

Mental Health: We're Ready to Talk

One year on: 2014–2015

Proof that lasting change

is possible through a collective commitment.

Breaking down stigma and discrimination. Creating

parity between mental health and physical health.

Significant progress is being made.

We've reached a real turning point. *Making a positive*

culture of mental health business as usual.

What's stopping you getting involved?

Creating a lasting legacy for change. **Ensuring**

as many people as possible can benefit from our

campaign. Proving what can be done and sharing

our insight. An opportunity for us to give back.

We're excited about the opportunities that lie ahead.

**Together, businesses are helping more
people talk about mental health.**



In association with



Introduction

BUSINESS IN THE COMMUNITY

People are working longer, harder and in tougher times than ever before. This is resulting in unprecedented levels of pressure on employees, with common mental health conditions like anxiety, stress and depression rising and resulting in higher levels of absence and presenteeism.

However, there is still a damaging culture of silence around mental health, with people reluctant to talk openly about the issue for fear of stigma and discrimination. This is not only causing a huge amount of personal suffering; it is also costing UK employers £26 billion a year.

In April 2014, leading businesses came together to create a landmark campaign to bring an end to the culture of silence around mental health. They recognised the overwhelming business and moral case for taking action and identified the need and opportunity for a business-led movement to drive change. This mission was outlined in the campaign's inaugural report, *Mental Health: We're Ready to Talk*, produced in alliance with Mind and Time to Change.

These companies put a stake in the ground for pioneering a new kind of relationship between businesses and their employees, committing to take action to create parity between mental and physical health. This has been achieved by taking a proactive, integrated approach to wellbeing rooted in the framework of Business in the Community's (BITC) Workwell Model and by making a public commitment to the Time to Change pledge.

In its first year, this campaign has made remarkable progress, with 13 BITC Wellbeing Champions implementing changes that have collectively had the potential to impact nearly half a million employees. Our new report, *Mental Health: We're Ready to Talk – One year on*, showcases the progress they have made – and this is just the start.

There is no doubt that this is a groundbreaking campaign. This is the first time that businesses have come together, united in their ambition to stop employees suffering in silence and committed to sharing their expertise, insight and best practice to tackle one of the biggest social injustices of our time. But this campaign is also unique because the learnings from champion companies have been used to inform BITC's new Wellbeing membership.

We want BITC's Wellbeing campaign to grow by encouraging more businesses to join our movement for change. The case studies featured in this report show that change is possible, and demonstrate why every business should be involved.

In order to maximise the impact of the campaign, BITC is delighted to announce our new Wellbeing membership opportunities, designed to help any organisation, large or small, private or public, develop and strengthen their wellbeing offer. BITC's Core and Champion memberships offer a unique advisory service built on the insight, expertise and best practice of the businesses whose success is showcased in this report. The full benefits and opportunities from joining us can be found here: www.bitc.org.uk/programmes/wellbeing

BITC would like to thank our founding champion members who have led this campaign, with the support of our partners – Mind, Time to Change, The Work Foundation and the Chartered Institute for Personnel and Development. We would also like to give special thanks to Professor Sir Cary Cooper for his immense support, encouragement and inspiration.

Creating a legacy of change



Over the past year we have seen a dramatic shift in the landscape around mental health at work, led by BITC's pioneering Wellbeing Champions.

It's also been one year since we launched our inaugural report: *Mental Health: We're Ready to Talk*, which set out the case for tackling the culture of silence around mental health at work.

The remarkable achievements made over the past year range from new public support from senior business leaders to creating new, dedicated programmes to embed the promotion of positive mental wellbeing into business strategy and organisational policy. Our champion organisations employ nearly half a million people in the UK alone, many of whom will have directly benefited from these initiatives. Furthermore, over 30 BITC members have pledged their commitment to improving mental health at work by signing the Time to Change pledge.

The level of public commitment we've seen is a groundbreaking achievement. It marks a critical turning point in breaking the stigma around mental health at work and in helping to reduce the suffering and injustice experienced by millions of employees.

