

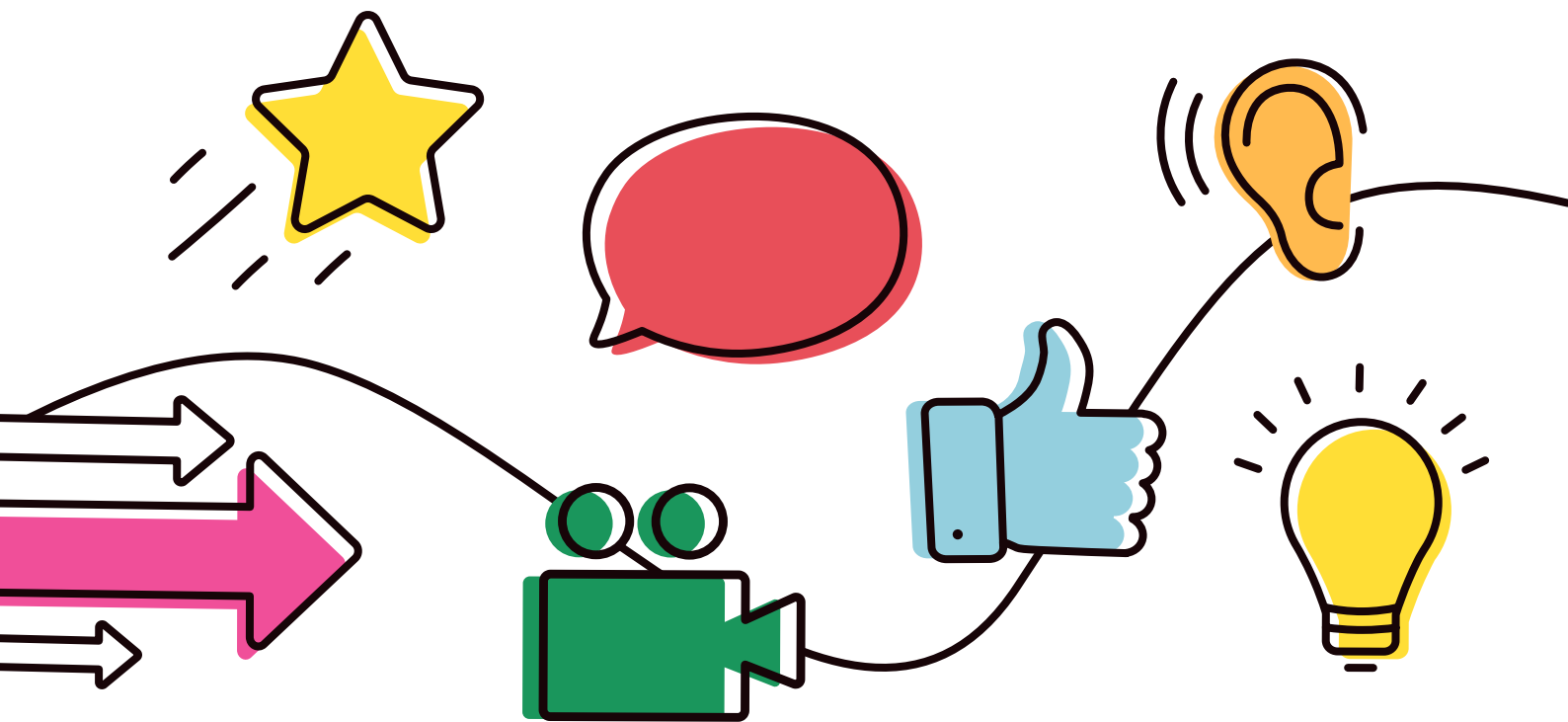
time to change

Wales

let's end mental health discrimination

Employer Pledge

A complete handbook for Champions in the workplace



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Looking after your Mental Health

This handbook has been developed by Time to Change in England and adapted to a Welsh audience.



Thank you for becoming a Champion for your workplace. Your work will help change how we all think and act about mental health driving this movement forward for your colleagues and for your organisation.

Why are Champions important for the workplace?

Champions are essential in challenging stigma and changing the way employees think and act about mental health in workplaces. They are at the forefront of our movement to make it commonplace for employees to say “I’m struggling”, “I’m working too much” or “I need support” in the workplace without the fear of negative consequences whether real or perceived.

Your employer has signed the Time to Change Wales Employer Pledge to demonstrate their commitment to creating a workplace free from stigma and discrimination. Together, we can create a working environment that is supportive and understanding towards employees experiencing mental health problems.

We are working together with your employer to help them achieve this vision and your role is instrumental in driving this forward.

Champions will help to embed positive changes within the workplace, through tackling mental health stigma and instigating initiatives to improve wellbeing amongst their fellow employees.

