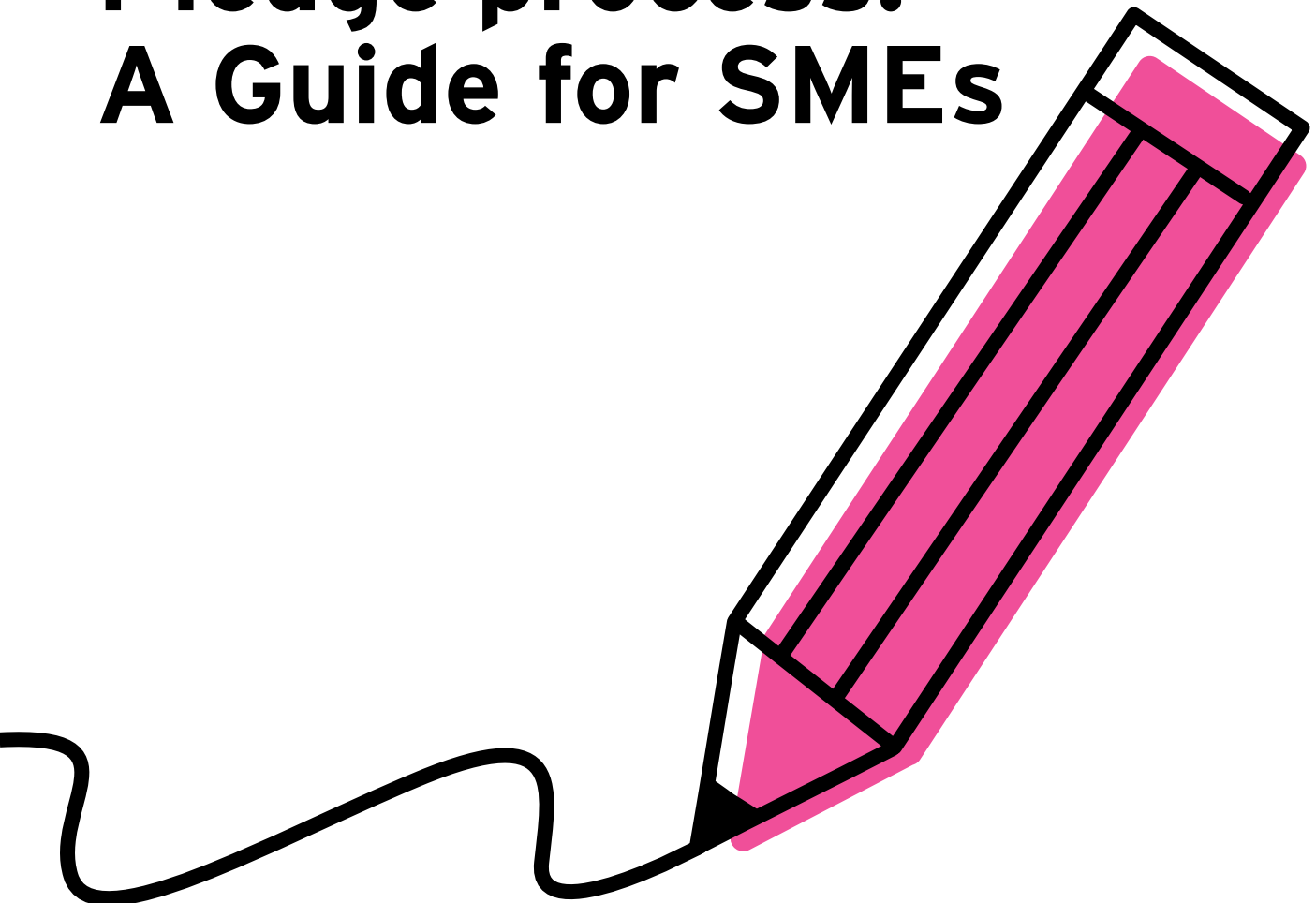


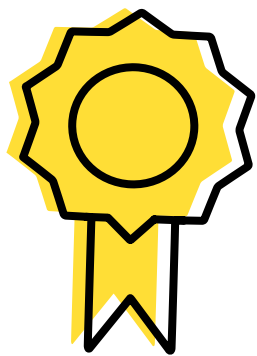
**time to change**

**Wales**

let's end mental health discrimination

# An introduction to the Time to Change Wales Employer Pledge process: A Guide for SMEs





## An introduction to the Time to Change Wales Employer Pledge process

Welcome to our guide on how to fill out your Time to Change Wales Employer Pledge Action Plan. This guide, accompanied by the Core Standards booklet contains all the information as well as links to resources that you need to help you complete your Action Plan.

---



## What is the Time to Change Wales Employer Pledge?

The Time to Change Wales Employer Pledge is a public declaration that a business wants to step up to tackle mental health stigma and discrimination, along with their dedication to supporting staff wellbeing and mental health.

It isn't a quality mark, accreditation or endorsement. There is no test or application. You just have to commit to taking actions that are realistic and right for you that will lead to a reduction in discrimination within your workplace and the wider community.

The more businesses stepping up to make the Employer Pledge the more they are helping to break the silence around mental health. Imagine if every business in Wales made a public pledge to tackle stigma: employers big and small, that would send a powerful message that mental health is something that can be talked about, and that stigma and discrimination are not welcome.



## What is the Time to Change Wales Action Plan?

To become Pledged, businesses need to set out their plans by completing an Action Plan. This is a live structured document, designed to be a starting point or a foundation on which to develop good wellbeing practices or strategies in your workplace.

To achieve lasting change within your workplace, it's important to create a plan of tangible and measured activity that is embedded at the heart of an employer's commitment when signing the Time to Change Wales Pledge.

The Action Plan guide and template is based on the 6 Core Standards recommended by the Thriving at Work Report released in 2017.

## What is Thriving at Work 2017 (TaW)?

Thriving at Work is an independent review of mental health commissioned by UK Government and led by Paul Farmer, CEO of Mind and, Lord Stevenson.

To address issues around mental health in the workplace, the report sets out six mental health Core Standards for employers, drawn from best practice and the available evidence base.

