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# WORKPLACE MENTAL HEALTH GUIDE

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**Over 40% Of  
The Hong Kong  
Respondents  
Did Not Have  
Good Mental  
Health Status  
As Found In A  
Survey In 2018.**

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# Part I. Background Information

## 01 Introduction

A mental health promotion and public education initiative (“Initiative”) has been launched by the Department of Health (DH) in 2020 under the steering of the Advisory Committee of Mental Health (ACMH).” The ACMH serves to advise the Government on mental health policies and tackle multifaceted mental health issues in Hong Kong. The objectives of the DH’s Initiative include:



To increase public engagement in promoting mental well-being



To enhance public knowledge about mental health with a view to encouraging help-seeking and early intervention



To reduce stigma towards people with mental illness

Despite one in seven adults in Hong Kong being affected by mental health illness, such as stress, anxiety and depression, there is a dangerous culture of silence that pervades many companies, it means the topic is not being discussed as openly as it should be. Not only individuals do not know how to speak out confidently about their own worries, but friends and colleagues also struggle to find the right way of discussing the subject with people they know to be suffering in silence. Thus, problems that could otherwise be resolved simply can soon develop into health concern, absence, disengagement and resentment.

This handbook is developed under the Initiative as a practical guide for organisations in Hong Kong to build a mental health-friendly environment. It will help organisations in Hong Kong to strengthen their understanding of common mental health issues in the workplace, learn strategies and be informed of the resources to support co-workers who may be experiencing a mental health condition.

## 02 What is Mental Health?

The World Health Organization (WHO) states that mental health is a state of well-being in which an individual realises his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and is able to make a contribution to his or her community. Mental health is fundamental to personal health and is crucial in maintaining the functioning of society.

A survey in 2018 found that over 40% of the Hong Kong respondents did not have good mental health status. They rated their mental health status in the past 6 months preceding the survey as fair, poor or very poor. Overall, around 6.4% of the respondents reported enough symptoms to indicate that they were under severe psychological distress.

### Graph Subject: When asked about feelings in the past month



The survey also found that people might have difficulty in recognising mental health problems. When presented with symptom descriptions in both subtle and overt cases, the average recognition rate was 69.3% for anxiety disorder, 51.2% for mixed anxiety and depressive disorder, and 62.8% for dementia. Respondents who were men, more educated, worked as managerial or professional workers, and had higher monthly household income were associated with lower knowledge scores in mental health problems.

Furthermore, the participation rates in activities which can improve mental well-being were low among the respondents.

Less than  
**50%** reported that they do aerobic exercises at least once a week

Only  
**18.6%** reported that they take part in mind-body exercises at least once a week

**16%** of respondents reported that they never talk to others about their feelings

Mental health problem is common. According to a territory-wide survey conducted between 2010-2013, the prevalence of common mental disorders (CMD) among Chinese people aged between 16 and 75 was 13.3%, which means around one in seven persons has common mental disorders. Among them, mixed anxiety and depressive disorder is most common (6.9%), followed by generalised anxiety disorder (4.2%) and depressive episode (2.9%). In a survey conducted in 2018, over 60% of respondents reported that they knew someone with mental health problems.

# 03 Recognising Common Mental Health Conditions in the Workplace

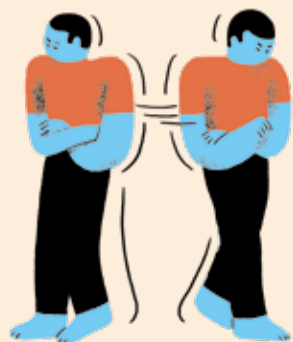
As we spend a lot of time at work, it puts us in a good position to notice changes in a co-worker's behaviour or mood or interaction with others; changes in their work output, motivation level; changes in eating habits, appetite; or appearing tired, anxious or withdrawn and losing interest in activities and tasks they previously enjoyed, which may be indications that the co-worker is encountering difficulties in coping.

Have you ever wondered if you should ask how your co-workers are feeling? Learning the signs and symptoms of some common mental health conditions could help workers better understand what others are experiencing and provide peer-support when necessary.

## Generalised anxiety disorder

The one-week prevalence of generalised anxiety disorder in Hong Kong was 4.2%.

A person with generalised anxiety disorder experiences "free-floating anxiety" which is excessive anxiety without specific trigger or reason. The anxiety and worry could be related to a variety of everyday subjects. The person has difficulty controlling such worry, and is apprehensive for most days over a period of 6 months or longer. Symptoms of generalised anxiety disorder include:



*Restlessness*



*Easy fatigue*



*Irritability*



*Difficulty in concentrating*



*Muscle tension*



*Sleep disturbance  
(difficulty falling or staying asleep)*

## Depression

A local study showed that the one-week prevalence of depressive episode for adults was 2.9% in Hong Kong.