At Time to Change Wales, we support Employee Champions by providing them with materials and resources for the workplace, support, good practice advice and peer networking.



Why does my organisation need me as a Champion?

Our movement has a monumental mission. Stigma and discrimination against people with mental health problems exists in our communities and workplaces across Wales. We need to break it down by helping as many people as possible to change how they think and act about mental health, accepting that it belongs to everybody including themselves. You may not have access to huge amounts of money and resources - but your strength lies in the voices of thousands of people who believe passionately that change must happen.

We need you to join our collective call for change and to carry that voice into your workplace. We will support you with the skills and knowledge to run campaign activity in your workplace. What we need as a movement is like-minded people who have the passion to create change. Making a commitment and getting the conversation started is your first step.



What would make me an amazing Champion?

If you are a passionate individual, with or without experience of mental health problems, who knows in their heart that the status quo in our approach to dealing with mental health is not only unproductive and unjust, but is also unsustainable. We want you to join our movement and start conversations about mental health by running events and activities in your workplace. In time you will notice your colleagues changing how they think and act about mental health.

Some questions to ask yourself to help you decide if you want to be a Champion in the workplace?

- Am I passionate about tackling the stereotypes, stigma and discrimination associated with people who experience mental health problems?
- Do I have the time and resources to lead an anti-stigma activity?
- Am I willing to engage colleagues constructively and positively when taking action to tackle mental health stigma?
- Will I spread the word about Time to Change Wales and advocate what the campaign has to offer in my organisation?
- Can I empower colleagues to share their experiences of mental health problems in the workplace?
- Am I able to persevere despite internal barriers and challenges?

Your employer believes that tackling mental health stigma and promoting wellbeing in the workplace should be one of its top priorities and needs employees, who are not afraid to throw their weight behind this important cause, to step up and Champion change from within.



So what do Champions do?

As a Champion, you will raise awareness about mental health and help to break down stigma in the workplace. How you do this is completely up to you (we encourage you to be creative!). However, anti-stigma activity should help support your Employer Pledge action plan as well as your employer's overall strategy for supporting employees.

Champions have a leading role in ending stigma and the culture of silence. If you can commit to normalising conversations around mental health this will have an impact on overall culture and perceptions among your colleagues.

Every activity, no matter how big or small, contributes to our collective goal of tackling mental health stigma, such as organising a stall in your canteen or starting a conversation about mental health with your team. We have some ideas for getting started here. [\[link here?\]](#)

What could I gain from being a Champion?

- The knowledge that you are part of a monumental movement to create positive change.
- Being part of a network of like-minded individuals where you can learn and share knowledge.
- Increasing your understanding around wellbeing and challenge mental health stigma in the workplace.
- Developing skills outside of your role and learning from your peers.

Increased confidence in public speaking about issues you are passionate about.

- Helping to end mental health stigma and changing how your workplace thinks and acts about mental health.



What support can I expect as a Champion from Time to Change Wales?

Keep you informed by sending you updates on the campaign and what's coming up.

Be on hand to answer any questions related to the Champion's role.

Signpost you to information and guidance to support you in addressing wider workplace wellbeing issues including training and useful resources within our network.

Provide you with tips and techniques to increase wellbeing amongst you and your colleagues, including how to manage challenging conversations with colleagues who are struggling.

Providing advice and resources for executing in-house awareness campaigns.



How do I get started as a Champion? Tips for getting the process started

Getting started is really easy, the following step by step process will clarify what you would need to do to get yourself ready to start those conversations that will change people's lives.

- ✓ Check with HR who your Time to Change Wales Pledge Lead is. Then connect with them and ensure you are part of their mailing list so that you get updates on what's happening internally.
- ✓ Find out if your organisation has other registered Employee Champions and connect with them. They will be crucial for providing support and information to help you accomplish what you want to achieve in your organisation.
- ✓ Identify what skills you have that you like using or want to develop more.
- ✓ Think about the activities that you can do to start conversations directly and indirectly.
- ✓ Map out in a calendar when you can do them and be mindful of your workload and commitments.
- ✓ Enlist support from your Line Manager if you haven't yet done so as they will also be key in enabling you to do this role.
- ✓ Make your own go to list for signposting by including details of everything your organisation has to offer to your colleagues, for example Employee Assistance Programme. You can also take a look at the list we have suggested here.
- ✓ Read this handbook fully and if you can get trained do so.
- ✓ You are ready to start those conversations. Why not try out these conversation starters. [\[link here\]](#)



Starting a conversation and encouraging people to talk about mental health

Starting a conversation can be a powerful way to challenge mental health stigma and get people to think about their perceptions. For all of us, our mental health is just as important as our physical health. Talking helps us all recognise this and can dispel misconceptions about mental health problems and the people who experience them.