I want to congratulate all of these organisations for having the courage to publicly lead this agenda, and to remind others that these achievements can be replicated by any organisation with the right support and guidance.

Now our champions have used their experience and insight to create a unique service offering advice and support to help any organisation take the next step to improve the health and wellbeing of their people.

BITC's Core and Champion memberships offer the chance for any business to benefit from the insight of organisations that are leaders in the mental wellbeing agenda.

Helping people to be happy, healthy and to fulfil their potential, both in and out of work, is a fundamental responsibility for all employers. The business case for doing this is also extremely compelling.

This report shows what we can achieve when businesses come together to create a legacy of change for employees, businesses and society. I hope it will give even more businesses the inspiration they need to join our movement to end the culture of silence and change business practices for the better.

Patrick Watt

**Corporate Director, Bupa UK and
Chair of Business in the Community's
Wellbeing Champion members**

Breaking new ground



I want to congratulate all our champions who have played such a pivotal and landmark role in pioneering new approaches to promoting positive mental health, leading this agenda on a global scale and paving the way for other organisations to follow their lead.

This report is cause for celebration. It shows how a collaborative, business-led approach to tackling the stigma around mental health at work is bringing enormous success, and helping to support good mental health to become business as usual. Over the past year alone we've seen groundbreaking new research on the culture of silence around mental health at work, senior leaders become the public face of company-wide mental wellbeing campaigns and companies appoint dedicated mental health champions to communicate their work in a public forum. New practical tools and resources have been created to help employees feel more confident articulating mental health issues, putting them in a better position to help themselves and those around them. Over the coming year we will be building on this expertise to produce dedicated research and guidance on the role of line managers, who are critical in delivering proactive mental wellbeing support interventions as well as ensuring the general wellbeing of their teams.

Our champions demonstrate the exciting prospects for change that have been made possible through the sharing of ideas and a collective commitment to lead the movement for responsible business, in conjunction with the Time to Change organisational pledge. BITC has been at the centre of helping progressive businesses to break new ground and realise their ambitions of making a lasting impact on social wellbeing by creating a legacy of change with the potential to benefit millions.

Lots of companies struggle to take meaningful action to promote mental health because they are unsure where to start. But this report shows that change and progress isn't as complicated or difficult as some people may think, and it demonstrates the possible solutions for businesses looking to implement a positive culture of wellbeing within their own organisations.

Our new Core and Champion membership offers fill a gap in the market by including an advisory service built on the insight of businesses at the forefront of a world-leading movement for change. There is the opportunity for any organisation to join this movement, and we would urge any business that shares this ambition and commitment to become a BITC Wellbeing member and to contribute to creating happier, healthier and more productive workplaces.

Louise Aston

**Wellbeing Campaign Director
Business in the Community**

A stronger business voice on mental health

time to change

let's end mental health discrimination



We are very proud to be partnering with BITC to help encourage and steer businesses into adopting progressive approaches on mental health.

Our ambition is to mainstream good mental health and make it the business of every employer. Through adopting the Time to Change pledge, organisations are able to put clear plans in place to implement the changes they need to create open and supportive workplaces.

The number of people living with everyday mental health issues, such as stress, anxiety or depression is huge. One in four people in the UK will experience a mental health condition each year. And yet, the extent to which this topic is discussed or addressed at home and at work is minute. This damaging disparity has been brought about by a culture of silence but, thankfully, this is starting to break down.

Time to Change is England's biggest programme to end the stigma and discrimination faced by people with mental health problems, making it easier for people to talk about the issue and access the support of those around them much earlier.

We know that the approach works – when asked about whether or not things had improved since Time to Change launched, 66% of people surveyed said they had become more confident to talk about their mental health problem. There has also been a measurable improvement in public attitudes towards people with mental health problems.

More and more people are waking up to the threat that the culture of silence poses to business, individual and social wellbeing, and it's telling that we have seen mental health rank highly on the political agenda in the build up to the UK general election in 2015. Businesses have a responsibility to drive this agenda and to help highlight the importance of parity between mental and physical health as a core priority for policy-makers. This report showcases some of the businesses leading this agenda.

