



York St John University: a MINDFUL EMPLOYER



What is MINDFUL EMPLOYER?

- NHS initiative run by Workways (a service of Devon Partnership NHS Trust)
- Workways supports people with a mental health condition to find or remain in employment
- Developed by employers in Exeter and launched in 2004
- Initially intended as a purely local initiative, it has since developed throughout the UK and has been launched abroad
- About increasing awareness of mental health, providing support networks and information, and making it healthier to talk about mental health
- Provides support to adapt the MINDFUL EMPLOYER principles within policies, structure and culture, adopting them for the longer-term benefit of employees



The Charter

- Is not an accreditation, award or a set of quality standards
- It's a voluntary set of aspirations
- About working towards the principles, not the immediate fulfilment of them
- Being a Charter signatory doesn't mean 'getting it all right' - but it does indicate a willingness to work towards better practice



Positive about Mental Health

As an employer we recognise that:

- People who have mental health issues may have experienced discrimination in recruitment and selection procedures.
- Whilst some people will acknowledge their experience of mental health issues in a frank and open way, others fear that stigma will jeopardise their chances of getting a job.
- Given appropriate support, the vast majority of people who have experienced mental ill health continue to work successfully as do many with ongoing issues.

As an employer we aim to:

- Show a positive and enabling attitude to employees and job applicants with mental health issues.
- Ensure that all staff involved in recruitment and selection are briefed on mental health issues and given the appropriate skills.
- Make it clear in any recruitment or occupational health check that people who have experienced mental health issues will not be discriminated against and that disclosure will enable both employee and employer to assess and provide the right level of support or adjustment.
- Not make assumptions that a person with a mental health issue will be more vulnerable to workplace stress or take more time off than any other employee or job applicant.
- Provide non-judgemental and proactive support to individual staff who experience mental health issues.
- Ensure all line managers have information and training about managing mental health in the workplace.



Why YSJ makes the commitment?

- Demonstrates our commitment to a positive attitude about mental health to all stakeholders (including our current and prospective staff)
- Demonstrates a willingness to enable disclosure of mental ill health to take place without fear of rejection or prejudice
- Provides a focus for our continuous development of good practice processes relating to mental health



Future and Next Steps

1. Continue to roll out mental health awareness training to all staff (including mandatory training for line managers)
2. Develop and embed a culture where staying 'mentally well' is the primary focus
3. Review and update our process for Stress Risk Assessments
4. Develop a formal network of Mental Health First Aiders/ Champions



Further Information

www.mindfulemployer.net

Liz Stanton

Senior HR Advisor

York St John University

l.stanton@yorksja.ac.uk

01904 876435