Document number:	Document title:
EP0038ALL-V3-1122	Mental health and well-being policy

Employee groups policy applies to:	All pub employees
	All head office
Locations the policy applies to:	UK
	ROI

Summary of the document
Guidance and support for anybody experiencing mental ill health.

Policy/procedure – full details

Guidance and support for anybody experiencing mental ill health.

We all have mental health, as we have physical health.

Mental ill health covers a variety of different conditions, ranging from depression to anxiety and stress-related disorders. In the workplace, the primary manifestations of mental ill health are anxiety, stress and depression. Although these conditions may not be caused directly by work, they are frequently exacerbated by it.

Mental ill health is typically caused by a range of factors, from relationship problems and financial worries to poor management and/or stress in the workplace.

If you experience symptoms of mental ill health you need to receive the appropriate support straight away. Talking about your symptoms (with trained professionals, family, friends or your manager at work) can help to prevent problems from escalating into a mental illness.

A healthy working environment and, in particular, managers who are skilled in spotting early signs of poor mental health and providing appropriate support play a critical role in keeping you healthy and preventing serious mental illness – whether the primary cause is work related or non-work related.

Line managers have a pivotal role in creating a working environment which is conducive to the well-being of all employees and to spot changes in behaviour or performance which could indicate an underlying mental health issue.

Employees should discuss with, or disclose to, their line manager (or a trusted colleague who can assist them with approaching their line manager) issues they may be having with their mental health so that their line manager can give them guidance. A line manager is not able to diagnose a mental health issue, but can talk to employees in a non-judgemental way and assist them in obtaining appropriate support.

Why do we need a mental health and well-being policy?

Mental ill health is a leading cause of illness, and Wetherspoon wants to support employees in its capacity as an employer. Some of the principles of the policy should be considered in conjunction with the 'disability (welcoming and supporting employees with a disability)' policy and the 'protection of at-risk individuals' policy.

Some mental health conditions may be defined as a disability under the Equality Act 2010. If you are suffering from a mental health illness which is substantial and long term, you may be considered to be a disabled person under the Equality Act 2010.

Examples of mental health conditions include, but are not limited to:

- anxiety disorders

- bipolar affective disorder

- depression

- dissociation and dissociative disorders

- eating disorders

- obsessive compulsive disorder

- paranoia

- post-traumatic stress disorder

- psychosis

- schizophrenia

Self-harm

Self-harm is when people intentionally damage/injure their own body. Some of the reasons why people may self-harm include:

- expressing or coping with emotional distress

- trying to feel in control

- a way of punishing themselves

- relieving unbearable tension

- a cry for help

- a response to intrusive thoughts

Self-harm may be linked to bad experiences happening now, or in the past, but sometimes the reason is unknown. The reasons can also change over time and will not be the same for everybody.

Self-harm is most often described as a way to express or cope with emotional distress. There are many possible causes of emotional distress. It's often a build-up of many smaller things which leads people to consider self-harm.

Some examples include:

- being bullied

- pressure at school or work

- family arguments or relationship problems

- money worries

- low self-esteem

- struggling with stress, anxiety or depression

- confusion about sexuality

- grief after bereavement or loss

- physical or sexual abuse

- being in contact with the criminal justice system

- experiencing complex mental health difficulties which sometimes cause impulsive behaviour or difficulty controlling emotions, often due to past trauma

Self-harm and suicide

There is evidence of a clear link between suicide or suicidal thoughts and those who have previously self-harmed.

However, not everyone who self-harms wants to end his or her life. Some people describe their self-harm as a way of staying alive, by responding to or coping with severe emotional distress.

It's important to find the right support or treatment to help to deal with the underlying causes in a less harmful way.

Wetherspoon is committed to supporting people with mental health issues and encouraging mental well-being in the workplace.

Wetherspoon will provide support to employees in the following ways:

- Provide a work environment which promotes and supports mental well-being for employees at work. Well-being is defined as being comfortable, healthy or happy.

- Promote a working environment which is inclusive and enables people with different abilities and backgrounds to work together, constructively and productively, at all times.

- Maintain an open door policy – encourage employees to engage in discussions about problems they may be experiencing at work, or outside of work, which have an impact on their work performance.

- Train line managers to support employees to adopt healthy ways of coping with competing pressures on their time.

- Provide advice and guidance for line managers on how to support employees who experience mental health issues at work.

- Allow employees to discuss their problems privately, with the assurance of sensitivity and confidentiality.

- Schedule working hours to provide routine and stability at work and adequate non-working time.

- Ensure rotas are published at least three weeks in advance, to enable employees to plan their non-working life.

- Encourage formal and informal flexible working arrangements to support a positive balance between working time and time outside of work to meet other commitments.

