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Top Tips – How to support employee mental health

Raise the profile of mental health in your business. If you don't currently have a wellbeing programme or support in place, create a business case for managing mental health at work. Failing to manage employee's mental health can cause a number of problems including sickness absence, poor employee morale, reduced productivity.

Create a mental health policy or include mental health in your sickness absence policy and include links to information and support such as stress management. This will include the timely referral of employees to specialist help such as Occupational Health where appropriate.

Promote understanding of mental health. There is still a stigma attached to mental health, especially in the workplace. Raise awareness and understanding amongst staff and encourage employees to communicate with one another and talk about mental health openly.

Train line managers. They play a key role in supporting employees who have a mental health condition, and it can be challenging without the right guidance and training. This includes a good understanding of disability discrimination law and encouraging disclosure of a mental health condition in a sensitive way.

Look at what support you can offer. Your business may not have a huge budget for counselling but there any many cost-effective employee assistance programmes (EAP) available and employers should be aware of the therapies that are offered for employees experiencing a mental health condition and look at signposting this in their policies.

Signposting employees to mental health charities that might be able to support such as Mind, Rethink Mental Illness and Mental Health Foundation can provide additional information and resources which employees may not have access to. Look at training employees to become Mental Health First Aiders (MHFA) to further support those at work.

Work can have a significant impact on people's mental wellbeing so ensure your business fosters a mentally healthy workplace by encouraging preventative measures such as addressing long working hours, encouraging flexible working, exercise and healthy eating and taking action to prevent and manage stress.

Be creative in allowing employees time and ways to explore how to prevent poor mental health at work such as allowing them to buy additional annual leave, offer volunteering days, sabbaticals, duvet days, pets at work! The list is endless!

If you're unsure about how to implement any of these strategies or need HR advice and support reach out to **natalie@hr2goconsultancy.co.uk   07779 508972   01279 771098**