You may want to start with the following activities:

- Talk about Time to Change Wales and why you're supporting our work.
- Ask someone how they are doing, and take time to listen and engage with their response.
- If you have your own personal experience of mental health problems, and only if it feels right for you, and you know how much of your story you want to share, you can talk about this personal experience with your colleagues or team.

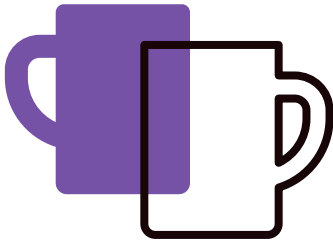
Talk about what helps you maintain wellbeing, relax or de-stress. Ask your colleagues what helps them. Check out our 'Coping with stress at work' page.

- Use news stories related to mental health to start a discussion.
- You could start with a fact such as one of those below:

1 in 4 people will experience a mental health problem in any given year.

61% of workers have experienced mental health issues relating to work. UK workers experience depression, stress or anxiety.

Mental ill health is the leading cause of sickness absence in the UK.



The main messages to get across are...

We're all human.
We all have mental health.
**Talking about it makes
an enormous difference.**

There are also other key messages that you may want to build conversations around:

- Mental health is just as important as physical health.
- Mental health problems are common and can be treated.
- Small things make a big difference when it comes to mental health.
- It helps to talk about mental health, but it can take courage. Just asking 'how are you?' - And taking time to listen properly to the response - can make an enormous difference.
- We all need support sometimes.
- Look out for signs of unmanageable stress in you and your colleagues.
- Find and implement ways to take care of yourself.



How important is it to be aware of boundaries as a Champion?

Establishing and maintaining boundaries is vital to your role.

Boundaries exist to protect everyone. Establishing boundaries can help to clarify your role as a Champion and the relationship you'll have with colleagues when in that role. Being clear about what you can and cannot offer as a Champion will help you enjoy the role and manage other people's expectations.

This section will detail some things you may want to think about when looking to set up clear boundaries, which could help keep you and your colleagues safe. These are some suggestions of things for you to consider but is not an exhaustive list or a guide to be followed. Our suggestions are not intended to take the place of your organisation's policies and guidelines, and you should always seek out and be guided by the information your organisation provides.

Boundaries that may be important to you in your role as a Champion:

Time: Knowing how much time you can offer to the role and the support you can provide to your colleagues.

Abilities: Being clear about what professional skills, knowledge and abilities you have or do not have to help others.

Confidentiality: Being clear on what you can and cannot keep confidential and the circumstances when things that have been shared with you may need to be shared elsewhere. Look for this information in your organisation's data protection and confidentiality policies.



Be clear on what your role is and is not

A Champion is someone who operates within the workplace to raise awareness of mental health and challenge mental health stigma.

- Remember, the Champion role is not a 'pastoral' role. It's important others don't see you as a counsellor and that you don't feel that you must go beyond your abilities and role to provide ongoing emotional support to someone because of your role as a Champion.
- As a Champion and if you feel comfortable doing so, you can offer peer support, an alternative point of contact on an equal basis, grounded in your shared experiences.
- Alternatively, you may be more comfortable doing practical things like emailing / putting up posters and that is ok too.



Tips for Maintaining Boundaries

Maintaining clear boundaries starts with understanding your role and keeping it clearly defined.

It may be helpful for you to look at the Champion's role description, which you can find on our website and identify the kind of activities you are already undertaking or want to undertake. This way, you can define what being a Champion will mean to you.

By being clear about what activities you'll undertake, you can create and maintain your boundaries, and avoid feeling overburdened or pressured to act outside of what you're comfortable doing.

Keep in mind what your Champion role is about

You can use any skills you may have gained from training such as MHFA (Mental Health First Aid) but remember you are acting in the capacity of a Champion, not as a counsellor or as a mental health first aider. It is important to separate your professional role and your role as a Champion. You may be a trained counsellor or mental health professional, however as a Champion, your role is to listen and signpost, and not to make a professional judgement.

Never promise confidentiality

You can never promise confidentiality as your colleague may disclose something that is a safeguarding concern - such as disclosures around risk or harm to self or another.

Other disclosures could be around committing serious crimes as well as about activities that are deeply prohibited within the organisation and therefore it is your duty as an employee of the organisation to escalate through appropriate channels.

Always start conversations by explaining that there may be some disclosures that you would need to flag or escalate and be very clear why that would be and what you would do.



Tips for Maintaining Boundaries Continued

Signpost individuals to further information and support

It may be helpful to ask the person: "What would you like to happen in this situation?" This will help to empower them and encourage them to take the course of action that seems right to them. Be clear about what you can do, as well as what you can't.

