



Promoting positive mental health in the workplace

Acas – promoting employment relations and HR excellence

October 2017

About Acas – What we do

Acas provides information, advice, training, conciliation and other services for employers and employees to help prevent or resolve workplace problems. Go to www.acas.org.uk for more details.

'Must' and 'should'

Throughout the guide, a legal requirement is indicated by the word 'must' - for example, where an employee's mental ill health amounts to a disability, an organisation must make reasonable adjustments that will help them to do their job without being at a disadvantage.

The word 'should' indicates what Acas considers to be good employment practice.

October 2017

Information in this guide has been revised up to the date of publication. For more information, go to the Acas website at www.acas.org.uk

Legal information is provided for guidance only and should not be regarded as an authoritative statement of the law, which can only be made by reference to the particular circumstances which apply. It may, therefore, be wise to seek legal advice.

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About this guide

The mental health of staff is integral to how they feel about their jobs, how they perform in their role and how they interact with colleagues and customers. Staff with good mental health are more likely to perform well, have good attendance levels and be engaged in their work. It is, therefore, in an employer's interests to:

- Improve mental health awareness in the organisation
- Tackle the causes of work-related mental ill health
- Create a workplace culture where staff feel able to talk about their mental health
- Support staff who are experiencing mental ill health.

Achieving these objectives can help an employer reduce the severity, duration and quantity of mental ill health in its workplace.

This step-by-step guide is written for employers and senior managers. It explains how you should approach changing your workplace to promote positive mental health and where to go when further guidance and support are necessary.

Step 1: Understand mental health

An employer that understands mental health is better able to support and encourage staff to be more open about their mental health. To fully understand mental health, an employer should:

- Recognise what mental health is and what mental ill health actually means
- Identify the causes of mental ill health in the workplace
- Recognise the stigma associated with mental ill health and consider how this can be removed from its workplace
- Know its legal obligations to staff.

What is mental health?

Mental health is the mental and emotional state in which we feel able to cope with the normal pressures of everyday life.

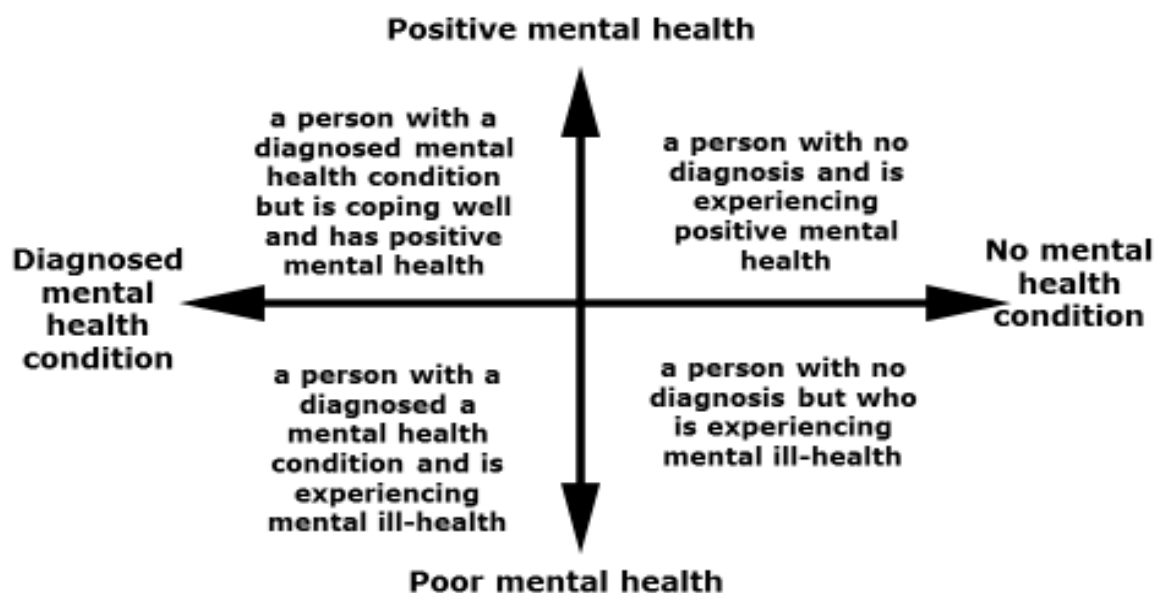
Positive mental health is rarely an absolute state. Factors both in and out of work affect the mental health of staff and move them up or down a spectrum that ranges from good to poor.