- Make reasonable accommodations, where necessary, to ensure employees do not experience any prolonged and unhealthy levels of pressure or stress at work.

- Encourage employees to take responsibility for their own physical and mental well-being, including seeking support from appropriate professionals to address and cope with problems outside of work.

- Complete appropriate assessments with employees who experience mental ill health, using informal one-to-one meetings, return-to-work interviews, an individual stress risk assessment, the well-being checklist and the Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP). Always maintain an open door policy.

- Where appropriate, refer employees to third parties for expert external support, including occupational health, the Licensed Trade Charity (LTC) and counselling services.

- Follow the principles of the absence management policy to support employees' return to work after a period of absence because of mental ill health. A return-to-work plan may include regular meetings, a phased return to work, an assessment of working hours and/or location and support from an assigned buddy.

- Recognise and discuss with employees any pressures outside of work which may aggravate mental health and interfere with the ability to attend work or be productive at work.

- Ensure all recruitment procedures are fair, transparent and non-discriminatory (including employing staff with mental ill health).

- Take a zero-tolerance approach in terms of any inappropriate or negative behaviour which is directed to employees who have a mental health condition.

- Recognise when the working environment may no longer be suitable for employees, and have a professional, open and constructive conversation about how that may be resolved.

Each case of mental ill health is unique and must be considered on its own merits. It must be dealt with to meet the specific needs of the individual, without making unnecessary subjective assumptions.

Further support

The following external organisations offer support. It is not an exhaustive list, and employees are encouraged to seek out their own support network:

The Licensed Trade Charity

The Licensed Trade Charity helps to support hundreds of people facing a crisis with practical, emotional and financial support each year. Its mission is to equip licensed trade workers to be self-reliant, to provide the right guidance, and, if necessary, offer financial support to help them to get back on their feet, and on with life again.

It has three tiers of service:

- A website (http://www.licensedtradecharity.org.uk), which has useful, downloadable information, including over 60 help sheets. This information is available to all employees.

- A free telephone helpline: 0808 801 0550* – this can be accessed by all employees, all day every day, 365 days a year. Employees may be able to access six sessions of telephone counselling free of charge.

- A free Management support and advice line (0808 801 0550).

- Financial support may be available to employees who have been in the trade for five years or more.

*Calls are free from any UK landline. Calls from a mobile phone or from Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland may be charged. If employees visit the website, they can leave their telephone number and request a callback free of charge.

Other organisations which can assist with specific support:

- **Mental Health Foundation**: www.mentalhealth.org.uk

- **Samaritans**: 116 123 – jo@samaritans.org.uk

- **Rethink**: 0300 500 0927 – www.rethink.org

- **Mind**: 0300 123 3393 – info@mind.org.uk

- **Mind legal service**: 0300 466 6463 – legal@mind.org.uk

- **Campaign Against Living Miserably**: 0800 585 858 – www.thecalmzone.net

- **The Health and Safety Executive**: www.hse.gov.uk/stress

- **National Self Harm Network**: 0800 622 6000 – http://www.nshn.co.uk

- **Hearing Voices Network**: 0845 122 8641 – http://www.hearing-voices.org

- **Shout Crisis Text Line**: Text 'SHOUT' to 85258 to contact the Shout crisis text line or text 'YM' if you're under 19.

- **Childline**: If under 19, you can also call 0800 1111 to talk to Childline. The number will not appear on your phone bill.

If you prefer a webchat, these services are available at certain times:

- **Self Injury Support webchat** (for women and girls) – https://www.selfinjurysupport.org.uk/Pages/FAQs/Category/webchat-support

- **CALM webchat** (for men) – https://www.thecalmzone.net/help/webchat/

- **Papyrus (prevention of young suicide)**
Call: 0800 0684141 (helpline UK 9am – 12 midnight 7 days a week)
Text: 07860 039967
Email: pat@papyrus-uk.org

Wetherspoon Welfare Committee

Employees with specific needs may be able to receive support from the Wetherspoon welfare committee. Examples include, but are not limited to: advances of wages or paid holiday; small grants for housing deposits; referrals for medical support, including counselling, physiotherapy and dentistry. Contact: welfare@jdwetherspoon.co.uk

Employee's responsibilities

Approach your line manager to discuss/disclose any issues you are having with your mental health which are affecting your work or which are being aggravated by work. Line managers cannot always detect when issues arise.

If possible, speak to your line manager in advance about having a discussion, so that adequate time can be put aside to talk openly, but confidentially. If you are unsure about what to say to your line manager, try talking to a colleague, friends, family or a medical professional in advance.