By signing the Time to Change pledge, organisations show their commitment to doing the right thing for their people, and to creating a positive culture of wellbeing where employees have what they need to thrive. It also shows that the organisation has the backing of senior leaders; a critical asset in helping to set a clear plan of action to bring about change. So far 325 organisations in the public, private and voluntary sectors have signed. Our alliance with BITC is immensely important – Wellbeing membership is a mature model that any business can use to support and help deliver its ambitions as part of its Time to Change pledge.

Businesses are in a unique position to help people with mental health concerns as they can spot the warning signs and provide early support. Therefore a stronger business voice on mental health is critical for the UK. We are very impressed by the work that the businesses profiled in this report have undertaken and we look forward to many more taking on these learnings and recommendations in the year ahead.

I would like to congratulate BITC's Wellbeing Champions and urge all businesses to join our movement for change and sign the Time to Change organisational pledge, affirming their commitment to helping us create happier, healthier workforces where there is parity between physical and mental health.

Paul Farmer
Chief Executive
Mind

BITC Wellbeing Champions

Progress to date



For American Express, signing the Time to Change pledge was a key opportunity to align our activities around mental health with our broader wellbeing strategy. It has helped us become smarter about how we can communicate and enhance our mental wellbeing support.

Aligned with signing the pledge, we rebranded our employee assistance programme (EAP) to help more employees access support and enable a culture of positive prevention. Encouraging employees to speak out internally and share their experiences of overcoming mental health challenges has proved important in driving a culture of openness and peer support, and we're seeing an increase in colleague and leader referrals to the programme.

We invited Time to Change to conduct an organisational health check in order to gain a clearer idea of the exact type of support employees and leaders really need to support positive mental wellbeing, and we're in the process of creating a leader education toolkit to make sure that the promotion of positive mental wellbeing at work becomes business as usual.

We're also seeing a better understanding amongst our leaders and line managers of how to signpost resources and offer support and interventions before long-term problems emerge, and this is benefiting our overall strategy to build people's capability to disclose mental health issues in a supportive environment.

We are carrying out more targeted activity to coincide with external events and awareness days and held activities at various sites to mark Mental Health Week and World Mental Health Day. We're also making sure to evaluate our support and its uptake so we can tailor the development of our programmes accordingly. During Time to Talk Day for instance we had a survey mechanism in place for people to record the hours they spent talking about mental health. We're also working on integrating mental wellbeing into our core employee guidelines and training strategy.

We're seeing more employees open up and start to have conversations about mental health conditions, which is really encouraging.

Georgia Hedley

UK Health and Benefits Specialist

American Express



Signing the Time to Change pledge really drove momentum around our Healthy Minds wellbeing programme, which is one of the core pillars of our broader Get Active health and wellbeing framework.

As part of our Time to Change pledge we produced a video that we also called *Time to Change*. In this, some recognisable figures in our organisation spoke powerfully about their experiences of overcoming mental health conditions; how the problem began, and what it felt like to face up to the challenge. Having the support of well-respected employees talking bravely and honestly about deeply personal issues has been invaluable in helping our mental wellbeing messages to resonate amongst our workforce.

Our directors have got on board by providing personal insights and top tips on how they cope with the stresses, strains and pressures of everyday life. We've also had a psychiatrist from our healthcare scheme deliver a talk about mental health from a professional perspective, to help broaden people's understanding. Providing a diverse range of content that our employees can really engage with has had a real impact in helping to normalise discussions around mental health in our business, and we've seen an increase in the number of people visiting our mental health website resources and using our employee assistance programme.

Another key milestone has been seeing mental health become a regular discussion point in company-wide health and safety committee meetings. Previously these had a more linear focus on occupational health and safety standards, but in June 2014 there was a particular focus on mental health; a symbolic moment for us.