For example, an employee may generally have positive mental health but a relationship break up may trigger a period of depression moving them into poor mental health. Alternatively, an employee with a mental health condition, such as depression, may have developed coping strategies that

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are working well and mean they move into having positive mental health.

The spectrum of mental health



(Adapted from "Mental Health Promotion: Paradigms and Practices" K Tudor 1996)

Anyone can suffer a period of mental ill health. It can emerge suddenly, as a result of a specific event, or gradually, where it worsens over time. It can range from feeling stressed to common conditions such as anxiety and depression and, in limited cases, to severe mental health conditions such as bipolar disorder or schizophrenia.

Some conditions can be persistent and may be classed as a disability, while others come and go, giving the individual 'good days' and 'bad days'. While someone may be diagnosed with a mental health condition, with the right support they can still enjoy positive mental health.

Why understanding mental health is important

It is important for organisations to better understand mental health because:

- Mental ill health is very common – the Government's Department of Health advises that one in four of us will experience it at some point in our lives
- The Work Foundation estimated that mental ill health costs the UK economy £70 billion each year
- Staff with positive mental health are more likely to work productively, interact well with colleagues and adapt to changes in the workplace
- Staff who feel unable to talk to their manager about their mental health may attend work when they are too ill to carry out their duties, which may be a health and safety risk

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- 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
- 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.

What can cause mental ill health?

Many causes of mental ill health are related to problems outside of the workplace. For example, a family bereavement or illness may lead to stress, anxiety and/or depression.

While work can be good for people's mental health (providing a sense of identity and personal achievement), **the workplace can sometimes have a negative effect on mental health.** Common workplace causes of mental ill health include:

- Unmanageable workloads and/or demands
- Poorly defined job roles and responsibilities
- Lack of control over work
- Unhealthy work-life balance
- Poor relationships with management and/or work colleagues
- Organisational change and/or job insecurity
- Lack of variety in work
- Lack of career progression opportunities.

While an organisation may not be able to prevent all the causes of mental ill health, it can take steps to reduce the work-related causes.

For more information, go to [Tackle work-related causes of mental ill health](#).

The stigma associated with mental health

There is still a lack of understanding about mental health and misconceptions persist. It is often thought to be a sign of weakness, which it is not. Additionally, people experiencing mental ill health can still be seen as dangerous, when in fact they are more likely to be attacked or harm themselves.

This stigma creates a fear of being judged or discriminated against and discourages people from talking about their mental health. Someone experiencing mental ill health often feels unable to tell their manager or seek help. As a result, they may try to hide their problems and therefore their mental ill health may not be spotted until it becomes a serious problem for the individual and the organisation.

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An organisation that promotes positive mental health and educates its staff can tackle this stigma. Staff who are able to talk openly about their mental health without fear of judgement or discrimination are more likely to:

- **Disclose existing mental health conditions**, making it easier to identify signs of mental distress should they experience mental ill health again in the future
- Be honest about their own mental health and feel able to **seek help at an early stage if their mental health begins to deteriorate**
- **Stop trying to hide their mental ill health**, which can cause additional stress and cause further problems
- **Support colleagues** experiencing mental ill health.

Comply with legal obligations

Employers must make sure they comply with legal obligations when dealing with mental ill health. Where an employee's mental ill health amounts to a disability, **an organisation must consider making 'reasonable adjustments' that will allow them to carry out their job**. A 'reasonable adjustment' is a change or adaptation to the working environment that has the effect of removing or minimising the impact of the individual's disability in the workplace so they are able to undertake their job duties, or apply for a job, without being at a disadvantage.