See information about signposting and where you can signpost colleagues to here. [\[link here?\]](#)

Explain your role and its limits to colleagues so you can manage people's expectations

Be clear about the activities you will be doing as part of your role. For example, you could say "My role as a Champion is to share information that promotes awareness of how to keep yourself mentally well."

Communicate the reasons for the boundary

If someone is asking for direct advice or help beyond your role, you could say: "Sorry, I am not the best person to advise you on that and do not have the knowledge, skills or experience to help you with this. I am not a mental health professional and stepping outside of my abilities as a Champion might be unhelpful to you. But I can suggest other sources of help and support you may wish to access." The explanation shows that you understand and believe in the reasons for the boundary.

Don't make promises you may not be able to stick to

For example, don't tell someone everything they tell you is completely confidential if there is a chance what they may say means you need to alert someone else in your organisation.



Identifying when boundaries are not working

Be mindful of your own wellbeing and take the time to notice any changes that could indicate that you need to take on a little less. Reflecting on your role regularly can help you to identify whether you are taking on too much.

- Be kind to yourself if you get it wrong. Identify what happened and how you can do it differently the next time.
- Talk to someone. Just as you may want to encourage conversations about mental health with your colleagues and for them to chat about how they are feeling, make sure you also take time to have these conversations yourself. You may want to discuss this with your line manager in the first instance.
- If you feel others are not respecting or are unclear on your boundaries, speak to them. Own your statement by starting with 'I' and going on to describe what you think or feel. For example, you could say: "I don't feel comfortable continuing this conversation until we're both clear about what my role is in supporting you." By using 'I' in this way, you take ownership of the statement, which is both powerful and demonstrates that you personally care about the outcome.



Safeguarding and why it is important to know about it

What is safeguarding?

Safeguarding is making sure that;

- Vulnerable adults or children are protected from abuse or neglect.
- People are supported to get good access to health care and stay well.
- People are supported to have full and happy lives.
- People get safe and empowering care.
- People get the support they need to make the most of their lives and get their full equal rights.

What is a vulnerable person?

A vulnerable person could be anyone who may be unable to take care of or protect themselves. Therefore, all children under the age of 18 are automatically accepted as vulnerable.

A vulnerable adult however refers to any person aged 18 years and over who may be unable to take care of or protect themselves.

This may include people who:

- have a mental health problem
- have a physical or sensory disability
- have a learning disability
- have a severe physical illness
- are elderly and frail
- are substance misuser

It is worth noting that vulnerability may be permanent or temporary.



Safeguarding and why it is important to know about it

What does safeguarding cover?

Safeguarding can cover abuse that fall into any of the categories below:

- Physical Abuse
- Sexual Abuse or Exploitation
- Neglect
- Psychological/Emotional Abuse
- Financial/Material Abuse
- Professional Abuse
- Cyber Bullying / Bullying
- Self-harm / Self Abuse

Some situations you may come across that could flag a safeguarding concern:

- Alcohol
- Thoughts of suicide
- Plan for suicide
- Causing significant harm to others
- Financial issues
- General experiences of poor mental health
- Bullying
- Committing of a crime



Some handy tips on what to do or not do if someone discloses something concerning?

Do:

It is important to remember that when a person discloses something that could be concerning then you would need to let them know if you can that you would need to tell someone about this and be sure to explain why. Listed below are some dos and don'ts to help you deal with the situation the best way you can:

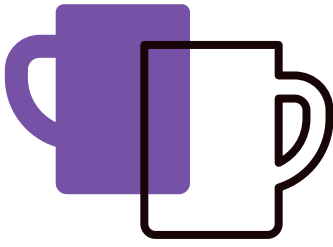
- Listen without making judgements.
- Behave in an open and friendly manner but avoid being over familiar in word or action.
- Stay calm and re-assure the person that they have done the right thing to disclose without compromising their dignity or doing anything to discredit one's own behaviour.
- Inform your designated safeguarding person or deputy as soon as possible and pass on the written record.
- Try to record what the person said, using their words where possible.
- Sign and date the record.
- If your organisation does not have a designated Safeguarding Person, speak to your line manager or Human Resources Department.
- Maintain confidentiality and do not discuss with others.
- Ensure you get support, for example a debrief from the designated lead, line manager or other Champions after you have dealt with the situation.



Some handy tips on what to do or not do if someone discloses something concerning?

Don't:

- Try not to ask questions, but if you have to, make sure they are open-ended questions to clarify understanding and not to probe or investigate.
- Don't give an opinion or offer advice.
- Don't promise confidentiality - explain you may need to talk to someone else.
- Avoid any physical contact or behaviour that could be misconstrued.



