

SUPPORT MENTAL WELLBEING AT WORK



Ensure your people feel supported and are able to do their best work, regardless of whether they are experiencing a mental health issue

Talk about mental wellbeing Create a workplace culture where it's okay to talk about mental health. Simply asking 'how are you' can open up a conversation and make a big difference. Your employees are your greatest asset – you need them to feel confident, happy and engaged in their work.

Put a policy in place Develop and promote an organisation-wide stand for zero tolerance of stigma or discrimination related to mental illness. Be clear that accommodations for disability, injury or illness includes mental health issues as this is not obvious to everyone.

Educate Provide managers with basic training and information about mental illness and its effects, and how to respond to, support and accommodate employees experiencing mental illness.

Collaborate Work together to find solutions that meet the needs of the organisation and the employee. If you become aware an employee may be experiencing an issue, raise it with them and discuss the support they require. Managers can build trust by keeping their word and respecting privacy and confidentiality.

Check assumptions Treat everyone as an individual and do not make assumptions about what it means to have a mental illness. Focus on the individual's abilities and on the strengths that the employee brings to the workplace. Consider how you are directly or subtly creating barriers to employment for people with experience of mental illness (i.e. pre-employment questions) and how your organisation responds to a person who discloses mental wellbeing issues.

Be flexible Workplace accommodations that people with experience of mental illness commonly find helpful include:

- flexible working hours
- flexibility around where they work, i.e. from home
- flexibility around sick and annual leave (e.g. the option of additional paid or unpaid leave)
- flexibility around attending appointments
- professional supervision
- an on-the-job coach or mentor
- being able to continue to work even when they are not 100 per cent well

Address behaviours Provide praise (when deserved) and critical feedback (when necessary). Raise employment issues when required. Ensure behaviours causing issues are discussed in a safe and compassionate way and support is offered and given. This may include a referral to EAP counselling services, accessing additional professional help, taking time off or offering flexible work arrangements.

Support everyone We all have mental health and everyone experiences ups and downs in life and at work. Ask all of your employees what will help them to do their best work.