## Why is an Action Plan needed and why is it based on the Core Standards as recommended by TaW?

The vision behind this review was to pave the way so that in ten years' time employees will have "good work", which contributes positively to their mental health, our society and our economy.

To support this, all organisations and businesses, whatever their size, will be equipped with the awareness and tools to address and prevent mental ill health caused or worsened by work. They will be equipped to support individuals with a mental health condition to thrive and the proportion of people with a long-term mental health condition, who leave employment each year, will be dramatically reduced.



## Why is addressing mental health important?

We know that one in six workers in Britain are affected by mental health problems like anxiety, depression and stress every year. Sadly, we also know that a staggering 300,000 people with a long-term mental health problem lose their jobs each year.

A major study into workplace wellbeing in 2018 by the mental health charity Mind has revealed that poor mental health at work is widespread, with almost half (48 per cent) of all people surveyed saying they have experienced a mental health problem in their current job.

The survey of more than 44,000 employees also revealed that only half of those who had experienced poor mental health had talked to their employer about it, suggesting that as many as 1 in 4 UK workers is struggling in silence, which reinforces the stigma around mental health.

**Our work has revealed that the UK is facing a mental health challenge at work that is much larger than we had thought. Not only is there a big human cost of poor mental health at work, there are also knock-on impacts for society, the economy and Government. Employers are losing billions of pounds because employers are less productive, less effective, or off sick.**

**Stevenson / Farmer** - Thriving at Work (TaW) Report 2017 on what poor mental health costs employers



## **The cost of poor mental health to employers**

The TaW report found that poor mental health costs employers around £33 - £42 billion a year. This is made up of:

**Absenteeism cost:**  
£8bn

**Presenteeism cost:**  
£17bn to £26bn

**Staff turnover:**  
£8bn

**Total cost:**  
£33bn to £42bn

This amounts to a cost per employee of between £1,205 and £1,560 per year. This cost is for all employees, not just those who are ill.



