

Briefing:

County Durham Health and Wellbeing Board and the MIND Mental Health at Work Commitment:

A collaborative approach to achieving good workplace mental health and wellbeing.



Date: June 2024

Purpose:

To provide an overview of:

- partnership work with Stamp It Out (SIO) and Durham County Council DCC) relating to workplace mental health and wellbeing
- a summary of the signatory organisations of the Mind Mental Health at Work (MHAW) Commitment in County Durham.
- the importance of wider local partnership organisations becoming signatories to the MIND MHAW Commitment

Stamp It Out

SIO (as part of the County Durham Mental Health Alliance) leads on work to challenge mental health stigma and discrimination, and raise awareness of good workplace mental health and wellbeing across the county. This includes driving engagement with the MIND Mental Health at Work Commitment, which has replaced the Time to Change Employer Pledge as a key conduit for improving approaches to good mental health in County Durham workplaces.

Furthermore, SIO chairs steering group meetings with wider partners in the lead up to national mental health and wellbeing awareness campaigns, and provides a forum to discuss organisations' internal plans, as well as enabling a partnership approach to coordinating key messages and campaigns – playing a vital role in educating the public about the importance of good mental health.

The SIO charity supports and trains Anti-Stigma Ambassadors in the community to positively address barriers and challenge attitudes around mental health stigma and discrimination. SIO also coordinates the Mind Mental Health at Work (MHAW) Commitment on behalf of Mind in County Durham.

Durham County Council

Work to improve employee mental health and wellbeing accelerated across County Durham (and within DCC) with the adoption of the TTC Employer Pledge in 2018. This included ambassadorship from the corporate management team, building an open culture around mental health conversations, utilising the 'Now You're Talking' campaign, training staff as Mental Health First Aiders, and raising awareness of the importance of good mental health

and wellbeing promoting national annual campaigns ('Time to Talk' in February, Mental Health Awareness Week in May, and World Mental Health Day in October).

Under the TTC campaign movement, many council staff were trained as TTC champions. Following the COVID-19 pandemic, the closure of the TTC charity and end of the TTC associated branding, the TTC champions entered a hiatus period.

Under the DCC Public Health strategic priority of '*continuing to develop a healthy workforce*', key objectives included the review and relaunch of DCC Better Health at Work (BHAW) networks (Health Advocates, Mental Health First Aiders and TTC champions), and exploring the MHAW Commitment as a replacement for the TTC employer pledge.

This involved reconnecting with SIO to explore:

- The requirements of the MHAW commitment and the progress made countywide.
- Support available from MIND regarding resources and training.
- Advice regarding the roles of the mental health champions (MHFA and TTC champions).
- Advice on branding of TTC following the end of TTC and associated branding (SIO had chosen to adopt the use Anti-Stigma Ambassadors in co-production with their champions)
- The benefits of adopting the Mind MHAW commitment.

On 13th May 2024, at the beginning Mental Health Awareness Week, DCC became signatories of the Mental Health at Work Commitment, demonstrating the Councils ongoing commitment to improving workplace health and wellbeing.

Partnership Working

DCC has always maintained a strong, close working relationship with SIO and over the years SIO has provided advice, guidance, training, and support relating to workplace mental health and wellbeing.

Public Health consulted with SIO, who recommended refreshing and reinvigorating the mental health champions across the Council and introducing the Mind MHAW commitment framework as a replacement for the TTC Employer Pledge.

Last year, DCC rebranded the previous TTC Champions as Anti-Mental Health Stigma Ambassadors in keeping with SIO community Anti-Stigma Ambassadors.

SIO offered the 'Introduction to Challenging Mental Health Stigma and Discrimination Training' which is based on the prior TTC champion training for staff within DCC. It agreed to delivery courses in 2024 to Council staff, and encourage attendees to become Ambassadors and engage with campaign planning.

In 2024, with the support of SIO, seventeen staff have trained as Anti-Mental Health-Stigma Ambassadors completing the 'Challenging Mental Health Stigma and Discrimination' training,

with further training sessions booked for October in the leading up to World Mental Health Day. Over the last year the BHAW networks have been refreshed with quarterly meetings, forums and campaign planning meetings with mental health champions and health advocates. This has increased engagement and recruited new workplace health and wellbeing champions.

