, respecting boundaries, showing appreciation, teams will feel safe and will thrive.
 - **Signposting:** Ensure employees know where to find support, whether that's internal wellbeing programmes, counselling services, or external helplines.
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