



ISSUE SPOTLIGHT

WORKPLACE MENTAL HEALTH

Introduction

Mental health in the workplace is a growing area of focus within the healthcare industry. A healthier workforce results in reduced demand for health services, lower costs for employers with fewer employees off sick, and increased productivity. Employers, both public and private, are increasingly engaging with the importance of workplace mental health support, with the NHS itself recognising the need for extra support for their own workforce.

Policy background

[NHS Five Year Forward View for mental health \(FYFV\) \(2016\)](#)

- Between 60–70 per cent of people with common mental health problems are in work, yet few employees have access to specialist occupational health services.
- The FYFV called for a doubling in the number of people accessing IPS schemes (see below).

[Independent review: *Thriving at Work: a review of mental health and employers* \(2017\)](#)

- The review found that **300,000 people** with a long-term mental health condition lose their job every year, which is much higher than those with physical health conditions.
- Poor mental health **cost employers between £33bn-42bn** annually, with the total annual **cost to the UK economy sitting between £74bn-£99bn**.
- The review recommended **6 mental health core standards**: produce and implement a **mental health at work plan**; develop mental health **awareness among employees**; encourage **open conversations** about mental health; provide **good working conditions** including a health work life balance; promote **effective management**; **routinely monitor** employee mental health.

[NHS Long Term Plan \(LTP\) \(2019\)](#)

- Cited **mental health** as one of the **main reasons for sickness absence**.
- Digital provision of mental health support is increasing, and the LTP places importance on **giving people more flexibility to access these services** around work.
- Linked to the **expansion of primary care networks**, which will mean more people seeing the right professional, such as **psychotherapists**, first time.
- Primary care networks will also encourage the development of **personalised care plans**, which will **help people to manage conditions** whilst in work.
- The LTP emphasises that **stable employment is a major factor in maintaining good mental health**. This is backed-up by statistics that show people with mental health problems are often **over-represented in high-turnover, low-pay** and often **part-time or temporary work**.

Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT)

- The main scheme focusing on improving treatment for mental health. Began in 2008, with the FYFV aiming to expand services to treat **1.5m people a year by 2020/21**.
- The LTP committed to expanding IAPT services further, with a focus on those with long-term conditions.
- Mental illness is a leading cause of disability in the UK, with **stress, anxiety and depression the leading causes of lost work days in 2017/18**.

Individual Placement and Support (IPS) model

- IPS supports people with severe mental health difficulties into employment. It involves **intensive individual support** and **a rapid job search** followed by **placement in paid employment**. It also provides **time-unlimited in-work support** for both the employee and the employer.
- The LTP concludes that the IPS employment model is the best way to support people to find and keep paid employment. Those supported by IPS **work more hours** per month, **earn more** and have **better job tenure**.
- In May 2018, the NHS, the Government, **Sheffield City Region** and the **West Midlands Combined Authority** launched the world's largest trial of IPS services. Where the trials are effective, the NHS will seek investment from the Government.

Recent Government & Parliamentary activity

13 Feb 2019

Prime Minister's Questions

- Chris Ruane asked about the use of mindfulness as a treatment, including in the workplace.

17 Jan 2019

House of Commons Debate - [Mental Health First Aid in the Workplace](#)

- Background ([Commons briefing](#)):
 - HSE's First Aid guidance was updated in Nov 2018 to encourage employers to think about their employees' mental health and wellbeing needs, but it wasn't made obligatory.
 - Called for a change to the Health and Safety Act, so that an employer's responsibility explicitly covers the mental health, as well as the physical health, of their employees.
- Led by: Luciana Berger, Norman Lamb and Johnny Mercer.
- For media coverage of the debate: see [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#).

Thriving at Work Leadership Council

- An employer-led group that champions standards and explores innovative solutions to further drive the implementation and adoption of mental health standards. The inaugural meeting was held on the same day as the above Commons debate.
- Answering a [written question](#) on 4 February, Jackie Doyle-Price said that the members of the group are committed to promoting the standards through their networks and to create sector champions.

16 Jan 2019

National Assembly for Wales Short Debate: [A Contract for Better Mental Health First Aid in the Workplace](#)

- Led by Jack Sargeant AM.
- Cited the *Where's Your Head At?* campaign, and urged the Welsh Government to give their full support to the campaign.
- Mentioned Airbus and Unite the union as key players in the area.
- Minister for Health and Social Services Vaughan Gething responded by saying that over 100 employers in Wales have signed the *Time to Change Wales* pledge seeking to challenge negative attitudes to mental ill health.

