



Mental illness costs UK businesses around £35 billion every year, this equates to £10.6 billion lost to sickness absence, £21.2 billion in reduced productivity, and £3.1 billion in substituting staff members who vacate their roles due to mental illness.

This guide will support employers in understanding Mental Health and its potential impact on the workplace.

Mental Health

Why it is important to your business?

Steps you can take to support your workforce

Focused Training

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Section 1: Mental Health-Why it is important to your business

What is mental health?

Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices.

Mental ill health can range from feeling 'a bit down' to common disorders such as anxiety and depression to more severe and far less common conditions such as bipolar disorder or schizophrenia.

Most people's mental health will not just be continuously good. Usually it will rise and fall depending on pressures and/or experiences in their life. A person may therefore feel in good mental health generally but also experience stress or anxiety from time to time.

What is the impact of mental illness in the workplace?

Approximately 1 in 4 people in the UK will experience a mental illness each year. In 2016, 15.8 million UK work days were lost due to mental illness.*

The largest causes of sickness absence for our county's workforce is depression, stress and anxiety. Mental illness costs UK businesses around £35 billion every year. This equates to £10.6 billion lost to sickness absence, £21.2 billion in reduced productivity and £3.1 billion in substituting staff members who vacate their roles due to mental illness.**

People that feel good about themselves often work productively, interact well with colleagues and make a valuable contribution to the workplace.

A recent Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development study highlighted the impact that mental ill health can have on organisations. The study found that:

- 37% of sufferers are more likely to get into conflict with colleagues
- 57% find it harder to juggle multiple tasks
- 80% find it difficult to concentrate
- 62% take longer to do tasks
- 50% are potentially less patient with customers/clients.

The study also found that, for the first time, stress is the major cause of long-term absence in manual and non-manual workers.

*Office of National Statistics

**MHFA England

There is still a lack of understanding about mental health and misperceptions persist. It is often thought to be a sign of weakness, which it is not. A better understanding of mental health at work is therefore important because:

- staff with positive mental health are more likely to work productively, interact well with colleagues and adapt to changes in the workplace
- staff supported by their employer are more likely to be able to stay in work or return to work after a period of absence, reducing long-term absences in the organisation
- staff who feel unable to talk to their manager may attend work when they are too ill to safely carry out their duties, which could be a health and safety risk
- if mental ill health is not treated, the pressures of it can cause other 'secondary symptoms'. For example, the strain of coping with depression may cause someone to become dependent on alcohol or drugs.

Commit to improve mental health at work

It can take time to change an organisation's workplace culture, employers should therefore publicise their commitment to promoting positive mental health across the organisation. Doing this can help to start normalising the subject and encourage staff to talk to their manager (and their colleagues) about their mental health.

Alongside this, organisations should develop an action plan covering how they will promote positive mental health. This may include:

Identifying why the organisation is committed to promoting positive mental health and what the objectives of the organisation are.

Planning a range of activities and key messages to educate staff and managers, including **mental health awareness training** sessions to support removing any stigma associated with mental ill health.

Putting support processes in place for staff experiencing mental ill health. For example:

- training staff managers to become Mental Health Champions
- having named mental health First Aiders in the workplace who can be approached if the employee does not want to talk their manager

Creating a mental health policy and reviewing existing policies to ensure managers and staff know where to go for support and further information when required. Create positive standards of behaviour expected of all staff, and how unacceptable conduct will be dealt with.

Ensuring that senior managers champion mental health awareness and act as role models to encourage healthy behaviours. For example, always having lunch away from their desk or work area can encourage staff to copy this positive behaviour.

"We need to banish the misunderstanding and prejudice about those who endure anxiety and depression"

13th June 2016- **David Sproul, senior partner and chief executive of Deloitte UK, writes about the great progress that the firm has made on tackling mental health challenges in the workplace.**

"Despite great strides being made across the City to promote mental health awareness, we still read about tragic stories of people suffering in silence. As chief executive of Deloitte, with responsibility for close to 15,000 people, this makes mental health a cause I am passionate about. In 2013, I signed the 'Time to Change' pledge as I was determined to improve both the understanding of mental health and remove the stigma attached to it in the workplace. At Deloitte, we have always striven to instil a culture that ensures everyone can thrive, develop and succeed. Our people are our most valuable asset and we want them to be fit and happy at work, but also to have the confidence and security to speak up about mental health concerns.

"Although Deloitte has made leaps and bounds to support our people with their mental health challenges, I am well aware that more still needs to be done. There remains a fear about being open about mental health at work, because some incorrectly perceive mental health struggles as a 'weakness'. Changing these attitudes is key if we don't want people to suffer in silence. We need to banish the misunderstanding and prejudice about those who endure anxiety and depression. One way to achieve this is by educating managers and providing people with easy access to mental health information. We have learned that having open and honest conversations about mental health ultimately leads to a more resilient and productive workforce. This should be a priority for every CEO."