Whether an adjustment is reasonable will depend on the size of the organisation and available resources. However, many adjustments are simple and inexpensive, and just require good people management.

Adjustments, with the employee's agreement, might include:

- Flexible working hours or changes to their start and/or finish times
- Changes to their role (this could be temporary or permanent)
- Moving their workplace (such as moving their desk to better suit their needs or homeworking)
- Increased help and support from their manager to ensure they can manage their workload
- Providing extra training, coaching or mentoring.

Once in place, an adjustment should be regularly reviewed to check it is still appropriate and/or working as intended.

Understanding when a mental ill health issue amounts to a disability

A person is disabled if they have 'a physical or mental impairment' which has 'a substantial and long-term adverse effect' on their 'ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'.

For example, someone with a mild form of depression that has only minor effects on their daily life may not be covered. But someone with severe

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depression that has substantial effects on their daily life is likely to be considered disabled.

An employer must consider not just current staff, but also anyone with a mental health condition who is applying to join the organisation. It is unlawful to discriminate against applicants because of a previous or current mental health condition which amounts to a disability.

To understand more about what is likely to amount to a disability, see the Acas guide, Disability discrimination: key points for the workplace at www.acas.org.uk/disability

An employer must also assess the risks of stress-related mental ill health for all its staff arising from work activities and take steps to effectively manage and control them. For example, designing jobs to be within the capabilities of staff. The Health and Safety Executive has detailed management standards that employers should follow. For more information, go to www.hse.gov.uk/stress/standards.

Step 2: Make a commitment to improve mental health at work

Once an employer has decided to try to promote positive mental health in its workplace, it should make a commitment by:

- Developing an action plan to change attitudes
- Creating a mental health policy to set out its values
- Ensuring senior managers champion awareness of mental health and fight to remove the stigma around mental health in the workplace.

Develop an action plan to change attitudes

It can take time to change an organisation's workplace culture. An employer should therefore plan how it will promote mental health and highlight the organisation's commitment to supporting staff with their mental health.

Planning how to change the workplace can ensure all relevant avenues are explored and considered. It can also provide a process to follow, with goals and objectives identified that will improve the organisation. An action plan should include:

- Why the organisation is committed to promoting positive mental health and **what the objectives of the organisation are**
- How the organisation will **identify and tackle the causes of mental ill health** in its workplace
- Planning a range of activities and key messages to **educate staff and managers, prevent mental ill health and remove the stigma** associated with mental ill health. This could include engaging in national initiatives such as Mental Health Awareness Week and World Mental Health Day

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- Putting in place **support processes for staff experiencing mental ill health**. For example, training managers in mental health and having named mental health champions in the workplace, who can be approached if the employee does not want to talk their manager
- How the organisation will **measure itself against its objectives**
- A commitment to **revisit the plan on a regular basis** to check its effect on staff mental health and how the organisation is progressing against its objectives.

Publicise the organisation's commitment

An employer should consider publicising its commitment to promoting positive mental health among staff. This can also make the organisation more attractive to job seekers.

There are a number of different initiatives an employer can sign up to. These can help an employer set objectives and plan activities to help achieve them.

For more information, go to [Support and information for an employer or a manager](#)

Create a mental health policy

An organisation should set out its approach towards mental health in a policy. Managers and staff can then refer to one document when requiring guidance, ensuring consistent approaches are taken. A policy can also highlight the organisation's dedication to promoting positive mental health.

A policy may include, for example:

- The organisation's **commitment to promote positive mental health for all its staff and tackle the causes of work-related mental ill health** - this commitment should come from the head of the organisation
- Its aim to **provide a workplace where all staff feel able to talk openly about their mental health** and not fear discrimination if their condition is a disability, or bullying and harassment
- A requirement that **managers and staff receive mental health training**
- **Recognition that an employee's performance or behaviour can be affected if they are experiencing mental ill health** and that appropriate support and adjustments should be explored before considering any formal measures such as disciplinary action
- **A request that staff seek help at the earliest opportunity** in the knowledge their employer will do its best to support them
- Details of **all support services in place for staff experiencing mental ill health**

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- The **types of additional support that might be offered to help a team member** experiencing mental ill health or who has been diagnosed with a mental health condition
- A process to **reintegrate staff absent from work due to mental ill health back into the workplace**
- Where to go for **further support and information**.