What's been important in this process is recognising the different elements that have an impact on mental health and making sure there is a holistic, integrated approach to wellbeing across the business. Encouraging people to talk openly about mental health is the right thing to do and we're seeing real progress in breaking the taboo, which is truly exciting.

Lee Murray

**Group Head of Occupational Health and Safety
Anglian Water Group**

BITC Wellbeing Champions

Progress to date

**BUSINESS
IN THE
COMMUNITY**

Since the launch of *Mental Health: We're Ready to Talk* in April 2014, we at BITC have seen real progress in creating a positive culture of mental wellbeing for our people.

Following our signing of the Time to Change pledge, we've begun to use our internal newsletter to talk regularly about issues relating to mental health and to offer practical tips for employees. This includes guidance on having conversations about mental health to help take some of the fear and reticence away and Time to Change conversation-starter cards and post-cards designed to encourage people to talk about mental health just as they would physical health. Our goal is to make talking about mental health 'business as usual' at BITC and that means we have an ongoing focus on reducing the stigma that surrounds mental health.

We have a system in place to provide targeted support for employees who are experiencing problems either at home or in their personal life. Our employee assistance programme (EAP) helpline is now open 24 hours a day, offering support for employees whenever they need it. We also offer tools to help people decide whether they need support from the EAP – for example we have a questionnaire which employees can use to assess their emotional resilience by responding to questions such as whether they take time to look after themselves and how regularly they feel stressed or under pressure. This is designed to help people understand whether they may benefit from seeking support or advice.

On Time to Talk Day this year, we provided dedicated resources for staff to help them put aside time to talk about different aspects of their lives that might be affecting their mental health, with volunteer Time to Talk Day Champions encouraging people to take part across the organisation. Our efforts have been driven by strong support at a senior level. Executive Director David Pemberton is our senior team champion for BITC's pledge. He toured all our regional offices over last summer and autumn, engaging our people in conversations about mental health and highlighting the importance of talking openly about the topic. This built confidence in our pledge and a belief amongst BITC employees that the organisation intends to 'walk the talk'. Wellbeing Director Louise Aston also appears regularly in the media talking about our work on mental health, and the achievements of other BITC member organisations, helping to raise the profile of the issue and ensure that it is on boardroom agendas across the UK.

This year we were proud to be selected as one of *The Times*' Best Places to Work, which we believe reflects, at least in part, the high importance we attach to our employees' mental and physical wellbeing. We look forward to building on our success to date.

Francoise Seacroft

HR Director

Business in the Community



Mental ill-health is one of the main reasons for sickness absence, so promoting a positive culture of mental wellbeing for our staff has been a key focus for BT over the past few years.

We're making real progress in normalising mental health as an issue within our business and have seen clear, tangible results.

More than 6,000 managers have received our Managing Mental Health training and use of our Employee Assistance Services has increased almost 18% over the past three years. Our most recent evaluation shows that overall sickness absence has fallen from 2.3% in 2012/13 to 2.1% in 2013/14. This is thanks to our mental health support, in conjunction with our broader wellbeing offer.

We actively ensure that people with mental health conditions are supported at work in the best way possible, providing accessible information, advice and support to our staff and supporting them with the flexibility and workplace adjustments to perform at their best. We pledged our commitment by signing the Time to Change pledge in 2010, which was a real catalyst in demonstrating that we're serious about this issue, both internally and externally.

One of our key focuses is now helping our people to build their resilience to deal effectively with the ups and downs of everyday life. We've recently piloted a resilience training programme for people managers, with hundreds now having been trained, and we're looking to roll this out more widely to make sure that all employees have the support they need to be happy, healthy and engaged.

Alister Scott

**Head of Health and Deputy Chief Medical Officer
BT Group**

BITC Wellbeing Champions

Progress to date



Bupa's purpose is longer, healthier, happier lives. This informs everything that we do and starts with all of our people. Our mental wellbeing strategy focuses on creating a leader-led culture where all our people are empowered and encouraged to make positive decisions for their own health and wellbeing.