Depression is a common mood disorder. It is different from how we normally feel sad or down sometimes in life, and may include complex emotions such as sadness, anger, shame, guilt, or emptiness. Depression may come in the form of depressive episodes, which is marked by depressed mood most time of the day that persists for more than 2 weeks. During this time, the person may experience:



*feels helpless*



*a strong feeling of  
self-blame or worthlessness*



*loses the ability to  
experience pleasure*



*might even have thought  
of killing himself*



*loss of energy*



*impaired ability to  
think or concentrate*

Other symptoms include indecisiveness, marked loss of appetite leading to weight loss, or an atypical feature of increase of appetite. In severe cases, hallucinations and delusions may occur.



## Psychosis

Psychosis affect about 1% of the population.

Psychosis is an abnormal mental condition that is often accompanied by delusions, hallucinations and disorganised speech. The thoughts, emotions and feelings of people suffering from early psychosis are frequently out of touch with reality. It could be the early signs of psychotic disorders such as schizophrenia, but may also be caused by medical conditions such as brain tumour, encephalitis or drug abuse. Symptoms of psychosis include:



*Delusion*



*Hallucinations*



*Disorganised speech  
and behaviour*



*Blunting of emotion*



*Lack of volition*



*Poverty in thought*

Psychosis may also cause impairments in cognitive function, e.g. attention, judgement and memory. These symptoms will negatively affect the person's social and vocational functioning.

There is no harm in showing care and starting a friendly conversation with your co-workers. However, it is important not to make assumptions or attempt to provide a diagnosis or counselling. If you are concerned about someone, you may encourage them to seek support and let them know that you are there to help.

# Part II. How to Create A Mentally Healthy Workplace?

# 04 A Mentally Healthy Workplace

As we spend a lot of time at work, it puts us in a good position to notice changes in a co-worker's behaviour or mood or interaction with others; changes in their work output, motivation level; changes in eating habits, appetite; or appearing tired, anxious or withdrawn and losing interest in activities and tasks they previously enjoyed, which may be indications that the co-worker is encountering difficulties in coping.

Have you ever wondered if you should ask how your co-workers are feeling? Learning the signs and symptoms of some common mental health conditions could help workers better understand what others are experiencing and provide peer-support when necessary.

According to the WHO, work is good for mental health, but a negative working environment can lead to both physical and mental health problems. Do you know that depression and anxiety have a significant economic impact? The estimated cost to the global economy is US\$ 1 trillion per year in lost productivity. Fortunately, there are many effective actions that organisations can take to promote mental health in the workplace.

Undertaking multiple actions tailored to an organisation's specific needs are likely to result in a much higher return on investment (ROI), where ROI means for every 1 dollar investment made, will receive certain dollar in return. The higher the ROI, the better the gains compare favourably to its costs. According to reports published by cooperates or the government, the average ROI of a mental health support program for employers in the United Kingdom is 4.2, in Australia is 2.3 and in Japan is 3.7. That will not only reduce the costs arising from co-workers with mental health issues, but also create a healthier, broader, more engaged workforce, which will further improve productivity. These measures that aim to create a fair and healthy workplace will also benefit the business' reputation among potential clients, customers and employees.