Mental health does not discriminate, it can affect any of us at any time.

Your people are your greatest asset and we believe that good business starts with good leadership. Mental health training can provide your line managers with the skills to support the wellbeing of your employees. A happy worker is a productive worker.

Are you ready to take a proactive approach to dealing with mental health issues in the workplace?

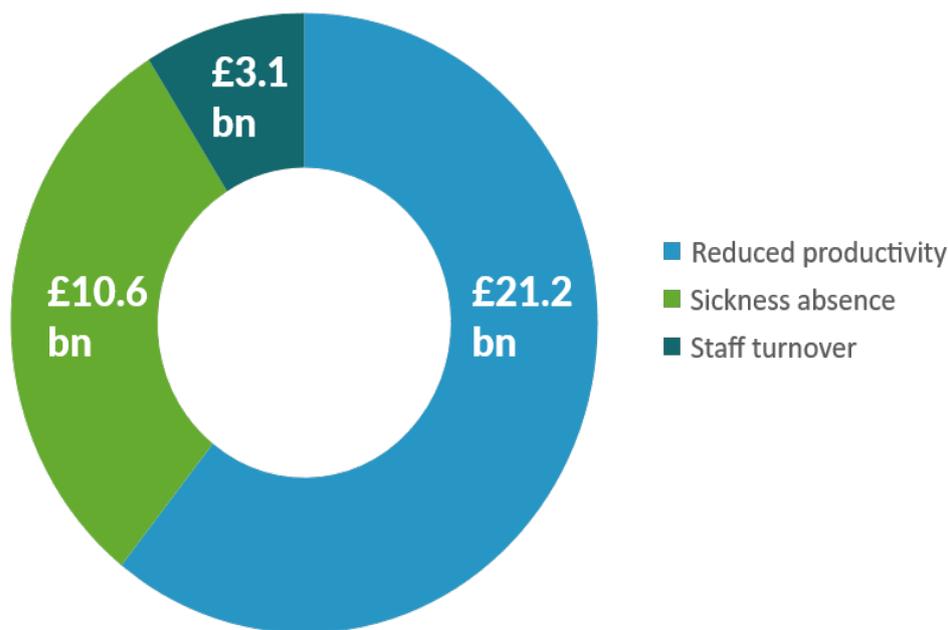
Section 2: Steps you can take to support your workforce

Wellbeing is good for business

Healthy people are happier, more engaged and more productive. Employers across the UK are acting now to support the wellbeing of their people and create mentally healthy businesses.

Stress, anxiety and depression are the biggest cause of sickness absence in our society. Mental ill health is responsible for 91 million working days lost every year.

Mental ill health costs UK employers £34.9 billion each year



Mental ill health costs UK employers an estimated £34.9 billion each year - the equivalent of £1,300 for every employee in the UK workforce. Broken down, that's £10.6 billion in sickness absence, £21.2 billion in reduced productivity and £3.1 billion in replacing staff who leave their jobs for mental health-related reasons.

Simple steps to improve the management of mental health in the workplace will allow employers to save 30% or more of these costs – at least £10 billion a year.

This is where Focused Training can help.

Educate the workforce about mental health

To successfully promote positive mental health, managers and staff may need to become more informed about mental health in general and what support is available

Mental Health First Aid training

Our training and consultancy is here to support you to manage wellbeing proactively and minimise the impact of mental ill health on work and life. We'll work alongside you to deliver training that complements and enhances your existing wellbeing strategy, if you have one. If you don't, we'll get you started on that journey and guide you along the way.

Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) training courses teach people to spot the symptoms of mental health issues, offer initial help and guide a person towards support.

We don't teach people to be therapists, but we do teach people to listen, reassure and respond, even in a crisis - and even potentially stop a crisis from happening.

We have training options to suit a range of timescales and budgets, from basic mental health awareness sessions to a full Mental Health First Aider qualification. They are all designed to benefit employees, line managers, HR professionals, OH workers and senior leaders alike - to let all your people meet the challenges of the workplace head on.

What is Mental Health First Aid (MHFA)?

Mental Health First Aid teaches managers and staff how to spot signs and symptoms of common mental health issues, provide non-judgemental support and reassurance, and guide a person to seek professional support they may need to recover.

Workplace mental health training has been proven to make a lasting difference in people's knowledge and confidence around mental health. Thanks to the development of mental health first aid training courses, responsible employers now have an opportunity to address the key issue of ignorance about mental health in the workplace. Those that choose to do so are likely to improve the workplace for staff and have a positive impact on business profitability.

Strategic approach

MHFA training is most effective when integrated as part of a strategic approach to wellbeing. You might consider how your company can:

- position mental health as a management issue, on a par with physical health and physical first aid.
- promote and communicate wellbeing as a key driver for productivity and maximising performance.
- make employee wellbeing a core part of line managers job responsibilities and provide appropriate time, resource and training so they can support the staff they manage.
- recruit, promote and support line managers with excellent interpersonal skills.
- support line managers to maintain their own wellbeing.
- develop and promote clear referral or assistance pathways so managers can take appropriate action to support employees.