Our Time to Change pledge was jointly signed by our Managing Director Richard Bowden and People Director Vivian Leinster in front of our top 100 leaders from across the UK business, all of whom added their signatures in support. This was significant in reaffirming our strategic and leader-led approach.

Since signing the pledge we have focused on embedding our performance energy coaching programme which helps people to create a personal system to sustain their performance and wellness and stay at their best. It focuses on building our people's ability to notice when they and their team are operating at their best and to recognise when they may be beginning to struggle. Specifically, it includes training on the physiology of resilience and energy, how to make good choices and how to maintain a sense of control.

Around 1,000 people across the business have experienced the performance energy programme through workshops, and by taking part in regular refresh and share sessions. Through the creation of our 'train-the-trainer' initiative, we have enabled our leaders to take the performance energy programme to the teams they manage. We have also created an online toolkit and conversation guide for our leaders to share these skills with their teams and pass them on throughout the organisation.

This is part of our strategy to give our managers the tips and techniques to maintain their energy and effectiveness in work and life, and the tools to have open and caring conversations and drive a positive culture of mental wellbeing through their teams and across our business.

We are seeing encouraging results from our support programme, including a five percentage point increase in our baseline indicator of whether Bupa employees feel healthier for working at Bupa. But we know we can do even more to improve, evaluate our impact and to lead the market.

Alexandra Williams

**Senior Corporate Affairs Manager
Bupa UK**



Promoting a culture of positive wellbeing for our people has been a major focus for Friends Life over the past year. Signing the Time to Change pledge has been the perfect way for us to show our commitment to helping tackle the stigma and discrimination surrounding mental ill-health.

The workplace should be an environment where people feel supported to talk openly about their wellbeing. Helping people to feel ready to have these conversations, and to approach and articulate them in the right way, has been a key focus for us following our pledge. We commissioned a dedicated guide, *Listen Up – Let's Talk Mental Health*, providing easy-to-follow advice on how to actually talk about and articulate mental health concerns. This was handed to every Friends Life employee on World Mental Health Day.

We've also introduced new aspects of our wellbeing programme to help colleagues develop their resilience and to feel more confident in recognising the warning signs that someone may be experiencing a mental health problem. We have stress and resilience webinar sessions for all employees throughout the year, as well as face-to-face training sessions to ensure managers are able to provide the right support and interventions for colleagues.

One of the highlights has been our business breakfast forum looking at how to break down the culture of silence, which was held in October 2014. We brought together business leaders to hear from national experts and Olympic gold medal winning cyclist Chris Boardman MBE on how to embed mental wellbeing into every organisation, working in collaboration with BITC, Mind and Time to Change. We also presented new research highlighting the extent of the culture of silence around mental health which was widely reported in the media. We hope that it has inspired other businesses to get involved.

Roger Cotton

**Corporate Responsibility Manager
Friends Life**

BITC Wellbeing Champions

Progress to date

M&S

EST. 1884

Over the past year we've worked with a range of stakeholders across the business to improve our mental wellbeing strategy. Through highlighting the business case for offering more proactive support to employees, we've managed to generate stronger engagement at a senior level, which has been crucial to help spark a company-wide conversation on mental health.

We've established a dedicated mental wellbeing hub on our intranet with new accessible advice and resources for employees, highlighting the intrinsic relationship between physical and mental health in line with our other wellbeing programmes. We've also held discussion groups amongst employees and managers across the business to help get conversations started, and to reassure employees that they can talk openly in a safe and supportive environment. A particular highlight was our own Mental Wellbeing Awareness Week, a targeted engagement campaign to encourage conversations around mental health and raise awareness of available support. These initiatives have been insightful and effective in helping people to feel more confident talking about sensitive issues.

Our focus on mental wellbeing as a critical issue for businesses to engage with has also informed our wider relationships with customers and communities. By pledging our support for the Dementia Friends campaign and delivering a training and engagement campaign for our staff, we're helping to promote the important role of businesses in enabling action on wider mental wellbeing issues that affect our employees, customers and communities. We've seen a really positive response from employees and we know that this will have an added benefit for our customer service offer and in strengthening community relationships.