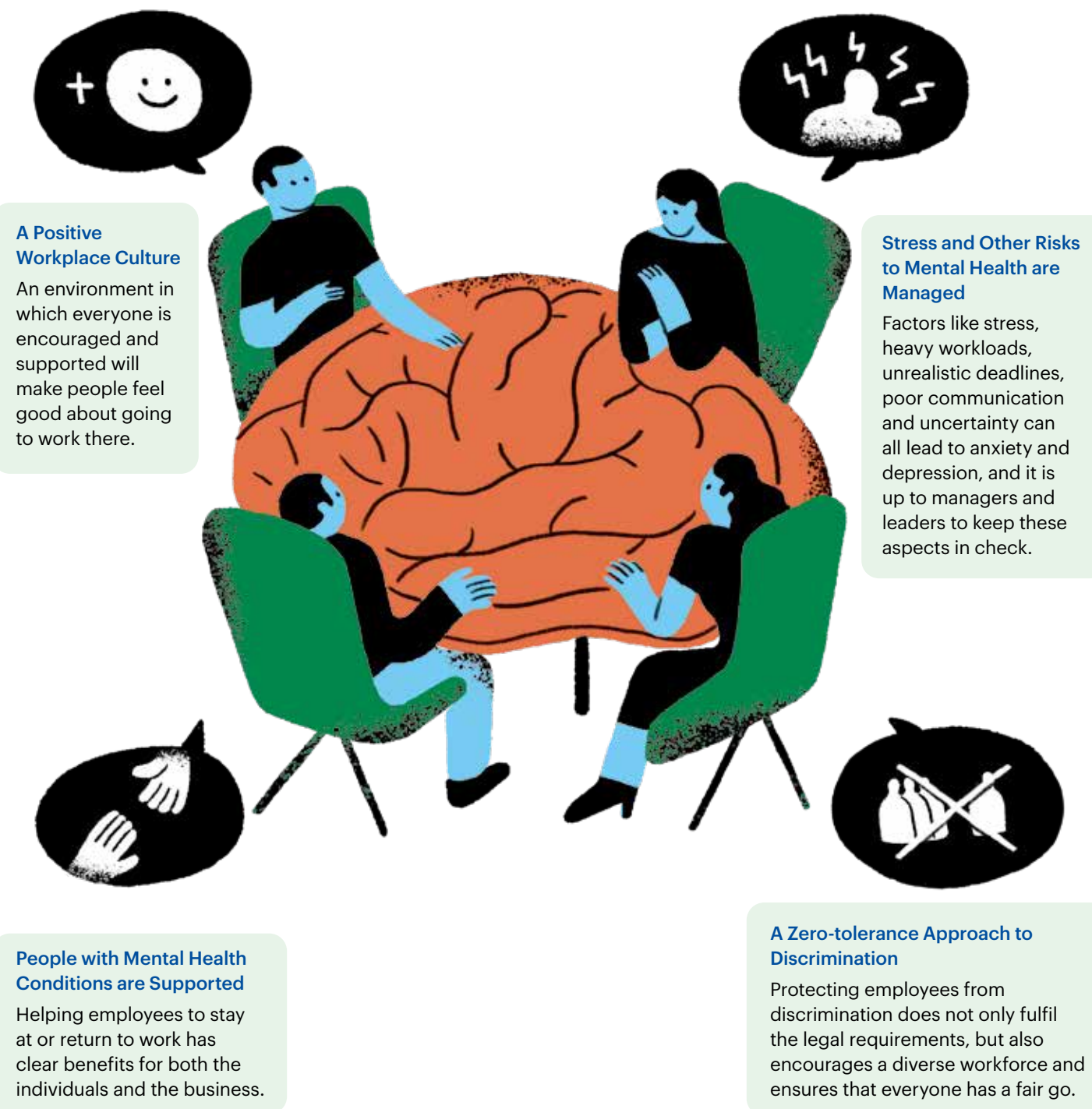
## Benefits of Having a Mentally Healthy Workplace:

- improved productivity
- increased staff morale and engagement
- lowered staff turnover
- ethical and legal obligations are met (increased business reputation)

According to a sharing from a local company, adopting a Mental Health Promotion Programme has brought significant impact:

- Highly engaged colleagues with 100% participation rate in the Engagement Survey; over 95% satisfaction rates in 4 key performance indices;
- Reduced sick leave per staff by 1 day;
- The turnover rate is 3 times lower compared to other businesses in the industry;
- The number of colleagues working in the company for a decade or more has risen to around 30%.

Mentally healthy working environments generally share these characteristics:





# 05

Looking after our mental health is not as difficult as we often imagine. Simply by promoting these 3 aspects in workplace management will help us to create a healthier, happier and more meaningful workplace environment:



## Mind

- Provide talks, workshops or life skills programmes on topics such as positive thinking, mindfulness, work-life balance, etc.
- Encourage staff to adopt positive thinking when handling stressful situations.
- Provide training to line managers to build knowledge around mental health problems, such as how to identify and reduce workplace stress-related issues, or provide Mental Health First Aid training courses.
- Encourage staff to express feelings through ways such as sharing with friends or using emojis on social media platforms.

## Enjoyment

- Organise physical activities or mind-body exercises, such as hiking, Tai Chi, yoga, meditation, and encourage staff to exercise regularly to boost both the body strength and mood.
- Organise interest classes such as sports, cooking or photography classes, and encourage staff to learn new things that they like, develop their strengths, maximise their potential and achieve satisfaction.