Managing conversations about mental health

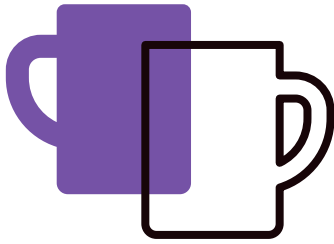
Such a situation might be new to you, or you may have experience of managing sensitive conversations because of your job role or personal history. The following suggestions are based on what we've learned can work well.

Remember, each conversation will be different

Think about the individual situation and person, one person may simply want to tell you their story, whereas someone else may be telling you as a first step to seek support. Exploring why your colleague is starting the conversation will help shape how you manage it.

Our Time to Change Wales champions have made such a difference in Companies House. Their openness, willingness to support others and passion for tackling stigma regarding mental health, have made a huge impact. We are so grateful for the contribution they make every day.

Natalie Dimmick, Companies House

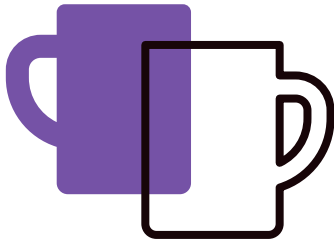


Key guidance: Managing conversations in which a colleague discloses that they are struggling with their mental health

Conversations can trigger painful memories

Listening to others experiences that are close to your own may trigger thoughts about your experience of mental health problems or traumatic events you have encountered. Think about how you might look after your own wellbeing as a Champion and remember your health comes first. If you do not feel able to continue the role for any reason, you can stop at any time.

- Find a quiet place with an informal atmosphere, perhaps in a café or over a coffee - this shouldn't feel like a formal interview.
- Actively listen to the person, by giving them your undivided attention. Try to leave any questions or comments you may have until the person has finished so you don't interrupt them.
- Try to establish eye contact in a non-threatening way.
- Use positive body language, and encourage the person to continue with small verbal comments like 'I see' or 'what happened next?'
- This will let them know that you are paying attention to what they are saying and actively listening to them.
- Check your understanding by paraphrasing what the person has said back to them.
- Reflect back actual words they have used to them, as this can encourage them to open up more. For example, a good reflection to 'I just feel so alone' could be 'alone?'
- Respond by using empathetic statements such as: "I appreciate this must be difficult for you...".
- Avoid clichés. Comments like 'Pull yourself together' or 'You're just having a bad day' are not helpful.
- Dispel any myths. Mental health problems are more common than people think and can affect anyone at any time.



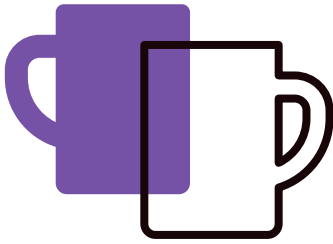
Key guidance: Managing conversations in which a colleague discloses that they are struggling with their mental health

- Try to avoid asking too many questions, especially questions that only require a 'yes' or 'no' answer, or that begin with the word 'why'. Ask open questions to invite a more detailed response.
- Tell me how you're feeling?
- How do you look after yourself?
- What support do you have in place?
- Reassure them that it is positive that they want to talk about their experience, what's happening with them, or that they are looking for support (if this is the case).
- Is the individual aware of sources of support? Signpost to further information and support. It may be helpful to ask the person: "What would you like to happen in this situation?" This will help to empower them and encourage them to take the course of action that seems right to them. Be clear about what you can do, as well as what you can't.
- The important thing is to listen rather than give advice, the individual needs to be able to act for themselves. Signpost the individual to sources of support, rather than telling them what you think is best. Take a look at the 'Managing boundaries' section above for more information on this.

Top tip

If someone is highly emotional, give them time to settle. It can be a bit disconcerting at first to watch a friend or colleague being in the throes of emotional distress. Stay calm, sit quietly and use expressions like:

- Whatever it is, it will pass.
- Whatever it is you/we can beat it.
- You aren't on your own, I've been through the same this myself and everything will be ok.
- Take your time, only talk when you feel ready. If you don't want to talk that's okay too.



When someone wants to talk and you don't have the time

Once a person knows they are being given the space and time to talk, they will.

But sometimes when someone takes the courage to talk to you it may not be possible for you to give them the time they need there and then. You will be the best judge of this.

Remember to always show you recognise that they have taken a positive step by speaking to you, explain why you cannot talk now and arrange a better time to have the conversation.

If someone is in urgent need of help always signpost immediately to support, you may want to help them by going to the Mind website and clicking on the yellow tab at the top which says, '**I need urgent help**'.

Alternatively you can call the Samaritans **08457 90 90 90** Lines are open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.



Sharing your story

You may find that colleagues tell you about their own thoughts, feelings, experiences and concerns, as part of seeking support around their own mental health.

If you have your own personal experience of mental health problems, you may choose to share this as a way of supporting your colleague. There is absolutely no requirement to share your story as a Champion. We recognise this is a big and very personal decision.