Nov 2018:

[Voluntary reporting framework](#)

- The Government published this framework to help employers record and voluntarily report information on mental health, wellbeing and disability in the workplace. The framework invites reporting on: training and support provided, the uptake of this support, as well as recruitment and retention rates.

Stakeholder Positions

There are a growing number of stakeholders engaging with the issue of workplace mental health, comprising a broad spectrum of approaches to the issue. The stakeholder landscape can be largely split into four areas: **private sector companies; public sector organisations; professional bodies and unions;** and **mental health charities**. Every organisation will be interested in the policy to an extent, but as an issue still developing in its own right, workplace mental health is often subsumed into the wider mental health policy framework.

Private Sector

Across the private sector and particularly in larger corporations, there is a desire to be at the forefront of addressing workplace mental health. Larger companies are increasingly focusing on employee satisfaction and wellbeing, as they are competing in an international recruitment market, and are becoming more receptive to the effects of wellbeing on productivity.

Deloitte

- Released a report in March 2017 titled [*At a tipping point? Workplace mental health and wellbeing*](#), which highlighted the importance of mental health in the workplace, challenges to implementation and attitudes among employers and employees, as well as solutions to current challenges.

Unilever

- Unilever started Mental Health First Aid training in 2013 after identifying mental health as a top reason for people accessing private medical insurance.

Barclays

- This is Me is a campaign to raise awareness of mental health and challenge the stigma that surrounds it at work. Colleagues at Barclays started the campaign in 2014, telling personal stories about managing their own mental health and wellbeing. Since then, more than 250 colleagues have shared their experiences.

Bupa

- Bupa is a private healthcare organisation, who are heavily involved in providing private health cover to businesses. As part of this, they have created *Bupa Boost*, a wellbeing app for both their clients and employees, which forms part of their health insurance package.
- The app focuses on four core areas of health and wellbeing: fitness, nutrition, mindfulness and relaxation, providing an interactive approach to setting health and wellbeing goals and tracking progress.

BAE Systems

- BAE Systems have put mental health at the heart of colleagues' health and wellbeing, and in 2016 launched a mental health awareness programme.
- To date over 1,300 employees at BAE Systems have participated in the programme.

Professional Bodies and Unions

Professional bodies and unions are working alongside mental health charities in broadening engagement with workplace mental health. Employee-focused bodies such as CIPD are particularly focused on addressing the issue, as are trade unions and health and safety groups.

Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD)

- The CIPD, the professional body for people at work, produced a [fact sheet](#) on employee mental health, which gave guidance to employers on how to support employees' mental health at work.
- They also produced a [people managers' guide to mental health](#), which contains information, practical advice and templates to help managers facilitate conversations about stress and mental ill health.

Confederation of British Industry (CBI)

- In September 2018, they called for employers to place workplace health and wellbeing at the [Front of Mind](#) – releasing a report in partnership with Bupa and HCA Healthcare
- The report found a strong appetite for addressing workplace mental health, but little clarity over best practice.
- The report contains guidance on how businesses can improve health and wellbeing, including advice on leadership, culture and support frameworks.

Trades Union Congress (TUC)

- As one of the earliest organisations to recognise workplace mental health as an issue, the TUC released [guidance on wellbeing](#) at work in December 2015.
- In late 2018 the TUC returned to the issue, releasing a second edition of the education workbook [Mental Health and the Workplace](#), which helps explain what workplace reps can do to support those suffering from mental health in the workplace.

Health and Safety Executive (HSE)

- As the regulator for workplace health and safety, HSE are closely involved in providing [advice and support](#) to employers on how to deal with employee mental health
- HSE's [Management Standards approach](#) to tackling work-related stress establishes a framework to help employers tackle work-related stress.

Mental health charities

Mental health charities are increasingly recognising workplace mental health as a key strand of their work, with organisations such as Mind and Mental Health First Aid acting as both resource centres for employers and support networks for employees.

Mind

- As one of the leading mental health charities in the UK, Mind have set up a [Workplace Wellbeing Index](#), which allows companies to assess and review their provision of mental health support to staff, celebrating areas of success and highlighting areas that could be improved.
- Mind have set up a the [Mental Health at Work](#) gateway in conjunction with The Royal Foundation and the *Heads Together* campaign, which is primarily a resource centre for employers.
- Mind also offer Corporate Partnerships to those organisations who are seeking to improve their approach towards employee wellbeing.

Mental Health First Aid (MHFA)

- Not strictly a charity, but a social enterprise/community interest company, aiming to provide mental health first aid training to 1 in 10 people in England.
- In May 2018, MHFA launched the *Where's Your Head At?* campaign, which called for mental health first aiders to become compulsory at places of work.
 - An [open letter](#) to the Prime Minister calling for provision of mental as well as physical first aid was signed by business, education and mental health leaders.
- In February 2019, MHFA launched their [best-practice workplace guidance](#) for both employers and employees.