We've seen a great deal of positive change but our work doesn't stop here; we have designed a new mental wellbeing strategy for the coming year, which includes outside speaker events on mental health, further line manager training, and plans to foster the organic growth of a peer network. We're proud of our progress so far and look forward to going from strength to strength in the future.

Beth Ryder
Wellbeing Manager
Marks & Spencer



One of our key focuses around mental wellbeing since signing the Time to Change pledge has been making sure that our line managers have the right support to take preventative action early if they spot the warning signs that someone might be suffering.

Last year we ran dedicated line manager training courses on mental wellbeing to help drive more effective interventions. This gave an introduction to what we mean when we talk about mental wellbeing and provided advice on how to spot the early warning signs.

We have a large and diverse workforce across multiple sites so the role of line managers is really important in providing early support. Therefore we want to give our managers as much advice and guidance as we can to help them feel confident talking about mental health within their teams.

Encouraging people to talk openly about their mental health has been one of the biggest challenges. Another key focus has been to help people respond effectively if they're approached by a colleague to talk about a sensitive mental health-related issue. Helping people feel confident that they can manage sensitive conversations in the right way is crucial.

We've also put a lot of effort into driving awareness around our employee assistance programme. To drive engagement with Time to Talk Day we put company-branded Time to Change posters around our sites and have also included dedicated articles in our internal magazine on why having positive mental wellbeing is so important for good health.

Around the business it's clear that awareness is growing and this is something we're really proud of. There is an increasing awareness that it's vital to support everyone to change their behaviour to keep them mentally and physically well.

We've run a number of training courses on this and we're currently working with our occupational health team to develop another new resource for line managers to help them access support more easily and to help foster a culture of positive prevention amongst their teams. This is a project that we're really excited about.

Helen Wray
Health and Wellbeing Business Partner
Mars Chocolate UK

BITC Wellbeing Champions

Progress to date



We've really re-energised our approach to mental wellbeing over the past year. Since signing the Time to Change pledge we have engaged a significant proportion of our business to provide a better understanding of the role that mental wellbeing plays in our organisation and the impact it has on our people.

We are pleasantly surprised by the overarching support this campaign has had and the feedback from those that it has touched.

Neil Pullen, our director and Time to Change sponsor, leads the work of our steering group on mental wellbeing. At National Grid we organise 'straight talks', where senior leaders provide a personal insight into critical issues affecting the business. In December 2014 Neil produced a talk on mental wellbeing specifically for our company intranet, talking about why it's an important issue and how it affects the organisation – as well as discussing the personal impact it has had on him.

This article has had one of the highest ever levels of engagement for a piece of content in our business and has driven interest in mental wellbeing, helping it become a key issue for our employees. We've also created a short film showing people from different parts of the business talking about mental wellbeing to highlight that this is an issue that affects everyone and is relevant to us all.

Neil has also spent time engaging with peers and other senior leaders, and encouraging them to get involved. This has been vital in helping us continue to push forward the debate and address the stigma and discrimination associated with mental ill-health.

We are also building on our efforts to make our mental health support services much more tailored in order to encourage proactive early interventions for employees. This enhanced service has been in place over the last couple of years and includes encouraging the early use of support and advice offered by our employee assistance programme on issues such as relationships, substance dependency, legal matters and debt management. This is in order to help prevent or minimise the development of mental health conditions that may be triggered or exacerbated by non-work related factors. We have also introduced a new psychological rehabilitation service and started delivering 'mental health first aid' training for our staff to provide better understanding of mental health issues.

We're now also focused on encouraging employees to sign the Time to Change pledge on a personal level, and to date 400 have made a pledge.

Andy Buxton

**Health and Wellbeing Manager
National Grid**



We signed the Time to Change pledge in September 2014 and launched our new Healthy Minds programme in parallel.