When is it helpful to tell your story?

A colleague tells you they think they may have PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder), and you have had a similar experience, it may be useful for you to explain how you sought help and what worked for you. However, it may not be helpful to talk at length and in detail about the sensitive details of your own story; while you may have experienced something similar, the circumstances and feelings will not be exactly the same and may be overwhelming for the other person. A good question to ask yourself is, how will this person benefit from hearing about my own experience?

Remember: ultimately, it's down to you and the policy of your organisation

Communication is a very personal thing so use what feels right for you based on your experience of managing sensitive conversations. Our suggestions are not intended to take the place of your organisation's policies and guidelines, and we urge you to always seek out and be guided by the information and support your service provides before starting conversations about mental wellbeing. The Time to Change Employers team are unable to give advice to Champions on individual services' policies.

We as your bosses do have time to take out of busy hectic days to talk and listen. People may look physically well but it is what is going on inside that can have a more detrimental impact.

Carl Hendy, ASW Scaffolding Wales



Speaking up, speaking out, sharing your personal story

Stories are important. Stories get people to understand the real impact and see things from a different perspective. Stories give people courage to seek help and speak up.

Stories create an environment for change.

Remember

If you have your own personal experience of mental health problems there is absolutely no requirement to share your story as a Champion. We recognise this is a big and very personal decision. Don't force yourself out of your comfort zone just because you think you should.

Everybody has a story to tell. Sharing your own experience of stress, anxiety, low mood or other mental health problems can be a powerful weapon in smashing stereotypes. This tool is designed to help you think about how to go about doing so in a safe and effective way.



Benefits of sharing your story

Sharing your story can:

Demonstrate that people can continue to work and manage anxiety, depression or other mental health problems effectively.

Encourage others to speak openly about their experience with mental health problems. You may be surprised by how many of your colleagues have also experienced a mental health problem at some point in their life, or supported a loved one.

Help others experiencing a mental health problem to take action.

Encourage your employer to make workplace mental health a priority.

Five Questions to ask yourself before telling your story

1. Why are you telling this story?

What do you hope to accomplish? Will your story inspire a colleague? Or maybe give a compelling reason for implementing a specific policy recommendation within your organisation?

2. What do you feel comfortable sharing?

Think carefully and decide what personal information you feel comfortable sharing with your colleagues about your own mental health experiences, and whether it is helpful to disclose this information in certain situations.

3. What more could your workplace do to support mental problems?

Based on your experience, how do you think positive change around mental health can be achieved within your organisation? What have you seen done well and what needs improvement?

4. Who needs to hear your story?

Who do you think needs to be involved in making change within your workplace? Will your story reach them? If not, how can you make it reach them?

5. How can others help?

In your experience, did someone help you in a memorable way? Can their actions be copied, or improved upon, to help create cultural change within your organisation? It could be worth highlighting this in your own story.



Twelve steps for speaking up successfully

1. **Be prepared**

Think about the different reactions, positive and negative, that the person might have so you're prepared. The person will be thinking about their perception of mental illness, you as a person and how the two fit together.

2. **Choose an appropriate time**

Choose a time and place when you feel comfortable and ready to talk.

3. **Be ready for lots of questions... or none**

The person with whom you are talking to might have lots of questions or need further information to help them understand. Don't worry about this, you're the expert on your own experience and feelings. However, they might feel uncomfortable and try to move the conversation on - if this happens it's still helpful that the first step has been taken.

4. **An initial reaction might not last**

The person might initially react in a way that's not helpful - maybe changing the subject, using clichés rather than listening. But give them time.

5. **Have some information ready**

Sometimes people find it easier to find out more in their own time - why not have some of our Time to Change Wales materials to hand them?

6. **Keep it light**

We know that sometimes people are afraid to talk about mental health because they feel they don't know what to say or how to help. So keeping the conversation light will help make you both feel relaxed.

7. **Take up opportunities to talk**

If someone asks you about your mental health, don't shy away, be yourself and answer honestly.

8. **Courage is contagious**

Often once mental health is out in the open people want to talk. Don't be surprised if your honesty encourages other people to talk about their own experiences.



Twelve steps for speaking up successfully Continued

9. Adjust your expectations

Being a Champion is about the small steps towards long-term change. Don't be disheartened if you don't immediately see the results of your actions as a Champion. You could be supporting one or many more people silently through your work. Reaching just one person through your actions and making a difference is a very positive step.

10. Be honest about where you're at

You'll get the same positive reaction if you're "just" working on your recovery and still have a long way to go or still experience difficulty or setbacks. People respect a brave struggle just as much as a victory, so be honest about it.

