

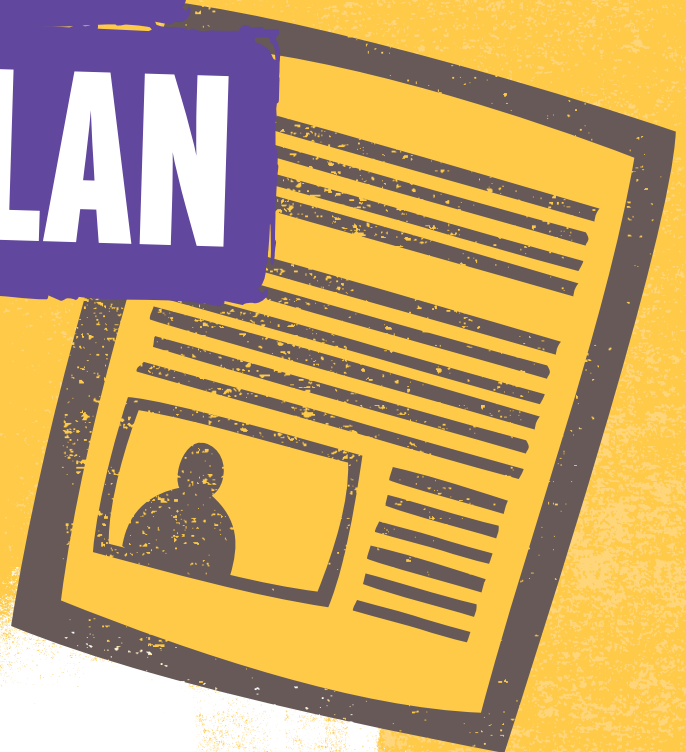
time to change

let's end mental health discrimination

DEVELOPING YOUR EMPLOYER ACTION PLAN



CORE STANDARD 6



**Routinely monitor
employee mental health
and wellbeing**



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INTRODUCING CORE STANDARD 6

Core Standard 6 recommends that employers routinely monitor employee mental health and wellbeing by understanding available data, talking to employees, and understanding risk factors - so in a nutshell taking stock of where you are at as an organisation with regards to stigma and essentially how open your organisation really is.

Developing a clear picture of the mental health of your organisation helps you understand what affects staff's mental wellbeing and how well you're supporting them. It also lets you assess whether your approach is effective and supports you to plan further improvements. Achieving this may sound complicated. But if you already ask your staff about their experiences, perceptions and how they manage their mental health - formally or informally - you've probably got a lot of the information already. Think about how you could adapt the tools you already use - like staff surveys, HR data and appraisals. Putting relevant questions into these existing tools will help you build a comprehensive picture, without creating extra work.



TIME TO CHANGE'S EXPECTATIONS AND MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS TO ACHIEVE THIS STANDARD

In order to have your action plan approved we would expect to see some minimum requirements met for this core standard around routinely monitoring employee mental health and wellbeing. **We would expect the following to be evidenced in your submission:**

- ✓ An outline of who is responsible for delivery of each activity within your organisation.
- ✓ Clear timescales and dates for delivery of each mental health activity within your organisation.
- ✓ An outline of what measurements will be used to monitor and evaluate impact and success.
- ✓ Details of who will be appointed as the lead/s within your organisation who has overall responsibility for the implementation, evaluation and subsequent review of this action plan? It does not have to be an individual and could be led by working groups or committees that might also have ownership of/significant stake in the delivery of this plan.
- ✓ A description of what mechanisms your organisation currently uses to monitor and evaluate employee mental health and wellbeing? Please include details of any surveys that will be deployed with specific reference to the sort of questions to be included and any of the performance measures outlined in this document that will be drawn from this research.
- ✓ Does your organisation record and monitor sickness absence in relation to mental health problems and stress? We suggest you make reference to what is recorded through your HR systems and how this data is monitored, reviewed and determines organisational action e.g. the data is used to inform actions at a Wellbeing Committee.
- ✓ Provide an outline on how you will monitor the impact of the deployment of your Time to Change Employer Action Plan in your organisation. Time to Change will be in contact at key stages in your journey over the next 12 months.

SUGGESTED ACTIONS TO EMBED ACCOUNTABILITY AND THE ABILITY TO ROUTINELY MONITOR EMPLOYEE MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

- Establish a cross-functional group to take forward the mental health agenda within your workplace. (this could be the aforementioned working / steering group made up of people with lived experiences of mental health).
- Decide who will have oversight of implementing the action plan and carefully choose someone who can bring together departments to work collaboratively.
- Ensure that you embed the consideration points from Core Standard 1 - testing as those consideration points will help you to not only think about impact but also reach with that impact.
- Share your action plan with your Employee Champions once you have recruited them and think about how you will communicate with your Champions on a regular basis.