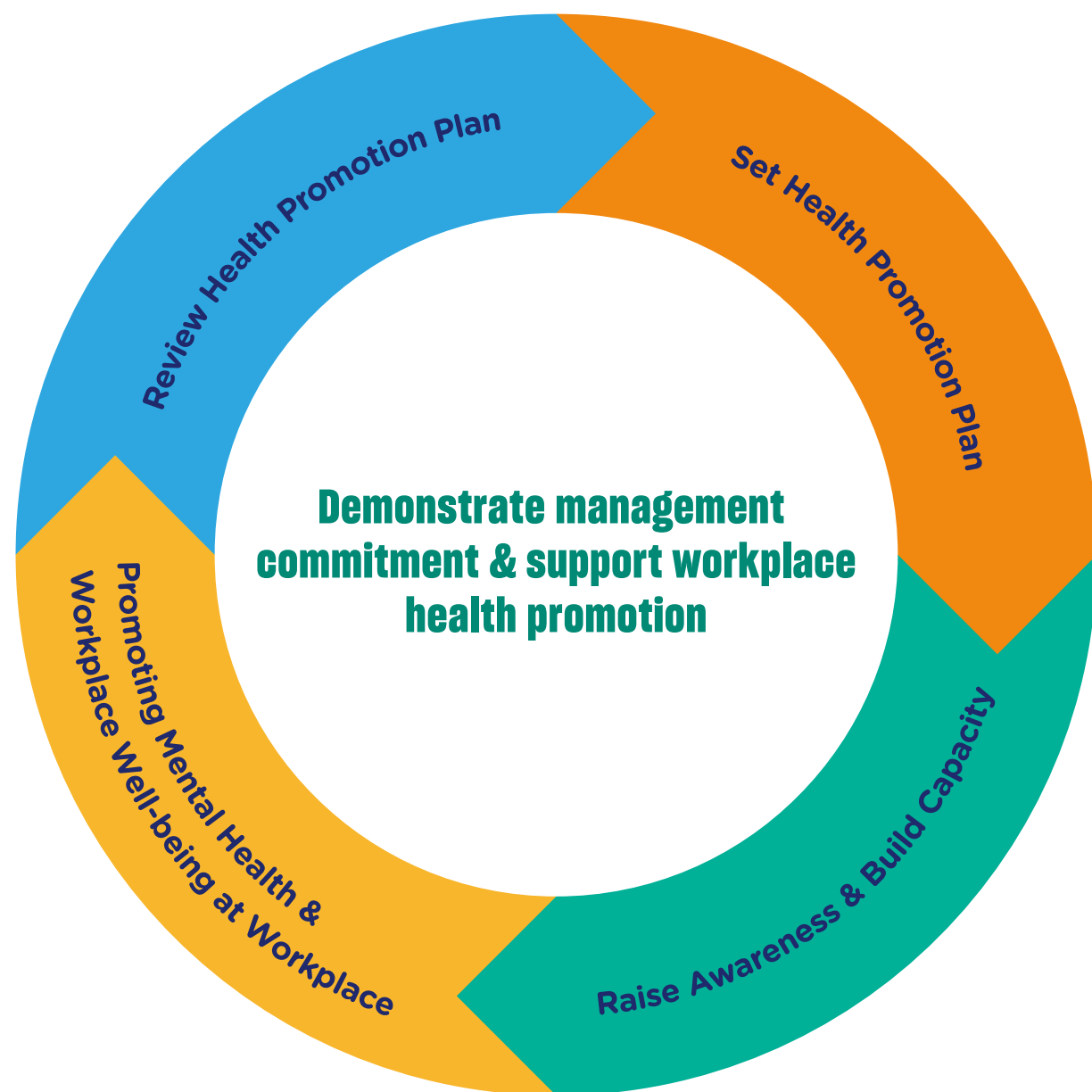
## Sharing

- Build a harmonious and caring culture in the office. Encourage staff to express their appreciation, gratitude or encouragement to others more frequently. For example, recognise and value staff contributions by giving out rewards, certificates, or providing positive feedback via newsletters or meetings.
- Organise social activities for staff, such as Christmas parties, birthday parties, Friday tea time gatherings, etc.
- Encourage and support staff to participate in volunteering work.
- Encourage staff to spend more time with family members, as having better and closer relationships with family can make one feel happy. For example, organise a workplace wellness day that encourages family members to attend.

# 06 5 Management Components to Promote Mental Health

In order to plan and create comprehensive measures, such as programmes, policies, environmental supports and benefits to meet the health needs of all employees, a coordinated approach to workplace health promotion is essential.

Are you wondering what you and your company can do? The checklist in Annex I may help you.



Essential Components of Mental Health Promotion in the Workplace  
(For details of individual components, please refer to Annex I.)

# 07 How to Talk about Mental Health Conditions in the Workplace?

Just like a casual chat about the weekend, regular, simple and informal conversations can help build a sense of belonging and connectedness which has shown to promote well-being. A caring and simple conversation will also encourage the approached person to be more open to share.

Have you noticed a change in a co-worker's behaviour or performance? Do you think that it might be due to underlying personal or mental health issues? If so, why not have a conversation and ask how the person is doing?

You may consider to...

- 1 Choose a time and place that suits you both when you have time to talk. You may consider choosing somewhere private.
- 2 Talk about the changes you have noticed about the person, and ask if they would like to talk about anything.

## Tips:

- Encourage them to talk, but respect that they might not want to do so.
- Listen and show that you are listening. Do not jump in with a solution.
- Find out if they are ready to look for help and if you can provide the help they need.
- Check in after a few days and see how they are doing.

I noticed that you have been... and wondered how you are.  
How are you feeling?  
How long have you been feeling this way?  
Have you spoken to anyone else about this?  
How can I help? / Is there anything we can do that would help?  
Do you have any support? / Do you know where to get support to help you?



# 08 How to Support Staff Who Are Experiencing A Mental Health Problem?

## Dos ✓

- Be supportive through listening.
- Help them to find ways to recover and stay well.
- Ensure that the workplace is a safe and pleasant place to be, free from discrimination.