When developing a mental health policy, an employer should consult with staff and their representatives, if there are any. Any existing consultation and/or negotiating arrangements should be followed.

Policies should be regularly reviewed to check they are still relevant and working. This might include seeking staff feedback and analysing staff turnover and absence data.

Some employers may decide it is not necessary to have a dedicated mental health policy. However, they should ensure their managers and staff know where to go for support and further information when required.

Review and update existing policies

If an employer creates a mental health policy, its other policies should be checked and updated to refer managers and staff to it when dealing with mental ill health. Policies that may require updating include:

- Absence and sickness
- Health and safety
- Bullying and harassment
- Recruitment and induction
- Redundancy
- Equality
- Whistleblowing
- Performance management

Ensure senior managers champion awareness and fight stigma

All senior managers can play an important role in removing the stigma around mental health from the workplace. This can be helped by them arranging and actively participating in team meetings that discuss mental health and organisational initiatives that promote awareness.

If a senior manager has experienced a period of mental ill health, it can be particularly useful for them to talk about it. This can help highlight to staff how common mental ill health can be and that it is not a barrier to promotion and a successful career.

Senior managers should also act as role models to encourage healthy behaviours. For example, always taking a break from their desk or work area for lunch can encourage staff to take a break as well.

If staff are aware that senior management take mental health seriously and want to support them, it helps to normalise the subject and make staff feel better able to talk to their manager (and their colleagues) about their own mental health.

Taking responsibility for promoting mental health awareness

In larger organisations, having a senior manager responsible for overseeing the development of a policy and putting support processes in place can help to prioritise mental health and drive the change across the organisation. It can, therefore, be helpful to assign a senior manager to be a Mental Health Champion. Their role should include:

- Raising mental health awareness across the organisation to normalise the topic
- Promoting positive and preventative approaches to good mental health
- Checking on how successful the promotion of mental health has been across the organisation
- Seeking thoughts from staff on how to improve mental health across the organisation
- Being available to speak to staff and provide support.

A senior manager acting as a mental health champion should consider seeking further training in mental health, such as taking a mental health first aid course. For more information go to [Support and information for an employer or manager](#).

Step 3: Identify ways to improve the workplace

An employer should identify how it could change its workplace to improve the mental health of its staff. In particular it should:

- Tackle the work-related causes of mental ill health
- Provide additional resources of support
- Work with trade unions and other employee representatives.

Tackle work-related causes of mental ill health

An employer should seek to identify what areas of the workplace might be a cause of mental ill health. Gathering information on staff turnover, sickness absence and performance data can be a good starting point.

Staff should also be involved in identifying these areas. They will be aware of what the organisation does well and what it needs to improve. They are also likely to be able to suggest how the workplace itself could be improved. Involving staff can create a sense of ownership in the programme and usually help get staff to commit to the resulting changes.

In larger organisations, this might be done through team meetings or an employee survey. In smaller organisations, the owner may simply talk to staff on a one-to-one basis to get their thoughts.

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For example...

Adnan runs a small independent shop. Recently, one employee left saying they were becoming depressed by working there every day. Adnan took this personally and wants to take steps to ensure the shop is a good place to work.

He arranges one-to-ones with his staff to talk about their feelings towards work, what they dislike about it and what they would improve if they could.

A few say that while generally happy, they do feel there is a lack of responsibility in their roles. It is suggested that Adnan could start delegating some of his work. This would provide staff with more variety, more responsibility and the chance to learn new skills.

Adnan thinks this is a good idea and makes an effort to delegate appropriate tasks to staff.

Some causes of mental ill health may be difficult to tackle. For example, job insecurity when there is the possibility of redundancies. However, many causes can be reduced or removed when carefully considered.