## The benefits of signing the Time to Change Wales Employer Pledge

### Benefits to workplace culture

The aim of the Action Plan and this guidance is to support your business whilst it actively works on breaking down stigma around mental health, making the workplace a safe space for all. Change may occur when the cycle below is addressed on each point.

- **Increased belief and trust:** employees believe that the commitment to changing how people think and act about mental health is genuine and that the care for employee's mental health and wellbeing is also genuine.
- **Increased knowledge:** people are provided with information, resources etc which results in an increase of employees' awareness around mental health.
- **Increased awareness** leads to an increased understanding of how their attitudes could be barriers to breaking down stigma and what a change of attitude could mean for employees and everyone around them.
- **An understanding and change of attitude** translates to adapted behaviour that is more about challenging stigma, taking care of mental health, open to sharing and listening to stories and also accessing support for one another as a result.

### Benefits to the employer from a business oversight perspective

- Employers ensure that workplace procedures and policies reflect the business's commitment to changing how everyone thinks and acts about mental health.
- Employers actively encourage key staff to work with one another and ensure that mental health is part of all their agenda and how it impacts on their specific audiences.
- Employer works with all staff to keep learning about how attitudes to mental health are changing, where progress has been made and where improvements might be needed.

**Hear from Melin Homes, an organisation who have signed up to the [Time to Change Wales pledge](#), about what they are doing to end mental health stigma in the workplace.**



### **Benefits to the employer from a business perspective**

Mental health and wellbeing becomes normalised and accepted within the workplace which leads to:

- An increase in disclosure with a decline in absence/sickness/presenteeism and turnover costs.
- Employees are better able to support their mental health and wellbeing, thereby using interventions before they become unwell thus reducing absence.
- Employer gains public recognition of their commitment to changing how the organisation thinks and acts around mental health, attracting high performing individuals into their employment.
- Increased productivity means increased revenue for the organisation, strengthened by a decline in costs according to presenteeism and absence.
- Access to opportunities to share and access best practice learning from other employers participating in the Employer Pledge.
- As an employer you are able to be proactive around what's needed by being able to find out what employees really feel about how you support their mental health.

### **Benefits to employees**

- Employees across the business become actively aware that mental health belongs to everybody and are better able to recognise when they might be struggling with poor mental health.
- Employees feel safe in sharing their lived experiences without fear of judgement or repercussions.
- Employees feel safe and supported in reaching out for help within the business or can be signposted to external help when needed.
- Employer works with all staff to keep learning about how attitudes to mental health are changing, where progress has been made and where improvements might be needed.
- Employees are empowered to actively support the pledge around changing attitudes towards mental health. This could be through recruitment of Employee Champions, advocates, mental health first aiders, people who engage on key dates such as Time to Talk Day or World Mental Health Day, either by taking part in activities or delivering an activity themselves.



## How to complete the Action Plan

### Before you start your Action Plan

Please take the time to read this booklet and the “Core Standards Developing your Employer Action Plan” booklet as they will help you to think about the following:

- What activities you could include in your plan to break down mental health stigma.
- What you would need to get the business owner, supervisors and managers on board.
- How you might raise awareness of mental health amongst employees.
- How to involve staff in dialogue and decision making to create a culture of openness.
- How to promote a healthy work life balance amongst employees.
- What learning and development opportunities you can create to help employees better understand mental health including upskilling managers and supervisors.
- What changes would you need to make workplace procedures to support this commitment.
- How to better support employees to create positive working relationships and connections with one another, basically an environment that supports, teamwork and information sharing.
- To think about who can lead on activities, the timescales that you might deliver those activities in and how you might measure impact and success.
- How you will ensure that the activities, will be inclusive one way or another in order to reach every employee within your workplace.