Centre for Mental Health

- Provide research, economic analysis and policy influence in the mental health sector
- They have selected [18 Centres of Excellence across England](#) to act as model examples of Individual Placement and Support (IPS) implementation.
- Similar to MHFA and Mind, they provide resources, toolkits and best-practice guides to both employers and employees.

Rethink Mental Illness

- More focused on providing support to sufferers from mental health issues.
- They provide [specific support](#) for helping people into work and maintaining employment.
- Rethink support Mind in their campaign [Time to Change](#), which seeks to tackle mental health discrimination.

Building Mental Health

- A group of volunteers seeking to tackle mental health issues in the construction industry.
- The following organisations are leading Building Mental Health:
 - Mace
 - Lendlease
 - Construction Industry Training Board (CITB)
 - Lighthouse Construction Industry Charity

City Mental Health Alliance (CMHA)

- A coalition of organisations that have come together to create an environment in the City of London where mental health is discussed in the same way as physical health.
- CMHA work closely with MHFA and Mind, and have [26 members](#), including large corporations such as KPMG, Goldman Sachs, PwC, Bank of England, Deloitte, Morgan Stanley, and Legal & General.

Public Sector Organisations

The public sector has recognised workplace mental health as an area that requires focus. The NHS Long Term Plan (LTP) committed to improving mental health support for NHS employees, whilst several Government departments have signalled their desire to improve support within their workforces.

NHS

- In February 2019, Health Education England [released the final report](#) from the commission on the mental wellbeing of NHS staff and learners. The report was written to support the LTP, and will be considered by the Secretary of State, Matt Hancock.
- The report suggests different ways that the 1.4m NHS employees could be supported, including:
 - Post-incident support for frontline staff
 - A 24hr mental health support service
 - Fast-tracked mental health referrals for employees
 - Improved rest spaces during and after shifts
 - A 'NHS workforce wellbeing guardian' in every NHS organisation
- The National Institute for Clinical and Health Excellence (NICE) also release [guidance on promoting healthy workplaces](#).

The UK Government

- In October 2017, the late Sir Jeremy Heywood [noted](#) that *Thriving at Work* gave recommendations to the Civil Service, with mental health first aiders put in place across government.

- Heywood said providing effective mental health support is a critical part of the civil service meeting their ambition to be the UK's most inclusive employer by 2020, as set out in the Civil Service Diversity & Inclusion Strategy published in Oct 2017.

The Armed Forces

- Mental health within the armed forces and for veterans is a hugely important issue, and one that gets much attention in both politics and the media.
- There is tailored mental health advice for veterans [provided by the NHS](#), as well as sector-specific support charities, such as [Combat Stress](#).
- In the Army, all Medical Officers, Combat Medical Assistants and Nurses are trained to recognise the signs of mental illness. Officers, Junior and Senior Non-Commissioned Officers (JNCO/SNCOs) are also routinely trained in methods of suicide prevention and stress management.

The Police

- The Police Federation describe mental health issues among serving officers as an 'increasing concern', with a [Nine-Point Plan](#) for stress in the police service released in September 2017.
- Mind have also [devoted some of their focus to the police](#), carrying out research that showed 91% of police have experienced stress or poor mental health at work.

Other Campaigns

- Workplace Wellbeing Charter
 - Led by the Health@Work Consultancy.
 - An accreditation system that demonstrates organisations' commitment to improving employee mental health.
- Global Corporate Challenge
 - An online platform set up by Virgin to improve employee health and wellbeing.
 - Made up of five modules that highlight key areas for leading a healthy lifestyle.
 - The following companies are involved: Zurich, Swarovski, Siemens, CocaCola, Fujitsu, and Petronas.

Key influencers

Ministers and Shadow Ministers

Jackie Doyle-Price MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Mental Health, Inequalities and Suicide Prevention

- Doyle Price said the Government are working to 'fundamentally' change culture and professional practice to tackle poor mental health.



Sarah Newton MP, Minister of State for Disabled People, Health and Work

- Newton jointly leads the work and health unit with DHSC, which oversees progress on the Farmer-Stevenson recommendations.



Paula Sherriff MP, Shadow Minister for Mental Health

- As part of the Labour Campaign for Mental Health, Sherriff has expressed the need for greater mental health support at work, with emotional costs to employees, but also financial costs to both employers and taxpayers.