Common causes of mental ill health and potential solutions include:

Unmanageable workloads and/or demands	<p>Review and/or redesign job roles to ensure that the demands are reasonable and appropriate. For more information, go to www.acas.org.uk/jobevaluation</p> <p>Create clear job descriptions that ensure staff and their managers fully understand the duties and tasks of each role.</p> <p>Provide support and additional training to help staff manage their workload effectively.</p>
Poorly defined job roles and responsibilities	<p>Create targets and objectives for the role that are closely aligned to the goals of the organisation.</p> <p>Review the organisation's induction process to ensure it provides an introduction to the role and how the role fits within their team and the organisation as a whole.</p>
Lack of control over work	<p>Give staff as much control over their work as is practicable. For example, have clearly defined objectives but allow staff to control how they approach the task.</p> <p>Involve staff in workplace decisions that affect them. For example, use team meetings, employee surveys or staff forums to seek their views on how the organisation might be improved and highlight how</p>

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	<p>their suggestions have been considered and actioned where practicable.</p>
<p>Unhealthy work-life balance</p>	<p>Encourage staff to consider flexible working arrangements to help them better meet their responsibilities outside of the workplace and reduce the stress these can cause. For more information, go to www.acas.org.uk/flexibleworking</p> <p>Ensure staff take the breaks (such as lunch break) they are entitled to during the day and take their annual leave entitlement each year.</p>
<p>Poor relationships with management and/or work colleagues</p>	<p>Managers should provide feedback promptly after a team member does good work to highlight that their efforts are appreciated.</p> <p>Managers should have regular one-to-ones and catch-ups with their team members to help build good working relationships.</p> <p>Managers should have an open door policy for team members to discuss any problems with them.</p> <p>Have clear discipline and grievance procedures and investigate any complaints thoroughly and fairly.</p>
<p>Organisational change and/or job insecurity</p>	<p>Staff should be involved in any decisions that may affect them and be kept updated about potential changes.</p> <p>Suggestions from staff should be considered and the reasons behind a decision fully explained to them.</p> <p>Be honest with staff, even if it may be bad news.</p>
<p>Lack of variety in work</p>	<p>Ensure staff understand why their work is important.</p> <p>Review and/or redesign job roles to reorganise working processes and create more varied responsibilities. For example, rotate duties between staff working at the same grade.</p>
<p>Limited career progression within the organisation</p>	<p>An employer should discuss with team members how they might be developed further to benefit them and the organisation.</p> <p>Opportunities - such as further education, training courses, and/or the delegation of work for staff to acquire new skills/experience - should be identified.</p>

An employer should always seek to involve staff in changes to the workplace. For some changes there will be a legal requirement to consult with staff about a proposed change. For example, redesigning and

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changing the job roles of staff will require varying their contracts and a variation to staff contracts must be agreed with those affected.

For more information, go to www.acas.org.uk/varyingacontract

Set up additional resources of support for staff

Staff should be encouraged to tell their manager of any existing mental health conditions or if they become concerned about their mental health.

However sometimes they may find it easier to speak to someone who isn't their manager. Therefore an employer should consider how else it may be able to support staff.

Within the organisation, an employer could designate particular managers or work colleagues to be mental health champions in the workplace. Mental health champions can help raise mental health awareness. They can also provide an additional source of confidential support for someone experiencing mental ill health, and who does not want to confide in their manager.

For example...

Tania owns a business employing over 100 people. While she wants to encourage her staff to talk to their manager about their mental health, she acknowledges that sometimes staff do not initially want to do so.

Unsure what else to offer, she gets feedback from team meetings on what type of additional support staff would be most likely to use. This shows that staff would like a contact who is outside of the line management structure. Tania therefore offers other staff the opportunity to become mental health champions.

She asks for expressions of interest and, after interviews, arranges for those chosen to go on an external training course to learn the skills the role requires.

An employer may also use external services to provide additional support. Services, such as Employee Assistance Programmes, can provide round-the-clock, confidential support, advice and counselling for staff dealing with personal problems that might adversely affect their job performance, health and wellbeing. For more information go to, [Support and information for an employer or manager](#).