## How to complete your Action Plan

1. The first step in completing your Action Plan is to create an Employers account on our website. You can create an account here: [www.timetochangewales.org.uk/en/register/](http://www.timetochangewales.org.uk/en/register/) Here you will find the Action Plan template along with supporting guides and other useful resources.
2. Read our supporting guides to understand each Core Standard, the minimum requirements we look for, ideas to consider and top tips.
3. When you are ready, populate the Action Plan template with activities that address each question posed.

Once you have completed your Action Plan, you can submit it in one of two ways:

1. You can submit your Action Plan online via **your employer login account**. or by emailing your Community Engagement Officer.
2. Once you've submitted your Action Plan, we will work with you to review and approve your Action Plan, providing feedback and an opportunity to resubmit as a result of feedback in time for your Pledge signing date. The review time period is up to six weeks so please ensure that Pledge signing date allows for this eight week review period.
3. Once we've approved your plan, we will send you a pledge board for your signing event.

### **Please note...**

We want to help as many employers sign the Pledge as possible but hope you understand that we receive a significantly high number of plans on a daily basis. Because of this, we require a minimum of six weeks' notice of your pledge signing date to receive your Action Plan, review it, provide feedback, approve your plan and despatch your pledge board. Please also note that process time may increase during peak periods, in those instances we will flag clearly online.



## Your pledge signing

Once your Action Plan is approved, it's time to organise a Pledge signing event, to share your Action Plan with staff and to celebrate becoming a Pledged organisation:

Each event is different, but here are some key points to consider:

1. Ask your CEO, the business owner or the most senior staff member possible to sign your Pledge in front of as many employees as you can gather.
2. Pick a significant day to get your message out more easily whether that's World Mental Health Day, Time to Talk Day or a significant day for your workplace such as a staff meeting.
3. Make sure you communicate your Pledge signing to all of your staff e.g. use an all staff meeting, all staff email or record the session for people to watch in their own time - preferably with a message from whoever signed it about why it's important to them.
4. Tell the world about your Pledge! We encourage you to use social media and send out a press release if you'd like to. You can find a press release template on the Employer Account Toolkit.

### **What can you expect from TtCW after the Pledge has been signed?**

- Answering any questions you have over email and phone.
- Invitations to free networking events for pledged employers where you can learn from leading employers on how they have achieved success.
- Connect you to other employers in your sector who have already signed the Employer Pledge or working towards it.

### **We may also:**

- Contact you in in order to produce a case study with respect to the Core Standards as described above.
- Contact you asking if you would like to be included in Time to Change Wales' programme wide evaluation.



## Final thoughts

We hope you have found this guide helpful and we look forward to receiving your Action Plan. Thank you for your commitment to ending mental health stigma and discrimination within your workplace. Together we can achieve lasting change and create workplaces where no-one has to face discrimination because of a mental health problem.

### Acknowledgements

This guidance has been developed by Time to Change in England and adapted to a Welsh audience. We would like to thank and express our gratitude and appreciation for the people listed below who took the time out of their super busy diaries to help us by feeding back on their wide experiences, knowledge and ultimately guiding us so that we were able to create this set of guides to help you create the Action Plan that you need for your organisation.

**Natasha Broomfield-Reid** - Director of Diverse Matters

**Leyla Okhai** - CEO & Director of Diverse Minds UK

**Siri Nomme** - Head of Talent & Diversity, Europe, Middle East and Asia for Norton Rose & Fulbright LLP

**Tyron Williams** - Employee Engagement Partner for BNP Paribas Real Estate UK

**Karl Wilson** - Disability Network and Wellbeing Programme Manager for Lloyds Bank

**Jackie Healey** - HR Consultant for Bristol City Council

**Dom Arnall** - Head of Programme Management for Time to Change

**Marcel Vige** - Head of Equality Improvement for Mind

**Darren Bee, Chrystalla Karvella and Anita Kumari**  
Time to Change - Community Equalities Coordinator for North West, London and East and West Midlands respectively

**Be part of Time to Change Wales' movement for change in workplace mental health.**



**@ttcwales**



**/ttcwales**



**@timetochangewales**



**/timetochangewales**