Representatives from DCC Public Health Team attend the mental health hub campaign steering group chaired by SIO to ensure access to up-to-date campaign information and ensure a collaborative approach to internal and external mental health campaigns.

SIO continues to support DCC in its three key annual Mental Health Campaigns - Time to Talk Day in February, Mental Health Awareness Week in May, and World Mental Health Day in October.

Mind Mental Health at Work Commitment Signatories in County Durham

The table below provides a summary of the thirty local organisations signed up to the commitment.

ORGANISATION	SECTOR	SIZE
1. Harlands Accountants LLP	Accountancy, banking and finance	Small
2. CyberWhite Ltd	Information technology (IT)	Micro
3. MGL Group Limited	Engineering and manufacturing	Large
4. Inflo Software	Information technology (IT)	Medium
5. Changing Lives	Charity, not-for-profit and voluntary work	Large
6. National Probation Service North East	Government and public agencies	Large
7. DFP Services Ltd	Engineering and manufacturing	Medium
8. Waddington Street Centre	Charity, not-for-profit and voluntary work	Small
9. North Star Housing	Property, construction and architecture	Medium
10. Magnet Group	Retail	Large
11. County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service	Emergency services and security	Large
12. North East Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust	Emergency services and security	Large
13. Durham Constabulary	Emergency services and security	Large
14. Carmel Medical practice	Healthcare and NHS	Small
15. ISOL8 Healthcare Ltd	Engineering and manufacturing	Micro
16. Stamp It Out	Charity, not-for-profit and voluntary work	Micro
17. Wear Referrals	Healthcare and NHS	Medium
18. thyssenkrupp rothe erde UK Ltd	Engineering and manufacturing	Medium
19. Hodgson Sayers	Property, construction and architecture	Medium
20. New College Durham	Education, teaching and childcare	Large
21. ARM Pipetek Ltd	Property, construction and architecture	Medium
22. Dunelm Geotechnical & Environmental	Property, construction and architecture	Medium
23. St Margaret's Centre	Charity, not-for-profit and voluntary work	Micro

24. Learning Curve Group	Education, teaching and childcare	Large
25. CDS Security & Fire	Emergency services and security	Small
26. PHS Home Solutions Limited	Energy and utilities	Large
27. Groundwork NE and Cumbria	Charity, not-for-profit and voluntary work	Medium
28. Husqvarna UK Ltd	Engineering and manufacturing	Large
29. Pioneering Care Partnership	Charity, not-for-profit and voluntary work	Medium
30. Durham County Council	Government and public agencies	Large
<i>Business size has been categorised by number of employees (micro less than 10, small 10 – 49, medium 50 – 249, large 250+)</i>		

Examples: SIO Wider Work with County Durham MHAW Commitment Signatories

SIO continues to promote and share information about the commitment to wider partners via the Resilient Communities Group (RCG), the Durham Mental Wellbeing Alliance, and the SIO Hub. This section provides an overview of some of SIO's wider work with Mind MHAW commitment signatories.

Waddington Street Centre

SIO continues to promote activities around positive mental health and challenge stigma and discrimination. Anti-Stigma Ambassadors from Waddington Street Centre have also supported events and campaigns outside of the Durham City Area including a recent event at Shildon for Mental Health Awareness Week. Waddington Street delivered a range of activities, including bus trips with mindfulness, nature photography and litter picking walks during Mental Health Awareness week.

Anti-stigma Pledge Framework

As part of the RCG, SIO has developed an Anti-Stigma Pledge/Framework to support organisations and services to embed anti-stigma practices within their organisations and with the communities they serve. This is being rolled out with members of the RCG and the Durham Mental Wellbeing Alliance (appendix 1 Pledge Framework)

New College Durham

SIO continues to support New College Durham by attending awareness day campaigns throughout the year, including Mental Health Awareness Week, World Mental Health Day and Time to Talk Day. SIO hosts information stands supported by Investing in Children to enable young people with lived experience to become Anti-Stigma Ambassadors. A video titled "Flash Mob" was created by young people from New College Durham regarding different scenarios that impact people's lives and the stigma associated with mental health resulting in people saying, 'I'm fine'. [NCD Flashmob video](#)

Pioneering Care Partnership (PCP)

The SIO partnership manager has developed links with the PCP Workplace Health Lead for the BHAW Award delivering presentations about SIO and the Commitment, sharing statistics, information about the objectives and some of the resources available.