Taking steps to provide additional resources for staff to seek support can help encourage staff to raise any concerns they have over their mental health at the earliest opportunity.

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Work with trade union and other employee representatives

Trade union and other employee representatives can play a vital part in promoting positive mental health in the workplace. They are often trained and/or experienced in mental health and can help an employer get messages across to staff.

Reps usually possess an awareness of the organisation and may be more willing to highlight areas of concern to management than staff. They might also know how similar issues have been successfully dealt with in other organisations.

They can provide an additional source of support for staff experiencing mental ill health, including if the employee is not yet ready to talk to their manager. It can also be helpful to suggest an employee experiencing mental ill health can be accompanied by a rep or a work companion at any meetings with their manager. This can reassure the employee and make them more willing to talk openly.

Step 4: Educate the workforce about mental health

To successfully promote positive mental health, it is important that staff understand what mental health means and know what support is available for them should they experience mental ill health. An employer should therefore:

- Train all managers to deal with mental ill health
- Train all staff on mental health awareness to help them understand their own mental health and support the mental health of colleagues
- Continue to regularly talk about mental health.

Train managers to deal with mental ill health

The role of a manager is to support their team members to be healthy and motivated so that they can perform at their best. However, without training, managers may not spot the signs that a team member is experiencing mental ill health.

Additionally, even if they do become concerned about a team member, they may lack the confidence to approach the matter, fearing they will get drawn into areas they are unqualified or unable to deal with.

However, managers should keep in mind that they deal with physical ill health on a regular basis and they should approach mental ill health in a similar way in focussing on how to support the team member to continue working or return to work when they are ready.

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Managers should already have many of the skills required to manage staff experiencing mental ill health. For example, being an effective communicator and experience in having difficult conversations.

To help a manager become confident in dealing with mental ill health they should receive training to:

- Become more emotionally intelligent and improve their self-awareness and social-awareness
- Spot the signs of mental ill health
- Understand the common types of mental ill health and the differences between them
- Understand the types of support and possible adjustments that may help a team member experiencing mental ill health
- Refer or signpost staff to local services or external support.

For example...

Maya is a manager at a care home and is experienced in supporting staff with mental ill health. She has spotted that Roger's behaviour has changed. He has been late for work several times and colleagues have mentioned that he is not completing all the tasks he is set.

Maya arranges an informal meeting in private. At the meeting, Roger admits that his wife has left him and he is struggling to cope. Maya encourages Roger to go to his GP to talk about it, but makes clear that she and the organisation will try to support him as best they can.

Maya suggests they have another chat next week, after Roger has seen his GP, to discuss what she can do to help him. She also makes it clear that if Roger ever needs to talk about it or needs more support, she or the organisation will help if they can.

Acas offers training courses for HR professionals and anyone with management responsibilities on mental health awareness. For further information, go to www.acas.org.uk/training.

There are also external training resources that managers may find useful. For more information go to, [Support and information for an employer or manager](#).

Some organisations may not have the resources to train all their managers in mental health at once. In these circumstances, an employer should assign certain managers to be trained as mental health champions, trained in mental health and then available to assist other managers in the organisation.

For information on managing staff experiencing mental ill health, go to www.acas.org.uk/managingmentalhealth

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Train staff

All staff should receive training in mental health awareness. Training should cover:

- The organisation's commitment to promoting positive mental health
- The law concerning equality and discrimination, and how it can be relevant to attitudes towards mental health in the workplace
- Standards of behaviour expected of all staff, and how unacceptable conduct will be dealt with
- What staff can do to improve and maintain positive mental health. For example, fun or productive out-of-work activities
- Spotting the signs that they or someone they know may be experiencing mental ill health
- Who they should go to if they need advice or support. For example, their manager and/or mental health champion. If there are trade unions in the workplace, they may also be able to offer further support and advice
- Any concerns or questions staff may have.

Ideally, training should be conducted by a senior manager, HR professional or an external trainer who is trained and experienced in dealing with mental ill health.

It may be helpful for an employer to provide staff with written summaries of key points from the training that they can refer back to should situations arise in the workplace.