TOP TIPS

A key part of Core Standard 6 is to take stock of where the organisation is at in terms of stigma around mental health. To help you take stock you would need to think about the following:

- How you can measure current data on mental health within your workplace, e.g.: absence and disclosure rates so you can measure the impact of your action plan. Think about your base line and the approaches you will use (referring back to Core Standard 1 - evaluation plan).
- How to improve your ability to understand your employees' wellbeing levels by including questions in staff surveys - see Case Study Point - Civil Service - People Survey.
- Do a midyear staff survey to check in around wellbeing especially if there is a higher staff turnover / migration.
- Develop an internal sharing good practice forum if in a large organisations where different regions / local services implement different approaches etc.
- Consider developing a case study to showcase what you were able to deliver successfully and what you found challenging and how you overcame challenge.

CASE STUDY POINT

In 2014 Laing O'Rourke developed a new occupational health strategy, starting with a six-month review to assess what the business needed and to identify a clear way forward. The new strategy has a well-defined set of priorities to:

- establish an effective health surveillance programme
- ensure the 'Fit for task' scheme is embedded across the business for workers in safety-critical roles
- review and refine existing occupational health risk management controls
- raise awareness of mental health in the workplace
- encourage engagement across workplaces in health and wellbeing activities.

You can read more about this strategy [here](#).

LAING O'ROURKE

SUGGESTED WAYS TO MEASURE FOR CORE STANDARD 6

TO MEASURE IMPACT

- Always remember that whilst data is important for prompt conversations and actions it is never as powerful as inspirational stories. Context is key.

TO MEASURE SUCCESS

- Use data collected to assess performance against all standards of this guide and action plan.

TO MEASURE COMPLETION

- Consider focusing on soft measures e.g. team discussions, behavioural measures versus access to services.
- Clarify and set what can be identified as / represents low, good or high engagement in your organisation.
- Focus on measuring outcomes and experience and build into context of business change.
- Assess GDPR implementation impact (May 2018) on confidentiality, regulatory requirements, conduct implications, impact of poor disclosure and culture impact.

ACTION PLAN ACTIVITY EXAMPLE

Measuring Success

To measure the success of our action plan, we will look at the following areas:

- The number of calls to our Employee Assistance Programme.
- The number of colleagues who contact a Mental Health First Aider.
- Referrals to Occupational Health.
- Absence and sickness levels.
- Feedback and attendance figures during Mental Health Awareness Week.



CASE STUDY POINT

The Civil Service have created in collaboration with CIPD a Peoples Survey that helps them to take stock of where they are at as an organisation with regards to employee mental health and wellbeing.

You can see their technical summary guide [here](#).



ACTIVITIES, IDEAS AND CONSIDERATIONS TO HELP YOU DEVELOP A STRATEGY BEYOND THE ACTION PLAN

HOW TO TAKE STOCK OF STIGMA ON DIFFERENT LEVELS

TAKING STOCK AT AN ORGANISATIONAL LEVEL

- Taking the time to develop your action plan will enable you to take stock of stigma levels in your organisation as you think about how to break it down as recommended by the core standards.
- For organisations who have the capacity for further stock keeping might want to consider Minds Workplace Wellbeing Index. The Workplace Wellbeing Index takes the form of both a staff and employer survey to help you assess where the gaps lie between your organisational approach to workplace wellbeing and staff perceptions.

ACTION PLAN ACTIVITY EXAMPLE

Our CEO will be monitoring the action plan progress with the Executive Management group at their meetings.

A 6 monthly update will be provided to the Safety Management Group from the Steering Committee.



TAKING STOCK OF STIGMA AT A TEAM LEVEL

- Regularly carrying out mental health audits is a great way to monitor this. If your organisation has a staff survey, which asks about employee experience, organisational culture and mental health, you may be able to gather information about your team's experience of mental health and wellbeing.
- With HR support, you could take this further, by holding a session at a team meeting. You could ask your team:
 - 1 What they think a mentally healthy team looks like.
 - 2 What they already do well to promote good mental health.
 - 3 How you can build on this together.
 - 4 If anything is having a negative impact on the team's mental wellbeing.
- Ask team members to group these issues under the following headings:
 - 1 **What do we have control over?** These can then be captured as part of your action plan.
 - 2 **What can we influence?** These can then be captured as part of your action plan.
 - 3 **What issues are beyond our control or influence?** These can be captured as an issue that needs to be acknowledged but cannot be mitigated against at the present time although it may well be something that can be influenced or controlled in the future.