Barbara Keeley MP, Shadow Minister for Mental Health and Social Care

- Keeley supports Labour's work on mental health, commenting on Government policy and outlining the Labour position, which included attending a Fabian Society event titled *Minds at Work: making mental health a priority in the changing world of work*.



Parliamentarians

Luciana Berger MP

- Berger jointly led a Commons debate on mental health in the workplace on 17 Jan 2019.
- Berger holds positions on All-Party Parliamentary Groups:
 - Chair of APPG on Complex Needs
 - Officer for APPG on Loneliness
 - Vice Chair of APPG on Mental Health
 - Vice Chair of APPG on Psychology
- Berger made history in Sept 2015, by becoming the first-ever Shadow Minister for Mental Health.
- Berger is a member of the Health and Social Care Committee, and has used this role to campaign for better mental health services.
- She is the former President of the Labour Campaign for Mental Health and has served as a mental health advisor to Liverpool City Region Mayor Steve Rotheram.



Johnny Mercer MP

- Mercer jointly led a Commons debate on mental health in the workplace on 17 Jan 2019.
- Mercer holds positions on All-Party Parliamentary Groups:
 - Chair of APPG on Mental Health
 - Vice Chair of the Veterans APPG
 - Vice Chair of APPG on the Armed Forces Covenant
 - Officer for APPG on Complex Needs
- One of Mercer's main aims as an MP is to improve mental health provision for war veterans.
- Mercer is a member of the Health and Social Care Committee, and frequently raises mental health in evidence sessions.



Parliamentarians

Jack Sargeant AM

- Sargeant's political career is borne out of personal tragedy. He stood to be an Assembly Member in his late father's constituency of Alyn & Deeside, after he took his own life in November 2017.
- He has frequently raised the issue of mental health in the chamber, and on 16 Jan 2019, led a Short Debate titled *A Contract for Better Mental Health First Aid in the Workplace*.
- Sargeant has worked with the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales in encouraging employers to equip their workplaces with appropriate support. He has also referenced the aforementioned *Where's Your Head At* campaign in the Senedd.



Norman Lamb MP

- Lamb jointly led a Commons debate on mental health in the workplace on 17 Jan 2019.
- Lamb has a long history of campaigning for improvements to workplace mental health, launching a motion in October 2016 in conjunction with MHFA calling for psychological and mental health first aid for all.
- As Chair of the Commons Science and Technology Committee, Lamb is currently overseeing an inquiry into the impact of social media and screen-use on young people's health.
- Lamb holds the following APPG positions:
 - Officer for the APPG for ADHD
 - Officer for the APPG on Clinical Leadership and Management
 - Vice Chair of the APPG on Global Health



Others

Paul Farmer, CEO of Mind

- Farmer was co-lead on the independent review into workplace mental health, which was commissioned by the Prime Minister and published *Thriving at Work* (mentioned above).
- The review has provided a broad framework for workplace mental health policy, and helped to raise the profile of workplace wellbeing.



The Duke of Cambridge, Prince William

- In Jan 2019, Prince William called for more mental health support for employees, recounting his own experience as an air ambulance pilot.
- Prince William devotes time to the partnership of mental health charities called *Heads Together*, which is largely supported by Mind but was founded by VirginMoney, Unilever, and Dixons Carphone.
- In September 2018, Prince William launched the *Mental Health at Work* gateway.



Lord Stevenson

- Former Chairman of HBOS, Stevenson co-authored the *Thriving at Work* review with Paul Farmer.
- Stevenson was also founding Chairman of the charity *MQ: Transforming Mental Health*, and has been involved in mental health legislative work in the House of Lords.



John Flint, Chief Executive of HSBC

- Flint has committed to creating the 'healthiest human system in financial services', and has partnered with Minds@Work, which is led by Geoff McDonald, Global VP of HR at Unilever.



Alastair Campbell

- Campbell was Downing Street Press Secretary under Tony Blair, and is a prominent supporter and advocate for the mental health campaign *Time to Change*, which tackles mental health stigma. He also works with *Mind* and *Alcohol Concern*.
- A former alcoholic and a sufferer from depression, Campbell has frequently opened up about his struggles with mental illness.
- He has often linked his difficulties with his places of work, firstly at the *Mirror*, where he said he endured great stress accompanied by a big drinking culture, and later whilst following the Neil Kinnock's campaign, suffering from a nervous breakdown.
- Campbell has said that whilst he felt he could raise issues or take time off work in Government, many people feel that they cannot raise mental health issues with work.