The training session should also be added to an organisation's induction process so all new members of staff also receive the training.

Continue talking about mental health

An employer should use a mixture of communication channels to continue promoting positive mental health to help ensure staff do not forget their training or revert back to old habits. Channels include:

- **Team meetings** which are a good way to regularly discuss how the team are feeling about their workload, upcoming challenges and get staff thinking about their own mental health and what affects it. Talking about mental health in team meetings can also normalise the topic. While it is likely that some team members will take a more active role, a manager should ensure that all team members are able to contribute so no one feels excluded
- **One-to-one meetings** between a manager and a team member provide regular opportunities to discuss mental health, check on how the team member is doing and identify any issues early. Conversations that may contain personal information the team member may not want widely known should be held in private
- **Informal chats around the workplace** should be a normal part of workplace life, with managers regularly working around their team.

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This can help them check on how staff are doing and whether there are any issues that may be affecting the mental health of team members

- **Awareness days/weeks**, such as Mental Health Awareness Week, can be used as a set date when staff are asked to think about their mental health. Activities could include talks and/or blogs from people who have experienced mental ill health sharing their insights. This can be a good way to get staff talking about their own experiences and reminding them of the organisation's commitment to promoting positive mental health
- **Noticeboards** (in a physical location or online) provide a set area for an employer to put up general information or key messages around mental health
- **Newsletters and email** are useful for general communications and for keeping staff up-to-date with any actions the organisation is taking to improve mental health in the workplace.

Step 5: Where to go for further support

It is essential an employer and its managers are aware of what further resources are available for further support and information when required. In particular an employer should know:

- Where they and their managers can go for additional help and advice
- Where to encourage staff to go for additional help and advice.

Support and information for an employer or manager

There are a range of organisations and programmes to help an employer and its managers.

To help promote mental health awareness and improve workplaces:

- **Mindful Employer** is a UK-wide, NHS initiative. It is aimed at increasing awareness of mental health at work and providing support for businesses in recruiting and retaining staff. For more information, go to www.mindfulemployer.net or call 01392 677064
- **Business in the Community** is a network committed to ensuring that age, gender, race and wellbeing do not limit an employee's engagement and success in the workplace. It provides toolkits on Mental Health, Suicide prevention and Suicide postvention to help employers support the mental health and wellbeing of employees. For more information go to, www.bitc.org.uk
- **Time to change** can help organisations develop an action plan, and set objectives and activities that will be undertaken to achieve them. For more information, go to www.time-to-change.org.uk
- **Employee assistance programmes** can provide round-the-clock support for staff dealing with personal problems that might adversely impact their job performance, health, and wellbeing. This includes

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issues such as relationship problems, money worries and other pressures. An employer can join an EAP for a fee. For a list of providers, go to www.eapa.org.uk

- **Mental Health First Aid England** offers courses that can help managers and/or HR staff identify, understand and help a person who may be experiencing mental ill health. For more information, go to www.mhfaengland.org

To help managers support team members who experience mental ill health:

- **Acas website** provides information and guidance to help support and manage staff experiencing mental ill health. For more information, go to www.acas.org.uk/managingmentalhealth
- **Fit for work** offers free occupational health assessments for staff who reach four weeks of sickness absence. The aim is to help them return to work. It can also provide free work-related health advice through a telephone advice service and website. For more information, go to www.fitforwork.org
- **Wellness Action Plans** can provide a practical way for a manager to support the mental health of their team members. They can be used to help identify when a team member may be experiencing mental ill health and what support to offer during these periods. Mental health charity Mind have guides on creating Wellness Action Plans. For more information, go to www.mind.org.uk or call 0300 123 3393
- **Additional help** may be available from groups where the employer is a member. For example, if an employer is a member of the Confederation of British Industry or the Federation of Small Businesses, it could seek its help and guidance.