Using the voices and personal insights of our senior leaders to champion our mental wellbeing efforts has been key, underpinning all activities. We created a leadership poster campaign based on senior figures' perspectives and personal experiences. These were displayed all around our offices with the intention of really bringing home to people that mental health is an issue that's relevant to everyone. Time to Talk Day was another highlight, with leaders providing their answers to a series of conversation starter questions on the topic, which we encouraged everyone to consider.

We've also launched a new speaker series in which senior members of the business hold small group sessions, exploring with employees how they manage the pressures and challenges of everyday life, and in some cases to share their personal stories in this area. These interventions have been vital in normalising the topic and demonstrating that you can succeed in business having experienced mental health illness.

We've begun to notice positive changes in a number of ways. Anecdotally, we're seeing more conversations about mental wellbeing happen, and we've received feedback from employees expressing personal gratitude that mental health is finally being talked about. We've also seen a real appetite from our international colleagues to learn more about our strategy and what we're doing – we have 19 sites in Northern Europe alone and are rolling out aspects of our Healthy Minds programme across all sites.

Without doubt, the most valuable asset has been the internal storytelling and leadership, showing that this really is a topic that it's OK to talk about. While it will take us time to analyse the long-term impact on our business, everything we have done to date has been received positively and we're excited by the potential for further cultural change over the years ahead.

Richard Seville
Senior HR Manager
Procter & Gamble

BITC Wellbeing Champions

Progress to date



Signing the Time to Change pledge has given us the perfect opportunity to demonstrate to our clients and our employees that we take mental health incredibly seriously – as leading experts in mental wellbeing, we want to practice what we preach.

As part of a wellbeing plan we've had senior counselling professionals deliver lunchtime sessions to discuss simple questions such as 'What is mental health?', the purpose being to help all our staff feel empowered to talk about mental health and wellbeing in an open and supportive environment. Given the nature of our business services we come into daily contact with people struggling with a range of mental health issues and it is important that our own staff can discuss this and contextualise and normalise their own feelings and reactions.

To build our practical support for employees we offer events in the workplace such as resilience workshops, nutrition and sleep clinics and we've relaunched our health and wellbeing online programme. We've also provided stress management training to our managers to help them cope more effectively with everyday pressures and to build resilient teams.

We've made a real effort to consider how we can change behaviours to improve people's mental wellbeing and we have a wellbeing champion team to drive this effort. For example, we hold a regular Running Club and 'Smoothie Fridays' – simple activities that have a real impact on how people feel at work. Our involvement in national campaigns such as Mental Health Awareness Day is also important in reminding staff of the support that is available and how this can be accessed.

The good news is that there is a groundswell behind this movement and businesses are making a difference. We're seeing more clients come to us to talk about how they can improve mental wellbeing support for their staff and senior leadership. This is a real sign that more business leaders are recognising that mental health is an important business issue and that collectively we're making lasting changes to an important area of national health and wellbeing.

Jayne Carrington
Managing Director
Right Management



Because there's been such a huge stigma around disclosing mental health conditions for so many years, we know that we're not going to change the situation overnight.

But signing the Time to Change pledge has enabled us to make the all important first step by starting the public conversation and helping people to become more comfortable discussing these issues. Having the support of our senior leaders and chief executive has been crucial. It is essential that all companies do their best to secure this senior-level support in order to help the message resonate with as many people as possible.

Over the past year we've seen the launch of our Feeling First Class Mental Health programme. The main ambitions of this strategy are to help people recognise signs of distress; to provide practical advice and resources to help people take control of improving their own mental wellbeing; and to enable them to take the first steps to support colleagues who might be struggling.

We've formed a new partnership with the Mental Health Foundation and have given our employees access to new online resources. These include videos for use across our e-learning and intranet platforms, which combine advice on boosting wellbeing with expert insights and input from employees talking about their personal experiences of overcoming challenges. These have helped to highlight the extent to which mental health and physical health impact one another, and how employees can change their behaviours in a variety of ways to improve their overall wellbeing.