## Don'ts ✗

- Blame them, or get angry or frustrated. Their mental illness is not caused by personal weakness or failing, and it should not define them.
- Be dismissive of their mental health issues, such as pointing out that others are worse off.
- Avoid them.
- Make fun of their mental illness.
- Pressure them if they do not want to go out or discuss their issues with you.

## Avoid!

- Saying 'I know how you feel' if you do not, because that would invalidate their experience;
- Using words that stigmatise, such as 'psycho' or 'crazy';
- Being dismissive, such as saying 'snap out of it', 'cheer up', 'forget about it', 'pull yourself together', or 'I'm sure it will pass'. These comments can make a person feel worse.

People with mental health problems may need to make long term or permanent changes in their lives or jobs. Your co-workers may need your support on an ongoing basis.



### As a co-worker, you can...

1. Check in with other co-workers informally in the office to see how they are doing, and, if you manage someone, offer them the chance to discuss their mental health status at supervision sessions.
2. Offer to be a mentor or coach, or just a friendly support on an ongoing basis.
3. Ask if there is anything that you can do to support the person to manage their condition.
4. Keep in touch with the co-worker during periods of leave and support them on their return.

### As a line manager, you can discuss short-term adjustments, such as...

1. Altering start and finish times or break times;
2. Flexible or reduction in working hours;
3. Working from another location;
4. Altering targets or predictable tasks, or reallocating duties;
5. Introducing a buddy or mentor system;
6. Modifying instructions or making sure that they are written down.



Reasonable adjustments can be made at work to reduce the impact of a mental health problem on a person's performance. The listed adjustments are generally simple, practical and cost-effective. Nonetheless, note that all support requires regular, planned reviews.

Line managers should be mindful of the resources available to support staff, such as human resources or occupational health services, or those that specifically help people with mental health difficulties, such as employee assistance programmes.

It is inappropriate to assume that a co-worker with a mental health problem should be off work and stay home, because that could fuel a sense of worthlessness and symptoms might spiral as a result, making the person's successful return to work in the future less likely. It is also important to keep in touch with the co-worker during periods of leave and support them on their return.

# 09

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Q. Does mental illness only affect a few people?

Mental illness is common. Around one in seven adults in Hong Kong has common mental disorders.



What is Mental Health?

### Q. Is mental illness caused by personal weakness?

A mental illness is not a character flaw. It is caused by genetic, biological, social and environmental factors.



Recognising Common Mental Health Conditions in the Workplace

### Q. Can people with mental illness 'pull themselves out of it'?

A mental illness is not caused by personal weakness and is not 'cured' by personal strength. Like physical illness, appropriate treatment in ways such as therapy and medication are usually needed to help someone with mental illness to recover. With appropriate treatment, many people can and do recover from mental illness.

### Q. Will mental health issues permanently reduce one's capacity to function in a work environment?

During the onset or relapse of mental health problems, productivity may be affected, but recovery generally brings a return to previous functioning levels. Therefore, it is important for a person with mental health issues to seek help and support for earlier recovery.



Sources of Help and Information

# Part II. Resources of Help



# 10 Sources of Help and Information

Category	Source
Workplace mental health promotion programmes	Joyful@Healthy Workplace Programme <a href="https://joyfulhealthyworkplace.hk/en/health-info/mental-health/">https://joyfulhealthyworkplace.hk/en/health-info/mental-health/</a>
	Mental Health Workplace Charter <a href="https://mentalhealthcharter.hk/en/index.html">https://mentalhealthcharter.hk/en/index.html</a>
	Occupational Safety and Health Council - Work Stress / Happy Life (Hot Topics) <a href="http://www.oshc.org.hk/eng/main/hot/stress_happy_life/">www.oshc.org.hk/eng/main/hot/stress_happy_life/</a>
	Labour Department: Publications (occupational health) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More Exercise Smart Work (PDF) <a href="http://www.labour.gov.hk/eng/public/oh/MESW.pdf">www.labour.gov.hk/eng/public/oh/MESW.pdf</a></li> <li>• More Exercise Smart Work (II) (PDF) <a href="http://www.labour.gov.hk/eng/public/oh/MESW2.pdf">www.labour.gov.hk/eng/public/oh/MESW2.pdf</a></li> <li>• Work and Stress (PDF) <a href="https://www.labour.gov.hk/eng/public/oh/WorkAndStress.pdf">https://www.labour.gov.hk/eng/public/oh/WorkAndStress.pdf</a></li> </ul>
Community resources	Social Welfare Department - Integrated Community Centre for Mental Wellness <a href="https://www.swd.gov.hk/en/pubsvc/rehab/cat_supportcom/centrebases/iccmw/">https://www.swd.gov.hk/en/pubsvc/rehab/cat_supportcom/centrebases/iccmw/</a>