The PCP is a delivery partner of SIO and has oversight of the business administration for SIO, in particular the running of the social media platforms. The PCP regularly communicates key messages aligned to promoting positive wellbeing and challenging stigma and discrimination. PCP have attended the “Introduction to Challenging Mental Health Stigma and Discrimination” Training as well as supporting the delivery of training on behalf of SIO.

County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service

In 2019, SIO worked with the Fire and Rescue service to develop a video case study about stigma in the workplace, the video is still very relevant today([CDDFRS video](#)).

Training and Workshops

SIO has provided several workshops linked to the objectives within the Commitment, in particular *Commitment Standard 3: “Promote an Open Culture around Mental Health”* which is all about having conversations around mental health. Workshops included:

- “workplace wellbeing” with DCC staff using the resources from the Commitment
- “Co-Production” with Horden Together service users, volunteers, and staff
- “Unconscious Bias” for East Durham Trust for volunteers.

The training and work SIO carries out aligns with *Commitment Standard Three “Promote an Open Culture around Mental Health”*: particularly the promotion of the 'Now You're Talking' Campaign in County Durham.

Next Steps: Durham County Council and the Commitment

Internal approaches

Mapping Against the Six Commitment Standards

A mapping exercise is in progress utilising the MHAW Commitment Action Plan Template to map existing provision against the six commitment standards to identify any gaps, areas of focus and how the council will address the standards. Once this exercise is completed, progress will be monitored and reviewed quarterly via the BHAW strategic group.

Partnership Working with SIO – Refresh and Relaunch of Staff Ambassadors

Following the hiatus period concerning TTC champions, DCC is working in partnership with SIO to refresh and relaunch the Anti-Mental Health Stigma Ambassadors internally. This action aligns with *Commitment Standard Three – Promote an Open Culture Around Mental Health*. The council BHAW Lead will work closely with SIO on this programme of work next steps will include;

- refreshing the anti-stigma ambassador role profile to enable clear expectations of the requirements of the Ambassador role,
- engaging with the newly trained staff Ambassadors to coproduce the launch and planning of activities in the lead up to World Mental Health Day

- re-engaging with staff who were previously TTC champions to encourage reengagement and a fresh commitment to the Ambassador role
- Offering the SIO 'Introduction to Challenging Mental Health Stigma and Discrimination Training' as a refresher training.

External approaches

Encouraging Health and Wellbeing Board member organisations to adopt the Mental Health at Work Commitment.

DCC became signatories of the Mental Health at Work Commitment in May 2024. It was requested that all Health and Wellbeing Board partner organisations recognised importance of the Commitment and promoted the opportunity to become signatories to their respective organisation.

At present, there are 3 partner organisations who have signed up to the *Mental Health at Work Commitment*: DCC, County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service and Durham Constabulary. Public Health and SIO will work together to engage Health and Wellbeing Board members as partner organisations and promote the Mental Health at Work Commitment.

Public Health and SIO will share good practice and lessons learned with the Health and Wellbeing Board members to encourage other local organisations to become signatories themselves.

Partnership Working - Establishing A 'Better Health at Work' Workplace Alliance

Public Health and the PCP are working in partnership to develop a workplace alliance as an extension of the BHAW Award. This forum will provide the opportunity to share promotional opportunities, resources, training, best practice with those organisations that are not yet signatories to the formal BHAWA programme. SIO will be a key partner in promoting the Commitment with Alliance Members to encourage local businesses to become signatories.

SIO and County Durham BHAWA Signatories

SIO will continue to promote and share information about the MHAW commitment to partners via the Resilient Communities Group (RCG), the Durham Mental Wellbeing Alliance, and the SIO Hub. Sign up of the Commitment is monitored locally via SIO and nationally via MIND, and SIO liaises with MIND for up-to-date information on local signatories.

Conclusion

The productive collaboration between DCC, SIO and other organisations in County Durham will continue to challenge mental health stigma and discrimination by working together to improve workplace mental health and wellbeing, and promote uptake of the MIND MHAW Commitment as an evidence-based approach - making County Durham organisations healthy and happy places to work in.