

Not too tough to talk

Ways to help men's mental health in the work place.



PAM Group provide a range of psychological health services that keep people healthy and at work. Too often men are under serviced partly because of an out-dated macho culture and partly because they don't know how to access help particularly around their mental wellbeing. Employers would do well to ensure that they have the appropriate solutions in place and encourage people to use them. If you need any assistance or further information contact *Louise Abbs Managing Director PAM Wellbeing*.

Employers have an important responsibility to support this area of health as men are more likely to 'tough out' an illness and ignore symptoms. This is particularly a challenge with addressing mental health concerns.

It's important to encourage employees to talk openly about mental health so that managers and colleagues can identify warning signs and intervene early to prevent mental health issues spiralling out of control.

Where men are reluctant to reveal what's on their mind at home or to a doctor, employers can create a space where no subject is taboo. This can save lives.

The six ways highlighted to help men and their mental wellbeing are;

Get the culture right

To combat the taboo around mental health, the workplace should be a comfortable place to discuss this. Leaders can set a good example by making it clear the business takes the subject seriously and being open about any experiences of their own.

Appoint mental health champions

Staff who are trained as mental health champions can drive mindfulness and wellbeing initiatives. These could involve anything from lunchtime exercise classes - online or face-to-face to exploring shared interest groups or volunteering opportunities.

Train up a team of mental health first aiders

These are employees trained to identify issues by looking

at behavioural traits and patterns, such as unusual sickness absence or presenteeism, and offer appropriate support.

Invest in training for leaders and line managers

Investing in training can help line managers learn more about mental health in general, but also the specific challenges which may face staff at different life stages. This training can be delivered remotely, to fit alongside core duties.

Establish an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)

Wellbeing and mental health initiatives available through an EAP can help support employees in all areas of their lives, including work pressures, relationship issues and money worries. Services such as PAM Assist include counselling options delivered through clinically validated smartphone apps.

Make use of wellbeing services from your insurance provider

Apps, helplines and online tools such as PAMLife to ease access to services directly related to mental health, such as counselling, as well as physical wellbeing support - nutrition services, for instance - which have a close relationship with mental health.

Exercise-related staff benefits also fit in well with wellbeing initiatives, such as walking, discounted gym memberships and cycle-to-work schemes.

Louise Abbs is a qualified Psychotherapist and Managing Director of PAM Wellbeing see www.pamwellbeing.co.uk