Category	Source
Training	The Mental Health Association of Hong Kong - Mental Health First Aid <a href="http://www.mhfa.org.hk/">www.mhfa.org.hk/</a>
Toolkits	City Mental Health Alliance Hong Kong - Hong Kong HR Toolkit: Main legal considerations for mental well-being at work <a href="https://www.cmhahk.org/docs//Toolkits/HR-Toolkit-mental-health_September-2023.pdf">https://www.cmhahk.org/docs//Toolkits/HR-Toolkit-mental-health_September-2023.pdf</a>
Resources that help to offer job opportunities to persons recovered or recovering from mental health issues	The Selective Placement Division of the Labour Department <a href="https://www2.jobs.gov.hk/isps/webform/">https://www2.jobs.gov.hk/isps/webform/</a>
Source the goods and services they need from rehabilitation social enterprises	Social Welfare Department - The Marketing Consultancy Office (Rehabilitation) <a href="https://www.mcor.swd.gov.hk/en/index.php">https://www.mcor.swd.gov.hk/en/index.php</a>



Category	Source
Professional Treatment	The Primary Care Directory <a href="https://www.pcdirectory.gov.hk/english/welcome/welcome.html">https://www.pcdirectory.gov.hk/english/welcome/welcome.html</a>
	General Out-patient Clinics <a href="https://www.ha.org.hk/visitor/ha_visitor_text_index.asp?Content_ID=10052&amp;Lang=ENG&amp;Ver=TEXT">https://www.ha.org.hk/visitor/ha_visitor_text_index.asp?Content_ID=10052&amp;Lang=ENG&amp;Ver=TEXT</a>
	Psychiatric Specialist Out-patient Clinics <a href="https://www.ha.org.hk/visitor/ha_visitor_index.asp?Content_ID=200252&amp;Lang=ENG&amp;Dimension=100&amp;Parent_ID=10053&amp;Ver=HTML">https://www.ha.org.hk/visitor/ha_visitor_index.asp?Content_ID=200252&amp;Lang=ENG&amp;Dimension=100&amp;Parent_ID=10053&amp;Ver=HTML</a>
	Private Psychiatrists <a href="https://www.hkpsych.org.hk/index.php?lang=en&amp;Itemid=345">https://www.hkpsych.org.hk/index.php?lang=en&amp;Itemid=345</a>
	The Clinical Psychologists of the Social Welfare Department <a href="https://www.swd.gov.hk/en/pubsvc/cps/">https://www.swd.gov.hk/en/pubsvc/cps/</a>
	Psychologists registered with the Hong Kong Psychological Society <a href="http://www.hkps.org.hk/en/psychologists/who_are_psychologists/">http://www.hkps.org.hk/en/psychologists/who_are_psychologists/</a>

# 11 Emergency Support

If you or someone in your workplace is facing a mental health crisis, and you think immediate action is needed, please call the emergency number (999) or go to a local hospital emergency department. You can also call:

**18111 Mental Health Support Hotline**  
 Hotline Service: 24 hours  
**18111**

**Social Welfare Department**  
 Hotline Service: 24 hours  
**2343 2255**

**Caritas Family Crisis Support Centre**  
 Hotline Service (Family Crisis): 24 hours  
**18288**

**Suicide Prevention Services**  
 Hotline Service: 24 hours  
**2382 0000**

**Hospital Authority**  
 Mental Health Direct: 24 hours  
**2466 7350**

**The Samaritan Befrienders Hong Kong**  
 Hotline Service: 24 hours  
**2389 2222 (Chinese)**  
**2389 2223 (English)**

**The Samaritans**  
 Multi-Lingual Suicide Prevention Hotline: 24 hours  
**2896 0000**

I. Demonstrate Management Commitment and Support Workplace Health Promotion

- Formulate a written “Healthy Workplace Policy” with promoting mental health and well-being included as an action area
- Have an annual budget for promoting health at the workplace
- Have an active committee responsible for organising health promotion activities in the workplace
- The committee is composed of staff representatives from all levels
- Demonstrate organisational commitment and support of worksite health promotion at all levels of management, e.g. include senior or middle management staff in the committee, invite them to participate in activities, etc.
- State the organisation’s commitment in promoting health at the workplace at orientation of newly recruited staff

II. Set Health Promotion Plans

- Conduct needs assessments and/or staff interest surveys. Examples of assessment include health risk surveys (e.g. staff consultations or surveys) and analyses of the working environment related to mental well-being (e.g. working conditions, communication, work-life balance, staff support, or work-related or other causes of stress)
- Prioritise the needs and develop a health promotion year plan, and an action plan that documents what will be done, when and by whom, as well as how it is monitored or evaluated

