Promotion of Mental Health for People of Working Age and in the Workplace

Dr Paul Litchfield
Chief Medical Officer – BT Group plc
Workplace Wellness Alliance – World Economic Forum

Mental Health - Europe 2020:
Investing in personalised community services

Brussels – 21 September 2011
The importance of mental health in the working age population

• Mental illness is common and increasing (27% incidence)
• Lower socio-economic groups most affected
• Four times less likely to be in work
• Risks from changes in work and economic situation
• Good work a protective factor but harder to find
• Mental health disability pensions rising and unaffordable
• Cost = 3% to 4% of European GDP
Impact of mental health on companies

Illness

Costs
• Absenteeism
• Presenteeism
• Healthcare costs
• Quality issues
• Accidents
• Burnout & Churn

Benefits
• Resilience
• Engagement
• Retention
• Innovation
• Productivity
• Competitiveness

Wellbeing
Workplace Wellness Alliance
Launched in Davos – January 2010

• Commitment by global enterprises to workplace wellness
• Focus on Leadership, Good Practice, Tools & Analytics
• Moving beyond chronic disease to well-being

103 current members; over 4 million direct employees
Workplace Wellness Alliance
Turning commitment into action

Sharing:

Good Practice

Analytical Tools

Data
# Employer activity in mental health - prevention, support and rehabilitation

## Table: Employer Activity in Mental Health

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Primary Prevention</th>
<th>Secondary Intervention</th>
<th>Tertiary Rehabilitation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education &amp; Training</strong></td>
<td>General awareness training to workforce of mental health issues, healthy lifestyle and stigma avoidance</td>
<td>Training of people managers to recognise signs of distress and to signpost support services</td>
<td>Guidance for managers and employees on effective return to work adjustments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assessment</strong></td>
<td>Risk assessment of work and change to control psychosocial hazards</td>
<td>Stress audits to identify people and/or business units at risk of harm</td>
<td>Access to occupational health service for assessment of sick employees and advice to management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Practical Support</strong></td>
<td>Adoption of flexible working (time &amp;/or location) to help balance work and home commitments</td>
<td>Availability of confidential employee assistance programme</td>
<td>Provision of psychological support (CBT) services for mentally ill staff</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Adapted from Good Work – Good Health: 2010; ETNO / Uni Europa*
Workplace interventions make sense for business and society

**Business**

- Productivity return on investment of 9:1 (Knapp, McDaid & Parsonage . 2011)
- Improved engagement, performance and retention

**Society**

- Prevent ill health and free up scarce healthcare resources
- “Contagion” effect on families and friends (x 2.5)
- Knowledge and capability in society increased
- “Normalise” mental health and mental illness
- Reduce levels of stigma
State action to promote workplace mental health

• The State should encourage enlightened self interest
• Incentivise (don’t penalise) companies doing the “right thing”
• Facilitate evidence based interventions at local level
• Remove artificial barriers to returning safely to work
• Encourage awareness training for managers and workers
• Encourage workplace understanding for healthcare staff
• Act as an exemplar employer with financial discipline
• Create market conditions for new services using new media