Support and information for staff

When a member of staff is experiencing mental ill health, they may benefit from seeking external support. There are a number of services that may be able to help. These include:

- **Access to work** can provide advice and an assessment of workplace needs for individuals, with disabilities or long-term health conditions, who are already in work or about to start. Grants may be available to help cover the cost of workplace adaptations that enable an employee to carry out their job without being at a disadvantage. These might be used to pay the costs of adapting equipment or buying special equipment for the employee, the cost of getting to work if they cannot use public transport and/or disability awareness training for colleagues. For more information, go to www.gov.uk/access-to-work
- **Mind** is the leading mental health charity in England and Wales. Their helpline and website provide information and support to empower anyone experiencing mental ill health—and general advice on mental

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health-related law. For more information, go to www.mind.org.uk or call 0300 123 3393

- **NHS choices** has a website that offers information and practical advice for anyone experiencing mental ill health. For more information, go to www.nhs.uk/livewell/mentalhealth
- **Remploy** offers a free and confidential Workplace Mental Health Support Service for anyone absent from work or finding work difficult because of a mental health condition. It aims to help people remain in, or return to, their role. For more information, go to www.remploy.co.uk or call 0300 4568114
- **Rethink Mental Illness** is the largest national voluntary sector provider of mental health services, offering support groups, advice and information on mental health problems. For more information, go to www.rethink.org or call 0300 5000 927.

Promoting positive mental health in the workplace

Further information

Acas learning online

Acas offers free e-learning courses at www.acas.org.uk/elearning including Mental Health Awareness for Employers. It gives an overview of managing mental health in the workplace.

Acas training

Our training is carried out by experienced Acas staff who work with businesses every day. Training can be specially designed for companies too. Current training includes:

- Mental Health Awareness for Employers
- Building Resilience in the Workplace
- Stress in the Workplace
- Effective Absence Management

Go to www.acas.org.uk/training for up-to-date information about our training and booking places on face-to-face courses.

Also, Acas specialists can visit an organisation, diagnose issues in its workplace, tailor training and provide practical solutions to address the challenges it faces. To find out more, go to, www.acas.org.uk/businesssolutions.

Acas guidance

- Managing people
- Stress at work
- Equality and discrimination: understand the basics
- Prevent discrimination: support equality
- Discrimination: what to do if it happens
- Disability discrimination: key points for the workplace
- Code of practice on discipline and grievance
- Guide on discipline and grievances at work
- Bullying and harassment at work: a guide for managers and employers
- Flexible working and work-life balance
- The right to request flexible working
- Handling in a reasonable manner requests to work flexibly

Promoting positive mental health in the workplace

Keep up-to-date and stay informed

Visit www.acas.org.uk for:

- Employment relations and employment law guidance – free to view, download or share
- Tools and resources including free-to-download templates, forms and checklists
- An introduction to other Acas services including mediation, conciliation, training, arbitration and the Acas Early Conciliation service
- Research and discussion papers on the UK workplace and employment practices
- Details of Acas training courses, conferences and events.

Sign up for the free Acas e-newsletter. The Acas email newsletter is a great way of keeping up to date with changes to employment law and to hear about events in your area. Find out more at:

www.acas.org.uk/subscribe

The Acas Model Workplace. This engaging and interactive tool can help an employer diagnose employment relations issues in its workplace. The tool will work with you to identify areas of improvement you can consider, and will point toward the latest guidance and best practice:

www.acas.org.uk/modelworkplace

Acas Helpline Online. Have a question? We have a database of frequently asked employment queries that has been developed to help both employees and employers. It is an automated system, designed to give you a straightforward answer to your employment questions, and also gives links to further advice and guidance on our website:

www.acas.org.uk/helplineonline

Acas Helpline. Call the Acas Helpline for free and impartial advice. We can provide employers and employees with clear and confidential guidance about any kind of dispute or relationship issue in the workplace. You may want to know about employment rights and rules, best practice or may need advice about a dispute. Whatever it is, our team are on hand. Find out more: www.acas.org.uk/helpline

Look for us on:

Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/acasorguk>

LinkedIn - <http://linkd.in/cYJbuU>

Twitter - <http://twitter.com/acasorguk>

YouTube - <https://www.youtube.com/user/acasorguk>