11. Use prompts if you need them

Don't be self-conscious about using cards. They tell your audience that you care enough about them to prepare in advance, (even if your 'audience' is only one person!).

12. Ask your audience questions

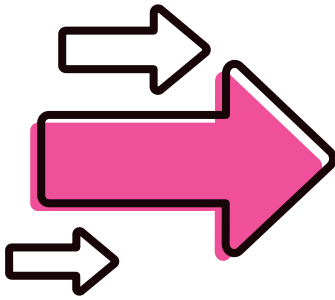
"Everyone has dark days whether they have a mental illness or not. What helps you in your dark days?" People love the opportunity to analyse themselves and to engage personally, so try giving them the opportunity to do so.

Structuring your story

Time is a natural organising principle for a story. What came first, what happened next, and what happened after that? Another organising principle you can use is "what helps and what hurts." E.g. Illustrate helpful and hurtful things with anecdotes from your life or someone you know. Your colleagues may like this kind of presentation because they want to know how to be better helpers. What do you want them to know? What do you want them to feel? And what do you want them to do?

How to manage if others tell you their story

Part of the role of a Champion is encouraging more open discussion of mental health in the workplace. As a result, you may find that colleagues tell you about their own thoughts, feelings, experiences and concerns, as part of seeking support around their own mental health. If you feel comfortable doing so, it can be helpful to share what other people did to you to help support you when you were struggling.



Signposting

Signposts to support

It's great to start the conversation in your workplace and we hope that our campaign materials and ideas help you to do this. Sometimes this can mean that people currently experiencing mental health problems will need some support as sensitive conversations may bring up difficult things.

We would encourage you to highlight the support tools that are offered within your organisation but you may also like to use some of ours too so please feel free to use the below text or link to our support page online [\[link needed\]](#).

If you are experiencing mental health problems or need urgent support, there are lots of places you can go to for help:

Samaritans

Telephone: 116 123 (24 hours a day, free to call)

Email: jo@samaritans.org

Website: samaritans.org

Provides confidential, non-judgmental emotional support for people experiencing feelings of distress or despair, including those that could lead to suicide. You can phone, email, write a letter or in most cases talk to someone face to face.

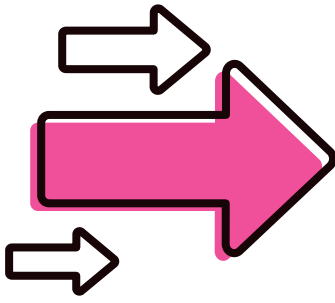
Mind infoline

Telephone: 0300 123 3393 (9am-5pm Monday to Friday)

Email: info@mind.org.uk

Website: mind.org.uk/help/advice_lines

Mind provides confidential mental health information services. With support and understanding, Mind enables people to make informed choices. The Infoline gives information on types of mental distress, where to get help, drug treatments, alternative therapies and advocacy. Mind also has a network of nearly 20 local Mind associations providing local services across Wales.



Signposting

Hafal

Telephone: 01792 816 6001 / 832 400

Email: hafal@hafal.org

Website: hafal.org

Hafal leads the way in Wales supporting individuals recovering from mental health illness and their families. They are managed by the people they support - individuals with serious mental illness and their carers. Find out more: www.hafal.org

Carers Wales

Telephone: 0808 808 7777

Email: info@carersuk.org

Carers Wales' mission is to make life better for carers. They give expert advice, information and support. They connect carers so no-one has to care alone. They campaign together for lasting change. They innovate to find new ways to reach and support carers.

Elefriends

Website: elefriends.org.uk

Elefriends is a supportive online community where you can be yourself. Elefriends is run by Mind.

You can also create your own Signposting document that lists all the support offered internally, for example Employee Assistance Programme or linking in with existing networks in your organisation for example the Disability Network.



Ideas for getting started

With your support, we can help end stigma and discrimination in our workplaces and in our communities. As professionals, our day-to-day roles can be very demanding and time can be scarce. We want the Employee Champion role to be as accessible as possible so there is no set time commitment. We just ask that you undertake meaningful anti-stigma activity within your workplace, being mindful that you only undertake activity that you feel comfortable with.

Got a minute?

Social media: Tweet using @TTCW, blog or post on Facebook (use of social media is an individual choice and will not always be appropriate. Please ensure you consult and are mindful of your employer's policy on social media and seek permission where necessary).

Information sharing: Distribute materials developed by Time to Change, for example promote the Time to Change Wales website and inform colleagues on how it can support them and their families.

Set an example: Guard against ill-informed actions, however well-meaning, which can reinforce misconceptions and low expectations.

Got an hour?

Speaking out: If you have direct or indirect experience of mental health problems, you may choose to share these with an audience of your colleagues.

Speaking up: If you don't have lived experience, present to colleagues about the importance of tackling mental health stigma and promoting wellbeing.