Denis Campbell, Health Policy Editor at *The Observer* and *The Guardian*

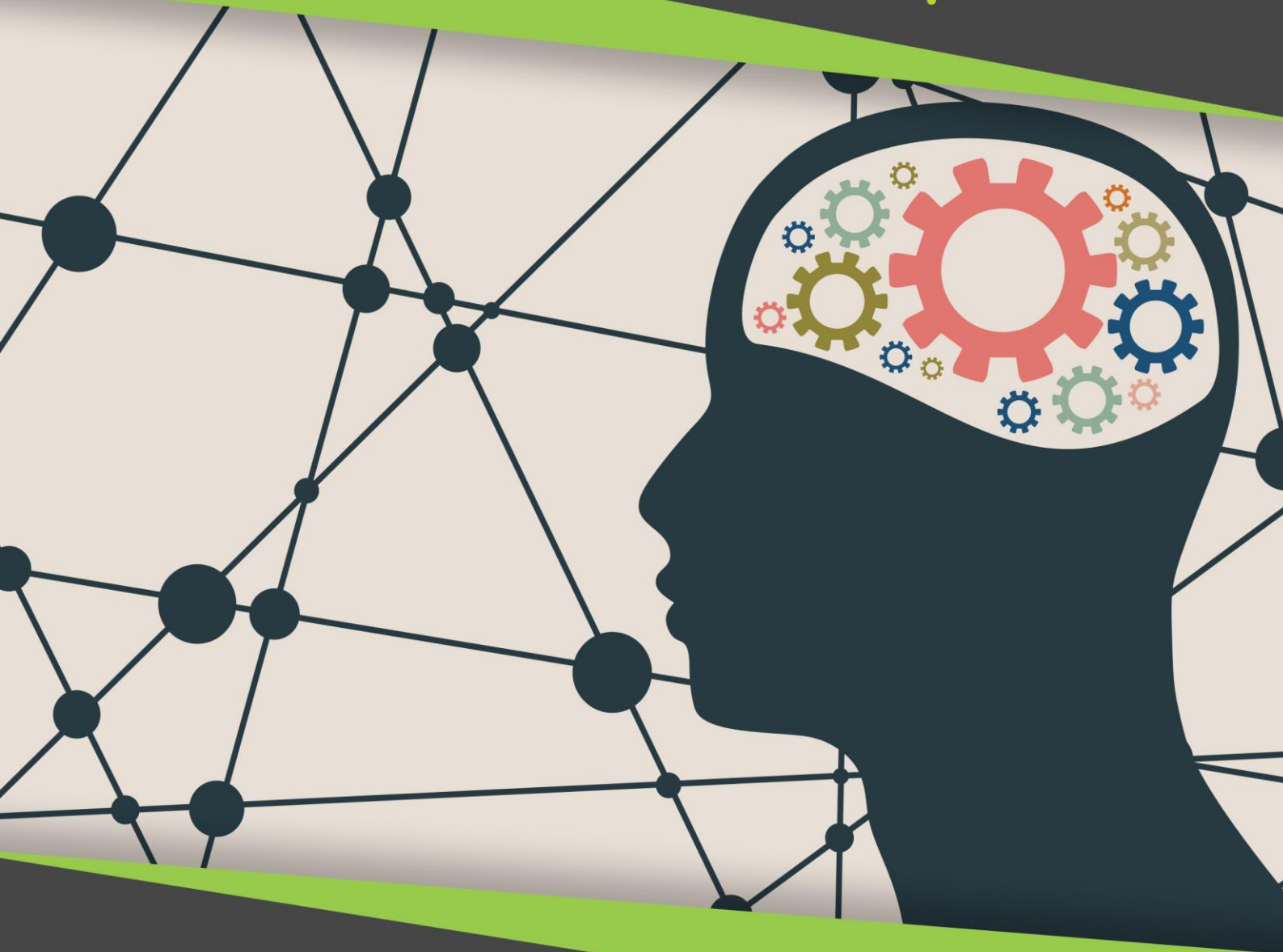
- A highly experienced health journalist, Campbell covers the full health policy portfolio and is a go-to on the latest policy developments.
- Whilst he has only [occasionally covered workplace mental health](#) as an issue in its own right, it can be expected that Campbell's focus will increasingly turn to how employees are supported and treated at work, particularly with the NHS now focusing on the wellbeing of staff.



Aphrodite Papadatou, Editor of *HRreview*

- Although Papadatou writes for a trade-specific publication with a comparatively small circulation, she has written several articles on [workplace wellbeing in HR](#), [mental health first aid](#), and [the lack of managerial knowledge of mental health at work](#).
- Papadatou is a reliable source of the latest information and developments within workplace mental health, viewing the issue largely from a HR perspective.





This issue spotlight was created by Olly Nicholson, Political Content Officer (Health), using the Vuelio political platform.

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