III. Raise Awareness and Build Capacity

- Disseminate information (e.g. health tips) regularly via posters or pamphlets, internal circulation, internal emails, notice boards or corners, newsletters etc. to increase staff knowledge and awareness on mental health and well-being, such as work-related stress, depression, etc.
- Provide talks or workshops to promote mental health and well-being, e.g. work-life balance and life-skills programmes
- Provide training to line managers to build knowledge around mental health problems, e.g. training on identifying and reducing workplace stress-related issues and providing Mental Health First Aid training courses
- Provide an Employee Assistance Programme and let your staff know how to access them
- Provide community resources, e.g. support services and volunteer opportunities, to promote mental health and well-being

IV. Promote mental health and well-being at the Workplace

- Provide clear workplace organisational procedures, e.g. clear job descriptions, code of conduct, clear lines of communication, confidentiality guidelines, orientation programmes
- Provide regular opportunities for staff to meet and exchange their views and knowledge, e.g. team meetings, one-to-one consultations or talks. This allows staff to comment on work-related and personal issues that affect their performance and allows the training required to be identified
- Offer learning and development opportunities to maximise staff potential

- Integrate the aspect of “sharing” into the workplace, e.g.
  1. Build a harmonious and caring culture in the office. Encourage staff to express their appreciation, gratitude or encouragement to others more frequently. For example, recognise and value staff success and contributions through ways like giving out rewards, certificates, providing positive feedback via newsletters or meetings
  2. Provide regular opportunities for staff to meet and exchange views and knowledge, such as team meetings, one-to-one consultations or talks
  3. Organise social activities for team building and promoting workplace spirit, such as Christmas parties, birthday parties, Friday tea time gatherings
  4. Encourage staff to participate in volunteering works and provide support
  5. Encourage staff to spend more time with family members, e.g. organise a workplace wellness day that encourages family members to attend
- Integrate the aspect of “Mind” into the workplace, e.g.
  1. Provide talks or workshops on promoting mental health and well-being, such as on the topics of positive thinking, mindfulness, work-life balance and life skills programmes. Also, encourage staff to adopt positive thinking while handling stressful situations
  2. Set up a well-being network for colleagues to share experiences and tips for managing mental health and well-being at work
- Integrate the aspect of “Enjoyment” into the workplace, e.g.
  1. Organise physical activities or mind-body exercises, such as hiking, Tai Chi, yoga, meditation, etc. Also, encourage colleagues to exercise regularly to boost both the body strength and mood
  2. Organise interest classes for staff and encourage them to learn new things that they like or develop their strengths, such as organising sports, cooking or photography classes, etc.
- Provide opportunities or time out space for employees to relax, e.g. provide magazines, music, adequate staff room
- Provide opportunities to promote workplace spirit, e.g. organise social clubs, sports teams, lunch gatherings
- Organise mental health promotion activities on a regular basis. These activities are sustained over long periods to become embedded in the organisational culture

- Invite staff at all levels to participate, including senior or middle management as role models
- Arrange recognition schemes or staff nomination schemes with awards or compliments for those having good progress by gifts, prizes, recognition or announcements
- Encourage open and honest communication opportunities, e.g. staff surveys, suggestion boxes

V. Review Health Promotion Plans

- Develop evaluation plans
- Monitor the change in staff’s lifestyles and behaviours, as well as the culture and atmosphere within the workplace
- Analyse various records, indicators and statistics, e.g. staff participation rates in various health promotion activities, staff feedback and satisfaction, absenteeism, sick leaves, changes in staff’s morale, etc.
- Adjust the health promotion plans according to the evaluation results



In January 2016, the Department of Health (DH) launched the Joyful@HK Campaign, a three-year territory-wide mental health promotion programme, to increase the public's engagement in promoting mental well-being and enhance their awareness and understanding about mental health.

In order to enhance the promotion of mental health in the working population, the DH and the Occupational Safety and Health Council (OSHC) launched the “Joyful@Healthy Workplace” programme in August 2016. The Labour Department joined as one of the co-organisers of the programme since April 2018. The programme focuses on three action areas: healthy eating, physical activity and mental well-being. Organisations are first invited to sign a Charter to demonstrate their pledge to promote mental and physical well-being in the workplace. A series of resources including dedicated web pages, workshops, professional advisory services, Mental Health First Aid training courses, and teaching materials are then offered to employers and employees to assist them to create a healthy and mental health-friendly working environment. Also, to promote a corporate culture that prioritises employees’ physical and mental well-being, the "Joyful@Healthy Workplace" Best Practices Award is also organised every year.

For further details about the “Joyful@Healthy Workplace” programme, please visit the programme website at [www.joyfulhealthyworkplace.hk/en/index.php](http://www.joyfulhealthyworkplace.hk/en/index.php).

*“We value and pledge to promote a mental health-friendly workplace environment.”*



Target Organisations

Private organisations, public bodies, educational institutions as well as non-governmental organisations are eligible for joining the Charter.