Training days and inductions: Speak to new recruits about the importance of wellbeing/mental health during staff inductions.

Family and friends: Think about activities you could do to reach family and friends of your colleagues. For example, run outreach activities and provide information about support available to family and friends.



Ideas for getting started

Got longer?

Events: Take advantage of World Mental Day and Time to Talk Day to organise your own events to get colleagues thinking about mental health in the workplace.

Be a point of contact: Step forward to act as a “go to” person for people seeking support or information on mental health.

Champion networks: Share experiences, challenges and suggestions with other Champions by contributing on the Champions Facebook Group You can also - attend networking events on behalf of your company.

Be the driving force: Sustain momentum of actions taking place within the organisation as a result of your employer signing the pledge.



TTCW workplace events

Events and meetings are great opportunities to speak to people face to face, challenge myths about mental health, have discussions and answer questions. Events can take a variety of forms. You can either organise an event yourself, ask for time to talk about wellbeing at a team meeting, or have an information stand with some of our Time to Change Wales materials.

Find out more about key dates on a month by month basis by clicking on our mental health calendar.

However, you choose to get mental health on to the agenda, you can use an event as an opportunity to:

- Get people talking about mental health and thinking about any stereotypes they hold about mental health problems and people who experience them.
- Bring people with different experiences of mental health together in an environment of mutual respect.
- Provide information about looking after your wellbeing and how to access support. Get people to talk about what has helped them.
- Inspire people to work together to end the stigma and discrimination surrounding mental health.



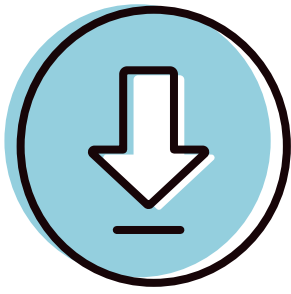
Tips

Try to find a venue that has a quiet place in case anyone wants to speak to you privately or becomes overwhelmed on the day.

It might be hard for everyone who is interested to attend your event, so think about whether you could film parts of it, for example, the main speaker. Or write a summary of how the event went and ask for it to be featured on your staff intranet or in a newsletter.

It is important to remember:

- Recognising that some colleagues may have mental health problems, even if they do not recognise it themselves.
- Sensitive topics can cause colleagues to become upset, it is important to take this into account during your events and talks.
- Time to Change Wales often focusses on two points in the year for campaign 'bursts' (Time to Talk Day in February and World Mental Health Day in October)
- Incorporate your planning to include other aspects that can cause stress in the workplace such as debt and change.



Resources

There is a huge menu of resources that we have available for you, the table below lists those resources and their links.

You can also print a whole menu of branded material yourselves such as email banners, posters, postcards etc. and include your information on them too.

Free Downloads [\[link here\]](#)

Use our free resources to help challenge mental health stigma and discrimination across Wales.

Useful references [\[link here\]](#)

Download our posters, leaflets or logos for your school, workplace or community, or for events like World Mental Health Day. Read our research to find out how stigma can affect people and also find out more about mental health myths, facts and stats.



Looking after your mental wellbeing

Being a point of contact to have conversations about mental health with colleagues can be very rewarding, but it can also be time consuming and emotionally overwhelming.

You might also find that discussing subjects or traumatic events close to your own experiences, or that of others close to you, may be triggering - especially if you're feeling unwell.

We encourage you to think carefully about how you'll look after your own wellbeing whilst participating in the Time to Change Wales programme, and make sure you have appropriate support in place. You might find it helpful to look at our website for additional resources. [\[link here\]](#)

Feeling stressed?

You may experience stress at some point during your time as a Champion. There is no such thing as 'good' stress, but some people find it more tolerable than others.

When stress becomes enough of a problem to affect your ability to carry out your work or other day-to-day tasks, or to enjoy things you have previously liked, it can become a disability like any other mental health condition.



Top tips on looking after your wellbeing and being the amazing Champion you are

- Talk about the way you feel
- Identify your triggers
- Do something you enjoy
- Think about what helps you if you start feeling overwhelmed
- Make a plan to stay well - Wellness Action Plan
- Take time to relax
- Be kind to yourself - we are all human!

We hope you found this pack useful.

You can get in touch with the Community Engagement Officers for more information, guidance or questions by emailing them at **pledge@timetochangewales.org.uk**

We would also love to hear what you get up to and how you are changing how your colleagues are changing the way they think and act about mental health.

Share your photographs and stories with us on Twitter using the hashtag **#TimetoTalk**, or by emailing **pledge@timetochangewales.org.uk**

For everything else please visit our website: **timetochangewales.org.uk**

Be part of Time to Change Wales' movement for change in workplace mental health.

 @ttcwales  /ttcwales

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