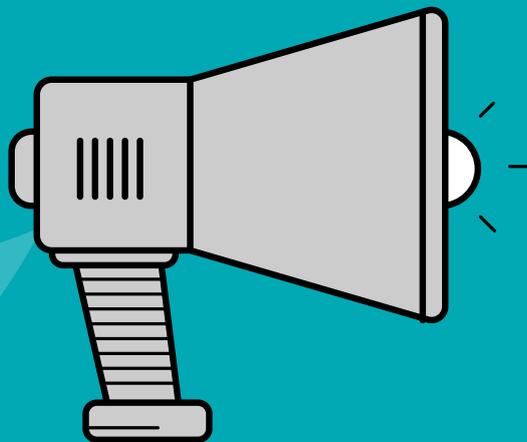




How to embed the seven key building blocks for creating workplaces inclusive of mental health, free from stigma and discrimination

A case study from Apex Hotels Ltd. on 'the importance of clearly communicating support available'





The needs assessment process with See Me showed the need for improved communication for all employees and further training for managers regarding conversations around mental health. We added a support section to the Apex Employee App, which was already in process. Mental Health First Aid training was already underway but we improved communication clarity around responsibilities and boundaries and, as a result, many more people have signed up and to date 61 people have completed the training.

Apex is now reporting on absences and absence reasons. We can see that although mental health is not the reason stated for the most occasions of absences, it is because of poor mental health that employees remain off work for the longest. We expect to see a rise in number of absences for mental health and a decrease in 'other reasons'; however, the aim is to decrease the length of time absent. We have changed Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) provider, and now all calls to the EAP will be answered by trained counsellors and cover multiple topics including mental health and wellbeing, financial support and living arrangements. Apex are also looking into resilience training and conflict management to better support managers and employees with the daily pressures they face. To sustain this amount of work Apex has put in place a wellbeing policy and budget to ensure full implementation and communication across the group. Both will incorporate not only mental wellbeing, but also physical and financial wellbeing.

Work completed with See Me is being rolled out in every location by employees and it's not seen as a human resources agenda, but instead as embedded within the culture and becoming workplace norm. Apex is also looking to have a core Wellbeing Champion group. It is crucial that Apex continue with this work to ensure preventative measures can be embedded within the workplace to ensure support and signposting are offered to employees from recruitment and induction onwards, enabling them to remain in work whilst seeking assistance where able. The champion group will be pivotal in these movements, with time authorised and allocated by management along with ongoing support and guidance from See Me.

Our take-home message: Tackling mental health stigma and discrimination is foundational to driving mental health improvement in the workplace. Employers often put in place advice and support for employees but fail to communicate these effectively. Regular communication and consultation on updates to policies and procedures, existing advice and support mechanisms like Employee Assistance Programmes and Occupational Health, as well as training in offer and the benefits of uptake are key to ensuring resources are well spent and gaps are identified and addressed.



Contact:

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<https://www.seemescotland.org/workplace/>
for other case studies, helpful information and practical resources.