TAKING STOCK OF INDICATORS PRESENT IN THE WORKPLACE THAT TEND TO BE TRIGGERS OF POOR MENTAL HEALTH

Typical workplace triggers for stress and mental health problems include:

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| ■ If employees routinely work long hours and take no breaks | ■ Employees feel unable to use annual leave | ■ Poor relationships with managers |
| ■ If there is unrealistic expectations or deadlines | ■ Unmanageable workloads or lack of control over work | ■ Poor relationships with colleagues |
| ■ Overly pressurised working environments | ■ Poor managerial support | ■ Poor internal communication |
| ■ High-risk roles | ■ A poor physical working environment | ■ Job insecurity or poorly managed change |
| ■ Lone working | ■ Bullying | ■ Financial worries |

Any of the above if routinely present for employees, then there is a risk that employees are vulnerable to poor mental health with an added risk of stigma preventing people to have those open conversations and accessing much needed support and / or appropriate workplace adjustments.

HOW TO TAKE STOCK AT AN INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

Regular one-to-one meetings and catch-ups are a great place to ask your staff how they're getting on. Doing so regularly will help build trust and give employees a chance to raise problems at an early stage.

Ask your team members how one-to-ones can be tailored to suit their needs. Employees should also be able to request a meeting outside the normal schedule if they need to discuss anything important. Regular one-to-ones have significant benefits for employers, employees and the bottom line.

BENEFITS OF ONE-TO-ONES

- Boosts employee engagement and builds mutual trust.
- Identifies issues early, so employees can get the support they need.
- Ensures employee wellbeing is monitored throughout the organisation.

TOP TIPS

Managers can help by:

- Encouraging staff to speak regularly about how they're doing, and explore with them what might be impacting on their mental wellbeing.
- Ensuring appraisal and supervision procedures cover mental wellbeing and stress, and give employees permission to talk about home as well as work issues.
- Maintaining regular, clear lines of communication with all staff, especially those working in isolation - for example, with monthly team meetings or regular phone catch-ups.



HOW TO CREATE AN EVALUATION PLAN

Monitoring and evaluating activities and deliverables is primarily about understanding where the organisational culture is at and what impact action plan activities might have had on it.

By having an evaluation plan that sits alongside your action plan ensures that your organisations mental health journey is mapped and evaluated at every point, findings which can help you decide the following:

- 1 How you need to move forward.
- 2 Whether you need to change the approach of delivery.
- 3 Whether you need to do more targeted activity.
- 4 Whether you need to adapt the delivery to suit differing audience need.
- 5 Whether you need to discard elements completely as they are not being engaged with at all.

SCENARIO FOR THOUGHT

An organisation upon evaluating their activities found meaningful engagement with MH activity was high in Region A amongst employees but not for senior management teams, in Region B activity and engagement was higher amongst employees and senior management teams and Region C had more engagement and activity amongst senior management teams but not amongst employees.

The Employer wanted to know why there was such gaping differences in engagement between the regions and between some senior teams and employee teams.

The Employer realised that to really make a difference they had to consider delivering more targeted activity to help struggling parts of the organisation progress.

SOME EVALUATIVE QUESTIONS THE EMPLOYER CAN ASK TO FIND OUT WHY

- Why is Region B more successful in engaging both audiences compared to A and C?
- Are there any similarities to what Region B is doing with A and C (where A and C have success amongst one audience).
- What regional challenges and barriers might exist for Regions A and C.
- Is Region A and B similar in terms of employees and how they work compared to C and vice versa re Region A and C with regards to success amongst senior managers.
- What would need to be done specifically in Regions A and C to bring it in line with overall organisational progress.
- Are there groups of employees that aren't engaging as much as others and if not why not.

Another important reason for evaluation is that activities can be tailored to be pitched correctly to employees and encourage engagement.

CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING APPROACHES WHEN CREATING YOUR MONITORING AND EVALUATION PLAN

Approach / Objectives	Rationale
SMART - where applicable Specific: straight forward, focused and well defined with emphasis on action and the required outcomes. Something you can actually do that will help you to achieve your aim. Measurable: how you will measure progress toward the attainment of each objective you set. You need to think about how you will know whether the objective has been, or is being, achieved. Achievable: can you get the activities / deliverables done? Make them stretch your organisation, but not so far that you become frustrated and lose motivation. Will make you think about how much money you need, what skills you and your team need and how long it will take to plan and run the activity. Realistic: must be something you can actually do that will help you to achieve your aim, taking into account the resources you have for your activity including financial, personnel and time resources. Time defined: must have deadlines but they need to be both achievable and realistic.	It's advisable you're your overall Action Plan is developed according to SMART, as it will provide you with tangible activities that not only you can measure but also improve and redeliver depending on the outcome of your evaluation. Be mindful that certain activities are a challenge to box into "SMART" such as sharing stories, or conversations started as they tend to be organic and often happen experientially or in a way that is not measurable and you might want to consider the following approaches for them.
Triangulation is a qualitative method where different perspectives are captured, so for example for an event you would capture feedback from;  - The perspective of Employees / participants you want to engage. - The perspective of those delivering the activity so most likely your Employee Champions. - The perspective of those neutrally observing - so this could be a helper or a colleague or the person who is responsible for evaluating activities off the Action Plan.	This approach is more suitable for those activities that can't be quantitatively measured and might happen organically alongside the delivery of your streamlined "SMART" activity. This approach works well if you have held events, or capturing info after key dates where activities were delivered by many. It's a great way to measure more of the grassroots activities that Champions might deliver on both an adhoc and routine basis.

