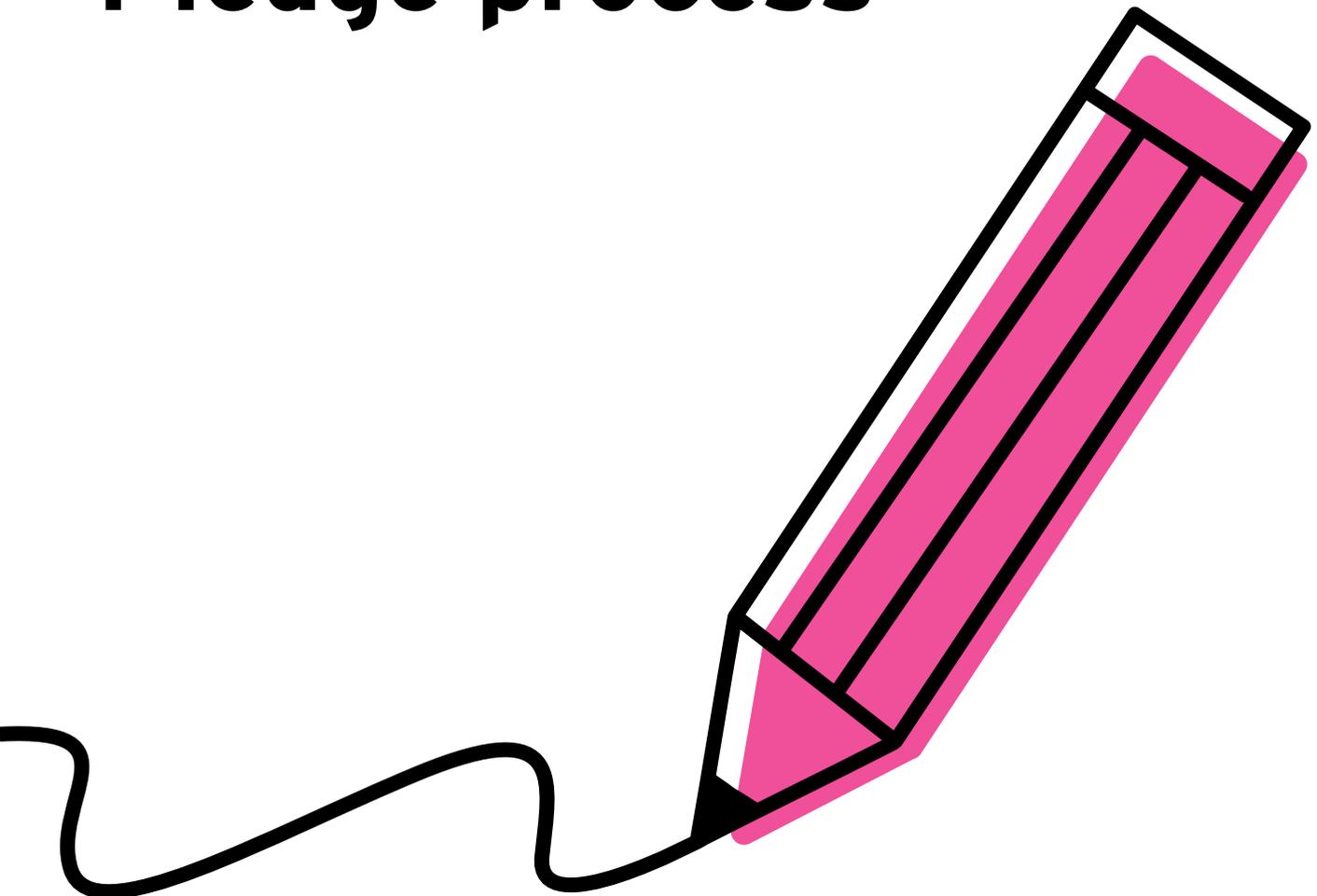


**time to change**

**Wales**

let's end mental health discrimination

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





## **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.

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

The Action Plan is designed to be a starting point for your plans as a live structured document that gives you the opportunity to develop your wellbeing strategy on using it as the foundation.

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 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, 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.

### **The 6 TAW Core Standards that structure the Action Plan are:**

1. Produce, implement and communicate a mental health at work plan.
2. Develop mental health awareness among employees.
3. Encourage open conversations about mental health and the support available when employees are struggling.
4. Provide employees with good working conditions and ensure they have a healthy work life balance and opportunities for development.
5. Promote effective people management through line managers and supervisors.
6. Routinely monitor employee mental health and wellbeing.