Recognition Scheme and Actions

Organisations signing the Charter may choose to attain either of the two titles, namely a "Mental Health-Friendly Organisation" or a "Mental Health-Friendly Supreme Organisation", by completing a designated number of action items from a list of 12 options (coded from A to L) which carries the following objectives –

**Objective I** – To promote mental well-being at the workplace, which includes building a respectful and positive work environment, promoting active listening and communication, encouraging help-seeking, and facilitating early identification and timely treatment of mental distress (A-H, eight items)

**Objective II** – To create an inclusive and friendly workplace environment for colleagues with mental distress. (I-L, four items)

The actions to be taken to attain the title Mental Health Friendly Organisation or Mental Health Friendly Supreme Organisation are set out in the table below –

**Mental Health-Friendly Organisation**

To complete at least THREE action items under Objective I of the List of Action Items

**Mental Health-Friendly Supreme Organisation**

To complete at least THREE action items each under Objectives I and II of the List of Action

Incentives

The following incentives will be provided to organisations signing the Charter –

- a Government will offer professional support and information on mental health related resources available in the community;
- b Government will arrange for the names of organisations and the recognition titles attained to be listed in the Charter website;
- c Organisations have the right to display their recognition titles on letterheads, websites and organisation publications for two years; and
- d Selected organisations will be invited to join the kick-off event of the Initiative and receive a certificate.

List of Action Items

Objective I – To promote mental well-being at the workplace, which includes building a respectful and positive work environment, promoting active listening and communication, encouraging help-seeking, and facilitating early identification and timely treatment of mental distress (A-H, eight items)

Tick	Option	Action	Example
<input type="checkbox"/>	A	Organise corporate family gatherings that facilitate exchange, as well as enjoyable and interesting activities	Organise corporate family fun days and festival celebrations  Organise interest groups, voluntary activities (e.g. visits to residential care homes for the elderly), sport activities and other recreation activities
<input type="checkbox"/>	B	Organise talks/workshops/activities to strengthen the positive mind and mutual respect of staff during work	Arrange talks/workshops/activities regarding positive thinking, stress management, resilience building, listening, giving feedback and conflict resolution
<input type="checkbox"/>	C	Promote exchange of information on mental health	Raise awareness on common mental health issues such as anxiety and depression
<input type="checkbox"/>	D	Encourage help-seeking behaviour by providing information on mental health support services	Arrange for a hotline, counsellors and employee assistance programmes
<input type="checkbox"/>	E	Organise talks on mental health	Arrange for speakers with expert knowledge or personal experience to conduct in-depth discussions
<input type="checkbox"/>	F	Offer training to staff to equip them with basic skills in resolving conflicts, providing peer support and handling mental health emergencies	Organise or arrange for staff to attend training courses on mental health and communication skills.  Provide guidance on offering peer support, covering topics such as the ways to start a conversation regarding mental health and listen with a respectful and non-judgmental attitude



G

Encourage colleagues to listen to each other and share mental health-related experiences

Encourage colleagues to listen to each other and share mental health-related experiences, e.g. sharing the ways they deal with stress, anxiety or depressive mood in a voluntary manner; senior staff members may also organise sharing sessions and lead the discussions



H

Introduce a mentorship scheme to facilitate exchange on mental health-related concerns

Make use of informal settings to listen, encourage help-seeking and promote healing

Objective II – To create an inclusive and friendly workplace environment for colleagues with mental distress. (I-L, four items)

Tick	Option	Action	Example
<input type="checkbox"/>	I	Assign a team/coordinator to implement the measures committed	Arrange for a staff member or team to follow up on the action items committed by your organisation and collect feedback
<input type="checkbox"/>	J	Formulate human resources policies to care for employees with mental health needs and provide them with an environment that facilitates their recovery	Arrange suitable positions/work environment for colleagues with mental health needs; build an environment that encourages colleagues to receive necessary medical treatment/ attend training courses on mental health (e.g. setting flexible working hours); adjust work arrangements to help employees with mental health needs return to work
<input type="checkbox"/>	K	Implement measures to promote work-life balance	Implement a five-day week work mode; provide employees with incentives, special leaves (e.g. family care leave) or flexible working hours with regard to their personal development, interests, or special needs  Avoid arranging for work outside office hours unless it is occasional and strictly unavoidable  Prioritise work  Communicate regularly with employees to better understand their individual needs and provide appropriate assistance
<input type="checkbox"/>	L	Offer job opportunities to persons recovered or recovering from mental health issues	Recruit the job seekers concerned through the Selective Placement Division of the Labour Department or relevant non-governmental organisations

## Notes

[illegible]

**For more information:**



**Consult your doctor**



**Call the following hotlines:**

**18111 Mental Health Support Hotline 18111**  
**Hospital Authority Mental Health Direct 2466 7350**



Visit  
[shallwetalk.hk](http://shallwetalk.hk)





精神健康職場約章  
Mental Health Workplace Charter

Workplace Mental  
Health Guide



Mental Health  
Workplace Charter



Shall We Talk



精神健康諮詢委員會  
Advisory Committee on Mental Health