Approach / Objectives	Rationale
Creating a Baseline You may need to work with or ask for support from relevant teams to help you by providing you with a base line. In the example used around sickness rates and reasons, working with HR to have an established base line for rates and reasons of sickness the previous year helps you to mark the change / impact as a result of activity delivered and what that can mean for the organisation moving forward.	Some activities from the Action Plan might be around understanding, changing attitudes specifically, so for example employees when phoning in sick cite a mental health reason for their absence, so whilst the overall sickness level hasn't reduced, the number of people citing mental health as a reason has significantly increased. To evidence any changes / or impacts that your activity might have had it important you have a baseline to compare it with. Without that baseline you will not be able to evidence accurately if there has been an attitudinal change as you won't have historical data to compare it with. You need to know where to start from.

ACTION PLAN ACTIVITY EXAMPLE

As part of our annual Great Place to Work staff engagement survey, we ask the question 'Do you feel this workplace cares about your mental health and wellbeing?' - which again shows that this is something that matters to us.

This year we were delighted to receive excellent results in this area and were recognised by Great Place to Work as a Centre of Excellence in Wellbeing.



In order to ensure we are capturing data around stigma and attitudes towards mental health, we will add the following questions to our next survey:

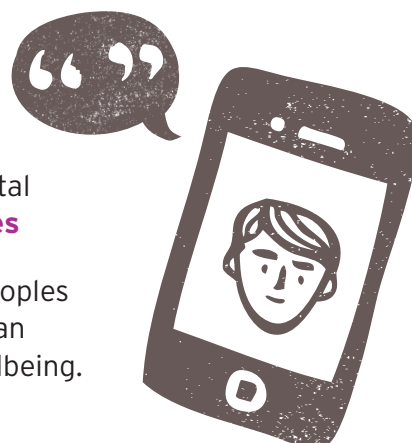
- 1 How comfortable would you feel speaking to your line manager about your mental health?
- 2 How comfortable would you feel speaking to a colleague about your mental health?
- 3 If you have called in sick due to a mental health problem in the last year, did you tell your manager the real reason or give another reason for your absence?

METHODS OF COLLATING INFORMATION AND FEEDBACK

Comments and cards and postcards	It's a flexible way of engaging people which can be done confidentially and needs minimal administration as people complete card themselves.
Questionnaires	Great way to engage a larger group of people, especially by adding questions onto pre-existing surveys like the routine / annual staff surveys that are sent out.
Interviews	Great to use if scoping for qualitative information. At the end of the year after signing the pledge its worth catching up with people to check in how it has impacted people, or encourage them to write blogs, share stories of how the organisation through its commitment has supported individuals. Sharing positive stories gives others in the organisation permission to also seek help from the organisation or take up any internal support offers.
Focus groups	Great way to gauge information and consultation so that initiatives don't fall on one person to develop and coordinate delivery. With regards to mental health consider what people in different teams / departments / regions etc. experience, focus groups are a great way to gauge this and to get help on developing more targeted activity that would be accepted and so engaged with by target audience.
Graffiti walls	This is a really fun and interactive way to get peoples feedback, thoughts etc. People can read each other's comments, the board / wall could be done up in a funky way and post it notes are always colourful.
Videos / photos / Emails	Videos, vlogs are all popular and fun ways for people to share stories and experiences and you can evaluate with regards to how many hits the videos have / downloaded or watched. Photos are also great memory aids.
Case studies	Great way to highlight what different teams / areas and regions within an organisation have been doing. It's a great qualitative and peer led way to demonstrate impact by engaging to others in the organisation who may not have engaged similarly. At Time to Change us often use Case studies as evidence bases to highlight to Employers yet to pledge around the benefits of making that pledge to their employees and to the overall organisation.

LIST OF RESOURCES TO HELP YOU

- Mind have a range of free resources to help you improve mental wellbeing in your workplace: mind.org.uk/workplaceresources
- The Civil Service have created in collaboration with CIPD a Peoples Survey that helps them to take stock of where they are at as an organisation with regards to employee mental health and wellbeing. You can see their technical summary guide [here](#).



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