Alternatively, you may initially prefer to speak to a trusted colleague. It is best to arrange that discussion when you can talk confidentially, without interruption or disruption to others at work. You can discuss with them when it would be best to approach the management team and who to approach for further guidance. The colleague can also support the discussion when it is arranged.

Your line manager may direct you to further support outside of the workplace, especially for more complex or longer-term cases. Line managers may also speak, in confidence, to the personnel team or their manager.

You may be encouraged to use a WRAP. This is a personalised, practical tool which anyone can use – whether you have a mental health issue or not. It can help to identify what keeps you well at work, what causes you to become unwell and the support you would like to receive from your manager to boost your well-being or support you through a recovery.

You may decide to share your WRAP with your line manager. This enables a regular review of the agreed, practical steps in the WRAP and gives you a sense of ownership of the process.

Management guidance

It can be difficult for employees to speak about their mental health. Managers should refer to the mental health first aid (MHFA) line managers' resource document to assist with how to approach situations.

Managers should use the recognised acronym **ALGEE**. This is a mental health first-aid approach to help those who are mentally unwell or have a mental health issue, which can range from a low mood to someone self-harming, to dealing with someone who is contemplating suicide.

ALGEE is a good way of remembering the appropriate steps to take with people who seem to be struggling with their mental health:

A – Approach, Assess and Assist employees – discuss and assess the issue(s) with employees.

L – Listen, non-judgementally, to what the issue(s) is. This should be carried out in a safe and private place for all parties.

G – Give support and information about where employees can turn (refer to the information above, outlined in 'further support'). However, as a line manager, do **not** try to diagnose the underlying issues.

E – Encourage appropriate professional support/help.

E – Encourage other avenues of support, including family/friend networks and self-help.

Once employees have been engaged in a discussion about their mental health, the following steps can be followed:

- Employees should be spoken to in private, at an appropriate time, encouraging them not to be embarrassed and to seek help. Assure them of confidentiality where it is required or desired. When talking to employees, say 'I', not 'we', to avoid them thinking that everyone is talking about them.

- Agree with the employees how the team and/or company could best support them at work.

- Direct employees to organisations which support employees with mental health issues, accessible via myJDW.

- Encourage employees to complete a WRAP and feel more empowered to control their recovery. Make reasonable or appropriate adjustments to support this process.

- Manage any long-term absence in accordance with the long-term absence policy and procedure, acknowledging that in cases of poor mental health it may be appropriate to manage the absence earlier than at four weeks' absence.

- Keep in touch with employees who are off work unwell and, where appropriate, engage with their own support networks to keep them in touch with their team and the company. The purpose is to avoid absent employees losing confidence in their support and feeling alienated from the workplace.

- Assign a buddy/companion to employees, who can be an additional point of contact in work. If employees have had a period of absence, the buddy can meet them on their first day back and help them to reintegrate back into the team.

- Involve external parties to assist in supporting employees at work, or, if absent from work, where necessary and without delay. Complex cases should be escalated to an area manager or head of department, who can provide further support or guidance.

How to help someone else who is self-harming

If you think employee colleagues have started to self-harm, it's important to approach the subject with care and understanding. It can be very helpful to just be there and let them know that they're not alone, but it's important to remember that you may not be able to help them on your own.

Things you can try to help

There are some things you can try which may help these employees to feel more supported and able to get help.

Do:

- encourage speaking to a GP or free listening service about self-harm

- ask how they would like to be supported

- let them know that you're there for them

- tell them about their positive qualities

- try to understand their emotions and experiences, without judging them, rather than focusing on their self-harm
- consider that any amount of self-harm might be a sign that they're feeling extremely distressed
- let them be in control of their decisions, but get them medical attention, if needed

Don't:

- try to force them to change what they're doing
- threaten to take away their control
- insult them, for example by saying they're attention-seeking

If supporting someone who self-harms, you should also make sure that you take care of yourself.

It's best to speak to a GP about self-harm, if you are:

- harming yourself
- having thoughts about harming yourself
- worried about minor injuries, such as small cuts or burns – without treatment, there is a risk of infection

References	
	• Absence management policy and procedures
	• Disability (welcoming and supporting employees with disabilities) policy
	• Equality, diversity and inclusion policy
	• Flexible ways of working policy
	• Learn to save a life training resource: https://shiningalightonsuicide.org.uk/learn-to-save-a-life/
	• Licensed Trade Charity (LTC): www.licensedtradecharity.org.uk
	• Mental health – Mental health first aid (MHFA) line managers resource document
	• Mental health – Stress risk assessment
	• Mental health – Wellbeing checklist
	• Mental health – Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP)
	• Sick pay policy (UK)
	• Stress management policy
Training	• Virtual classroom – Advanced training – people management
	• Virtual classroom – Management academy people management
	• Virtual classroom – Shift leader people management