Mental Health in the Workplace for Managers

Course outline

Duration: 3.5 hours including breaks

Modules:

1. What is mental health?

Learning objectives: By the end of the module, learners will be able to

- give examples of clearly stigmatising language
- give examples of good language to use, and language to avoid
- agree that we all have a state of mental health at all times
- discuss definitions of mental health and what it means to them
- explain the difference between mental health and mental illness
- use the concept of the Stress Bucket to describe their own stress and general wellbeing
- use the Mental Health Continuum to describe the difference between someone functioning and not functioning whether or not they have a mental illness

Adaptations

We will additionally use this section to explore our new stressors brought about by the COVID-19 outbreak as well as our new ways to keep well. We will also consider that if someone is not functioning well, what might that look like now?

2. What is mental illness?

Learning objectives: By the end of the module, learners will be able to

- discuss definitions of 'mental illness'
- state that mental illness is common
- list signs and symptoms of general mental ill health
- briefly outline some common and less common conditions such as depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia and personality disorders and state where they can learn more about them
- list different treatments, considering that mental illness is treatable and that there are many different options available but that some illnesses are harder to treat than others.
- discuss the bio-psycho-social model to explain potential causes and treatments.

Adaptations

We consider signs and symptoms of general mental ill health and how this might show up in this new world of home-working and remote line-management since the COVID-19 outbreak. How might you spot poor mental health over email or the phone?

3. Mental illness in the workplace

Learning objectives: By the end of the module, learners will be able to

- discuss the impact of mental ill health at work when it is undisclosed/unsupported
- discuss the impact of stigma/negative culture in workplaces

- define presenteeism
- recall that presenteeism costs more than absenteeism in relation to mental ill health

Adaptations

The importance of looking out for presenteeism during the COVID-19 outbreak, especially, and what it might look like.

4. How can mangers respond?

Learning objectives: By the end of the module, learners will be able to

- list some responsibilities they have in relation to mental health/illness
- list key pieces of legislation/law relating to mental health in the workplace
- list examples of reasonable adjustments for people's mental health
- recall the stress management standards which make up Stress Risk Assessments, and where to get more information on them
- describe elements of good practice for supporting others and promoting a positive culture around mental health at work

Adaptations

We explore issues that still affect us as employers/employees during the COVID-19 outbreak. There are still rights that we have and tools we can use, even though we may not be working face-to-face with our colleagues in the same way. Delegates learn about reasonable adjustments and examples that can support people with poor mental health or prevent people experiencing mental ill health in the first place – what might reasonable adjustments look like in your current way of working? They begin action-planning for their best-practice workplace – what should we all be doing more or less of in order to promote a positive culture around mental health? What does this best practice look like during the COVID-19 outbreak? We inform delegates of Stress Risk Assessments including how to carry them out, where they can learn more about them and point out that we can still carry these out and use them when working remotely.

5. Communication

Learning objectives: By the end of the module, learners will be able to

- Describe a supportive conversation including:
  a. Things to try and things to avoid and
  b. recalling features of the 'RECEs' framework for having supportive conversations
- Identify places they could signpost a colleague to in a non-emergency
- Demonstrate these skills and use of RECEs using a scenario

Adaptations

If you have spotted signs of poor mental health in a colleague, how do you have a conversation about it? This may seem particularly difficult if your way of working has changed recently. We consider how these conversations may be different over the phone or a video call where they would have previously been face-to-face. Delegates practice this with a scenario that we can work with you to create to ensure it is relevant to the employees we are training.

6. Looking after ourselves

Learning objectives: By the end of the module, learners will be able to

- identify signs of stress
- use the Stress Cycle to manage stress
- explain and complete a Wellbeing Plan
- describe the Five Ways to Wellbeing
- identify one thing they will start and/or do differently as a result of today

Adaptations

What does stress look like for you and what can you do about it? This is especially important during the COVID-19 outbreak as our usual activities and pastimes may now be unavailable to us. We encourage delegates to consider what they **can** do now, rather than what they can't. Some tools that can support this include; the Stress Cycle to stop stress responses before they build, completing a wellbeing plan – recognising what wellbeing looks like to you and how you can proactively maintain it, and the Five Ways to Wellbeing and how they can still be engaged with during lockdown.