## Why is addressing mental health important?

We know that one in six British workers 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 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 one in four UK workers is struggling in silence, which reinforces the stigma around mental health.



## The cost of poor mental health to employers

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.

**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 continued

The TAW report found that poor mental health costs employers around £33 - £42 billion a year. The following diagram shows a breakdown of what these costs relate to...

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.



## Potential return on investments for employers who invest in their employees mental health

**Companies that invest in employee support and satisfaction tend to succeed in generating happier workers.**

**Professor Andrew Oswald**, University of Warwick

There are various studies that show a return on investments for Employers who invest in their employee's mental health can do something about it. The following findings demonstrate what return on those investments looked like for employers:

- FTSE 100 companies that prioritise employee engagement and wellbeing outperform the rest of the FTSE 100 by an average of 10%.
- Social Marketing Foundation (SMF) (2015) found that happy employees are up to 20% more productive than unhappy employees. When it comes to salespeople, happiness has an even greater impact, raising sales by 37%.
- SMF also found that stock prices of Fortune's "100 Best Companies to Work for" rose 14% per year from 1998 to 2005, while companies not on the list only reported a 6% increase.
- A recent study by economists at the University of Warwick found that **happiness led to a 12% spike in productivity**, while unhappy workers proved 10% less productive. As the **research team** put it, "We find that human happiness has large and positive causal effects on productivity. Positive emotions appear to invigorate human beings."
- At Google, employee satisfaction rose 37% as a result of those initiatives - suggesting that financial incentives aren't enough to make for highly productive employees.



## The benefits of signing the Time to Change Wales employer pledge

### Benefits to the organisational culture

The aim of the Action Plan and this guidance is to support your organisation whilst it actively works on breaking down stigma around mental health and making the workplace a safe space for all. Cultural 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.



## The benefits of signing the Time to Change Wales employer pledge

### **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 the employer from a governance perspective**

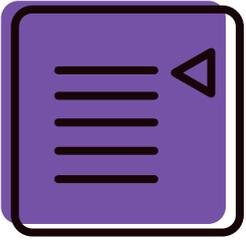
- Employers ensure that organisational policies reflect the organisation's commitment to changing how everyone thinks and acts about mental health.
- Employers actively encourage key staff groups/networks to work with one another and ensure that mental health is part of all their agenda and how it impacts on their specific audiences.
- Employer adopts a collaborative and consultative approach to keep learning about how the culture is evolving around mental health, working with different groups who help with overall strategic direction, for example scoping with staff networks or a working group formed from people with lived experience of managing mental health problems.



## The benefits of signing the Time to Change Wales employer pledge

### Benefits to employees

- Employees from every part of the organisation 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 accessing internal support or signposted appropriately to an external provider by their Employer.
- Employees are empowered to actively support the pledge around changing attitudes towards mental health. This could be through continuous recruitment of 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.

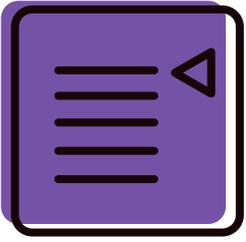


## How to complete the Action Plan

### Before you start your Action Plan

Please take the time to read this booklet and accompaniments as they will help you to think about the following:

- What activities you need to include in your plan to break down mental health stigma.
- What you would need to encourage senior leaders 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 line managers.
- What changes would you need to make at policy level to support this commitment.
- How to better support employees to create positive working relationships and connections with one another, basically an environment that supports collaborative working, team work 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. We have created a template Action Plan for you which is based around the TAW Core Standards to complete which you can download from here.
2. Read our supporting guides for each standard to understand the minimum, the requirements we look for, themes to consider and top tips.
3. When you are ready populate the Action Plan template with activities that address each question posed.

### What to do when you have completed your Action Plan

Once you have completed your Action Plan, you can submit it online:

1. You can submit your Action Plan online via **your employer login account**.
2. Once you've submitted your Action Plan online, 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 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 event

1. Ask your CEO (or the most senior leader 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 organisation such as a staff conference.
3. Make sure you communicate your Pledge signing to all of your staff - 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 template press release [here](#).

### What happens 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 order to produce a case study with respect to the Core Standards as described above.
- Contact you following the 12 month completion of your Action Plan requesting you complete an evaluation form that will collect data.
- 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.

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



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