



See Change: Mental Health in the Workplace Briefing

See Change

See Change is Ireland's national programme working to change minds about mental health problems in Ireland. We are working in partnership with over 90 organisations to create a disruptive, community driven social movement to reduce the stigma and discrimination associated with mental health problems.

What we want to achieve

1. An environment where people can be more open and positive in their attitudes and behaviour towards mental health;
2. Greater understanding and acceptance of people with mental health problems;
3. Greater understanding and knowledge of mental health problems and of health services that provide support for mental health problems;
4. A reduction in the stigma associated with mental health problems and challenge discrimination.

Our messages

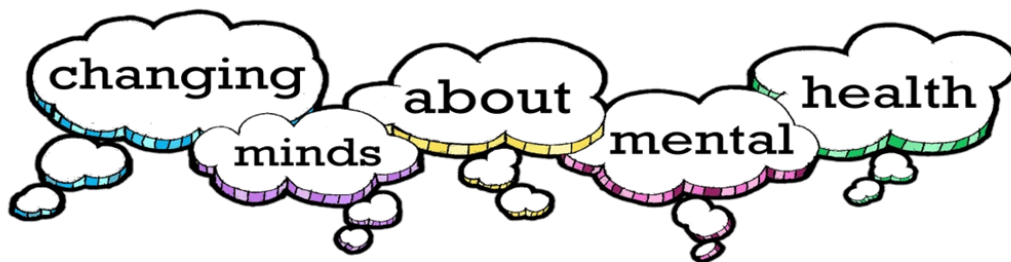
- Mental health problems can affect anyone at any time during their lives and are part and parcel of being human.
- People with mental health problems can and do recover.
- People affected by mental health problems are entitled to the same human rights as everybody else in society without discrimination.
- Every person – whether you have been personally touched by mental health problems or not – has the power to help stop the stigma and discrimination of mental health problems

See Change in the Workplace

Creating workplace environments where people can be open and positive about their own and others' mental health promotes overall organisational wellbeing, reduces absenteeism, enhances employee stress management skills and can assist employers to develop systems to support the 1 in 4 employees who may experience difficulties at a given point.

Mental health and employment are undeniably important and intertwined aspects of a person's daily life yet See Change research has found that almost half of Irish people would deliberately conceal a mental health problem from co-workers.

See Change has identified the workplace as a key setting for social change around attitudes to mental health problems to take place. Our goal is to help facilitate a cultural shift in workplaces around Ireland so employers and employees can begin to feel supported and secure in starting a discussion about the mental health problems that can affect each one of us. To this end, See Change has developed a training suite to help steer Irish workplaces towards creating this open culture and can provide assistance on how each team member can become involved and play a role in challenging stigma.



The Cost of Mental health problems

In 2008 the Mental Health Commission report *The Economics of Mental Health Care in Ireland* estimated the direct annual cost of poor mental health in Ireland at €3 billion. These costs include loss of potential labour supply, unemployment, absenteeism and reduced productivity in the workplace.

According to the CIPD (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development) stress, anxiety and depression are the leading causes of long term absence for non-manual workers and the current economic climate has exacerbated stress levels in the workplace.

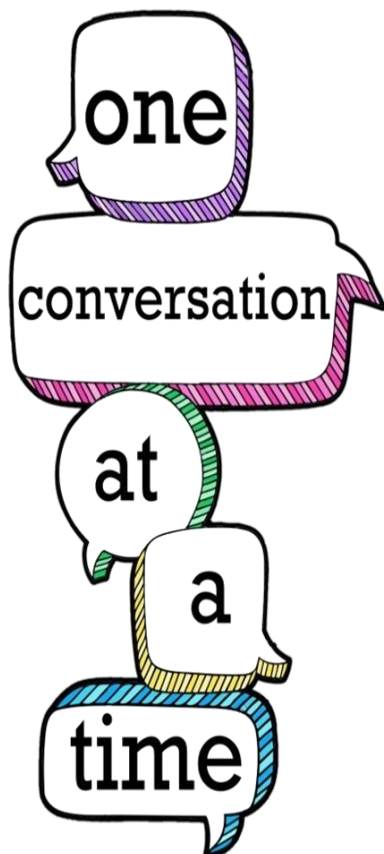
See Change Workshops

The half-day (3-hour session) “See Change in your workplace” workshop provides information on mental health and mental health problems for employers, managers and employees as well as offering best practise advice on creating workplaces that are free of stigma and discrimination and equipped to support the mental health needs of the organisation.

These workshops are delivered by two fully trained workshop facilitators, one of whom will speak about their personal experience of having a mental health problem and their recovery journey.

The funding for these workshops has been provided by the National Office for Suicide Prevention and covers the cost of the trainers and their expenses for the workshops thus enabling See Change to provide this excellent training package free of charge to organisations.

Topics covered during the workshop:



- Introduction to mental health, mental health problems and how they relate to the workplace context followed by an opportunity to discuss the myths that surround mental health problems and Irish attitudes to mental health.
- Attendees will benefit from the expert and personal insight of a workshop facilitator who will share the story of their own mental health journey, from being the subject of stigma in the workplace and the wider community to now creating strategies to support mental health needs.
- Advice on how best to support an employee who is experiencing a difficulty with their mental health through information on relevant equality legislation, resources available, examples of reasonable accommodation, recommendations on responding to a crisis and simply starting a conversation about mental health in the workplace.
- Discussion on creating a culture that is open to and supportive of the mental health needs of an organisation.