

# Mental Health Charter Case study

March 2019



1. **Project name:** Supporting Employee Mental Health

2. **Organisation name:** Swim England

3. **Target group:** Employees

4. **Aim of project:** To demonstrate commitment by taking action in the following areas, for our employees:

- Adopt good mental health policies and best practices
- Appoint ambassadors and role models
- Regularly review and monitor our performance with these

5. **Project overview:**

Since signing the charter in 2016, we have committed to providing better mental health support to our employees by:

- Providing better support and resources for those with a mental health condition, making it easier for them to discuss their mental health condition with others in the organisation, and seek support and external help.
  - Published a new electronic employee handbook; [Team eGuide](#). The 'Your Wellbeing' section addresses working hours and the working day, encouraging our people to take their leave and maintain a better work life balance.
  - Conducted a 'mystery shopper' of our employee assistance programme which offers confidential counselling. Then worked with the provider to improve the service and process of getting through to someone who can help.
  - Reviewed and rewrote our policies and procedures, making them clearer to remove ambiguity.
- Secondly, provide training and support for managers and others to identify the signs of poor mental health and equip them with the skills to hold a conversation on mental health.
  - Trained all 58 line managers in Mind's 'Managing Mental Health at Work'.
  - In conjunction with the Skills Network, offered the funded qualification 'Awareness of Mental Health Problems' (L2) to all of our people. 7 employees completed the course tapping into their study leave entitlement.
  - Trained all first aiders in mental health first aid with support of St John's ambulance. Now have 12 Mental Health First Aid trained employees who are our 'wellbeing champions'. These individuals are now a source of support for anyone who would like to have a conversation.
- Provided training and support to our people in identifying the signs of poor mental health, setting strategies and methods to deal with potential triggers of poor mental health and developing resilience skills.



- Embedded the Mind Wellness Action Plans, into our Team eGuide. We reference the WAPs in our absence policy, and in conversations with managers for anyone who might want to proactively consider the way the symptoms of their mental health condition displays, and what support they need from others to mitigate this.
- Implemented Wellbeing Wednesdays (sports masseur comes in house one Wednesday per month). Team members able to book and pay for a massage slot.
- Working with an external facilitator to make 'Resilient Me' workshops available to our employees. Facilitated by an external trained psychotherapist and business coach, we teach our people the art of demonstrating resilience.

## 6. Impact and testimonials:

We can see more people being open about their mental health. The People Development team have had an increased number of conversations initiated by the employee regarding managing their mental health.

We've gathered testimonials from people to highlight the impact our supportive culture has had:

"During my time working for Swim England, the support I have received for my ongoing mental health problems has been second to none..."

After battling through a particularly tough patch I had to take a long period of time off work and I was very close to just giving up and not coming back to work at all; I felt I was letting people down by taking time off to focus on getting better so my logic at the time was to hand my notice... If it wasn't for the amazing support I received from everyone at Swim England... and friends I'd made at work there is absolutely no way I'd of had the courage to come back.

It was agreed that I could back to work on a very gradual phased return, building my hours up as I was able to. Using a Wellness Action Plan (WAP), regular catch ups with my manager and my colleagues supporting me I was back to work full time after two months... Coming back to work has been the best decision I have made and...this wouldn't have been possible without the support from Swim England. Since being back at work I have been lucky enough to become a Time to Change Young Champion meaning I can hopefully give a little back to everyone who has supported me..."  
*Hollie Fyfe, Customer Service Advisor*

"2018 from a personal point of view was really tough for me. I accessed the Employee Assistance Programme provided by Swim England and found the confidential counselling service exceptional.

Before I went through it, I was a bit of a cynic about counselling and didn't see how talking to someone could help me. I was at a real low point and saw the posters advertising the service... I found the counselling to be powerful, and through it I began to understand how the events of my past have helped shape who I am today... I was in a bad place, and the service... had a really positive impact on my mental health, with the added knowledge and comfort that if I do need further support in the future, I am covered through those times.

Swim England have been incredibly supportive, knowing that I had such a huge amount of support from across the business including the team has made and continues to make, a big difference.

Keeping active has also been critical in keeping not just a healthy body but also a healthy mind. In summer 2018, I signed up to discounted health insurance provided by Swim England which has motivated me to become more active as the activity points earned enable me to access a variety of