Framework for creating a healthy working environment

We believe the most effective way to create a healthy working environment is to train people in mental health awareness and skills at a blend of levels throughout your organisation. Every workplace is different but here is an adaptable framework that from our experience has had the greatest impact in the workplace.

Mental Health Awareness Sessions

Ideal for: Whole Organisation

Length: Half day course

Lay the groundwork by introducing the idea of talking about mental health.

This will tackle stigma and empower people to utilise the other initiatives and supports you put in place.

MHFA Champions

Ideal for: Line Managers

Length: One day course

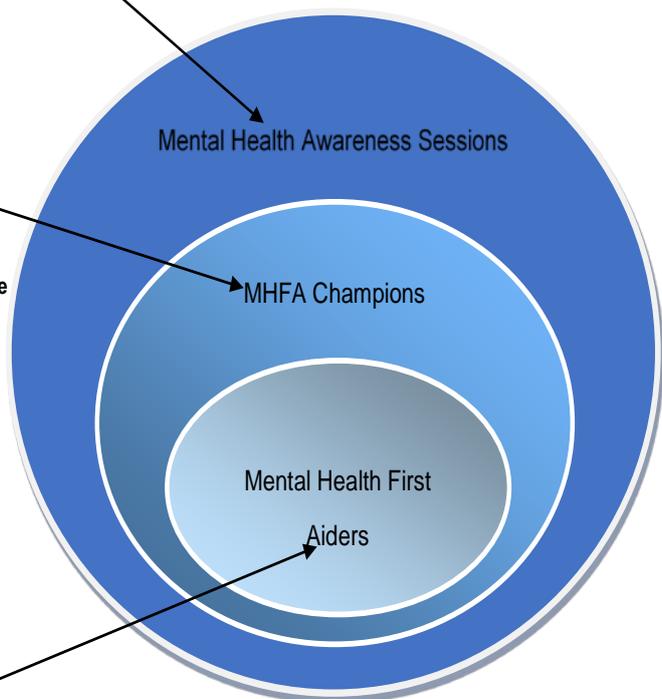
Equip all line managers with the skills and confidence to spot when someone on their team is struggling, and to know how and when to offer support

Mental Health First Aiders

Ideal for: Staff at every level who are interested in being trained

Length: Two day course

Demonstrate your commitment to equality between mental and physical health by training an equal number of Mental Health First Aiders as your organisation does with physical First Aiders



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Getting the Best Out Of Your Investment By Training Mental Health First Aiders

Internal support is very important to successfully embed Mental Health First Aiders into your organisation. Every organisation will have a different approach to how they support their Mental Health First Aiders but here are some examples of support strategies which have proven successful:

Promoting your Mental Health First Aiders

It is a good idea to make employees aware of who the trained Mental Health First Aiders are within the organisation so that they know who to approach if they are experiencing mental health issues. Again, how each organisation approaches this can be different but the following ideas can be considered:

- Provide Mental Health First Aiders lanyards or badges for easy identification.
- Include a list of Mental Health First Aiders with name, photograph and contact details on the intranet.
- Setting up networks (with a clear remit) for support and idea sharing (perhaps overseen by someone with a HR background).
- Putting in place a Mental Health First Aider role and policy document to ensure clarity on expectations.
- Empowering Mental Health First Aiders to maintain their skills with regular refresher skills training. The recommended gap is two years, in line with physical first aid training.
- Develop and promote clear referral or assistance pathways so Mental Health First Aiders can signpost effectively to support.
- Increase mental health literacy across the rest of the organisation to help normalise the conversation around mental health.

Measuring the impact of your investment

We recommend identifying some KPIs to ensure your organisation can measure the impact and outcomes of its investment in MHFA. These could be a mix of anecdotal evidence and data, for example:

- Number of people accessing Employee Assistance Programmes (EAP) or other organisational assistance programmes of support
- Rate of sickness absence and return to work - ideally tracked both before and after MHFA training has been introduced
- Staff surveys and evaluations following MHFA training sessions
- Percentage of people trained who have applied what they learned on the MHFA course
- Percentage of managers feeling more confident speaking to employees about mental health in the workplace
- Percentage increase in employees who would feel comfortable speaking to their line manager about mental health
- Number of critical incident forms filled out by trained Mental Health First Aiders

Why choose Focused Training?

- **Quality assured**
Every MHFA course is delivered by a qualified instructor who has completed The MHFA Instructor Training programme accredited by the Royal Society for Public Health
- **Safe**
Our instructors provide a safe, inclusive learning environment and are trained to support people throughout the whole course
- **Evidence based**
The courses we deliver are written by experts (MHFA England), grounded in research, and tested by people with lived experience of mental ill health.
- Our courses make a lasting difference in people's knowledge and confidence around mental health

Ready to discuss training for your organisation?

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