Our Feeling First Class programme is making a real difference. Our company-wide engagement survey showed that the 'my organisation cares about my wellbeing' score has increased from 50% in 2013/14 to 54% in 2014/15. We're planning further evaluation work to explore the other lifestyle factors that impact mental wellbeing and planning new ways to offer more tailored support accordingly.

Shaun Davis

**Group Director of Safety, Health, Wellbeing
and Sustainability**

Royal Mail Group

BITC Wellbeing Champions

Progress to date



Santander is committed to protecting and promoting the physical and mental health of our people. Over the last year we have enhanced a number of our wellbeing delivery and communication tools. Our training and support is now refined through the lens of mental wellbeing.

We have produced a number of new written resources and e-learning tools – from managing pressure to building resilience – which are available to everyone. We have also developed new resources for people experiencing non-work related stress as this still impacts on work. We have a partnership with the Bank Workers Charity and through them colleagues can access a broad range of personal support services to help them manage non-work related issues.

It has been important to show that we take the wellbeing agenda seriously at every level of the business, and especially right at the top. We have introduced new modules for leadership programmes, covering such topics as understanding people, the impact of leaders on their teams and absence management.

We know that despite making prevention a priority there will always be people who become unwell. We have improved access to our employee assistance programme, making it easier for colleagues to get help and advice when they need it.

We have also put in place measures to support colleagues who are off work for mental health reasons. In appropriate cases colleagues can now access structured support through a UK-wide network of qualified counsellors. Working together, they will identify potential barriers and put in place plans to help employees return to work. We recognise that the longer someone is off work the harder it is for them to return, so our new programme provides timely intervention and support; just when it's needed. This is not a 'one size fits all' approach but a bespoke model tailored to personal needs.

To promote and encourage use of our integrated health, safety and wellbeing services, we publish regular news stories on our intranet. We have also significantly upgraded our *Health and Lifestyle Update*, issuing this as a quarterly magazine across the business and encouraging all our managers to talk about the update with their teams. There has been a real appetite to engage with the new health and wellbeing agenda from across the business.

Suzanne Hughes

**Learning, Talent and Development Director
Santander**



We were inspired by what we saw in Responsible Business Week in April 2014 – and we were struck by how many people suffer in silence – so we signed the Time to Change pledge very quickly afterwards, in May 2014.

We wanted to make a real statement of intent so the pledge was signed on behalf of all three UK businesses by our Country Head and CEO UK Life. Public commitment from the top gives a very clear message that we are taking this seriously. While we signed it in our Swindon office, we wanted all teams to be aware of it so we shared the news widely, along with the reasons for signing and what resources we had available for all employees. We also had one employee share their personal experiences, which was really powerful in demonstrating the importance of breaking the culture of silence.

The commitments we made in our pledge were a natural development, and complementary to our existing wellbeing programme, which had previously had an emphasis on physical wellbeing. We felt it was important to treat mental health on a par with physical health so our first step, literally, was to link the two. We launched a six week walking challenge called 'StepZ' and gave all employees a pedometer. This activity was promoted in terms of its impact on both physical and mental wellbeing.

We also piloted some new training workshops on 'Resilience Through Change' – these were incredibly successful and have now been rolled out as part of our learning and development offering for all employees. We are also currently providing training for managers on managing people at work who present as stressed, anxious or depressed, which is facilitated by Mind, one of our national charity partners, and analysing feedback from some mindfulness taster sessions.

We continue to promote wellbeing, including through our intranet 'photo of the day', which often features a mental wellbeing theme. And for Time to Talk Day we produced a short video, to encourage our employees to think about mental health by providing them with some myths and facts, hints and tips and signposting available resources for support.

Tackling mental health is really important to show our commitment as a responsible business to our customers, stakeholders and employees.

Jacky Thompson

**Employee Relations Manager
Zurich**

Business in the Community

137 Shepherdess Walk
London N1 7RQ

T +44 (0)20 7566 8650

F +44 (0)20 7253 1877

E info@bitc.org.uk

www.bitc.org.uk

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**BUSINESS
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**THE PRINCE'S
RESPONSIBLE
BUSINESS NETWORK**