



# Ensuring return-to-work processes support employee mental health

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# Our purpose

We're here to fight for  
mental health.

For support.

For respect.

For you.



# Today's session aims

## Improve understanding:

- On how an organisation can create a supportive environment.
- Of statutory requirements including reasonable adjustments.

## Increase confidence:

- In supporting someone back to work.
- In supporting others and our own wellbeing.

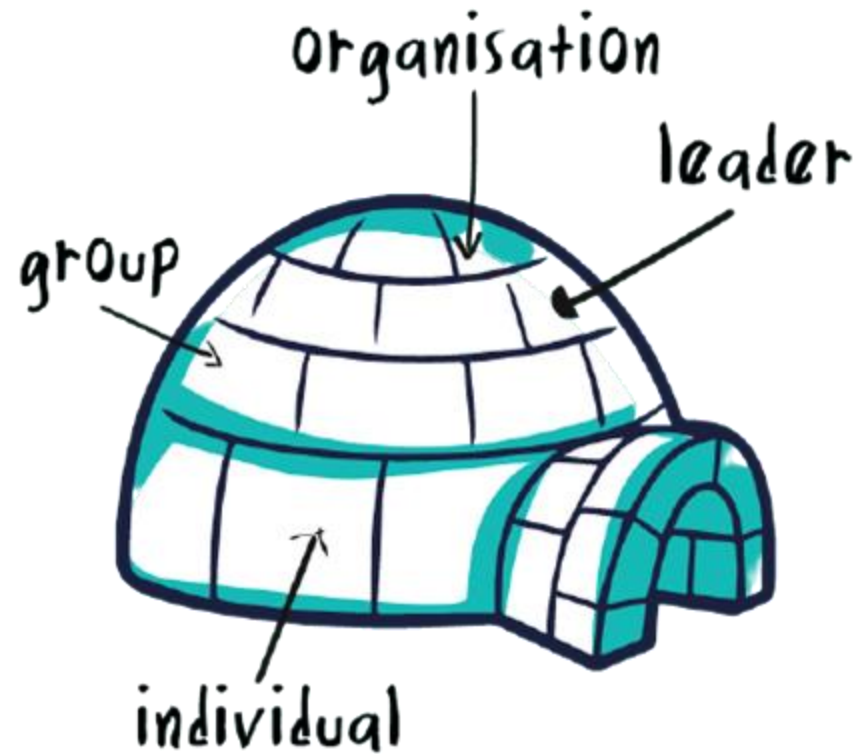


The background is a solid blue color. Overlaid on this background are several thick, white, hand-drawn style lines. These lines are curved and intersect, creating a sense of movement and depth. One line starts from the top left and curves towards the bottom right. Another line starts from the top right and curves towards the bottom left. A third line is more horizontal, crossing the other two. The lines have a slightly textured, chalk-like appearance.

**Creating a supportive environment**



# The IGLOO framework



# Mental health and the law

## The Equality Act 2010

Challenge discrimination in line with protected characteristics:

- Disability (this can include mental health problems).
- Symptoms don't have to always be present.
- Symptoms may be better at some times than others.

Considered a disability under the Equality Act if it:

- Has a 'substantial adverse effect' on their life.
- Has lasted at least 12 months or is expected to.
- Affects their ability to do their normal day-to-day activities.

# Employer's legal duty

## Duty of care

- Making sure the working environment is safe.
- Protecting staff from discrimination.
- Carrying out risk assessments.

## Resources available:

- Internal – HR, EAP, Wellbeing lead
- ACAS
- CIPD
- HSE
- Mind

**If an organisation is aware that something about work is causing a problem for someone with a disability, they have a legal duty to make reasonable adjustments.**

# Reasonable adjustments

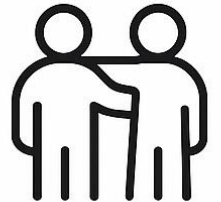
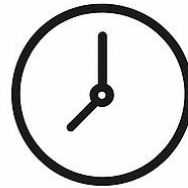
- Changes that must be made if those of us with a disability are put at a disadvantage.
- Depends on many factors:
  - Does it address the disadvantages?
  - Employer size and resources
  - Potential impact on other staff
  - How practical is it?
- Communication with the person is key to understanding the need and what will help.





# What reasonable adjustments look like at work

- Start and finish times
- Phased return
- Workspace
- Role (temporary or permanent)
- Working tasks
- Break times
- Increased support or supervision
- Working from home or remotely
- Using a lightbox / natural light
- Relaxing absence rules
- Time off for appointments





**Providing tailored support**

# Supporting someone off work

- Regularly communicate.
- Communicate key developments.
- Focus conversations on wellbeing.
- Be in touch with their close colleagues (with consent).
- Encourage others to keep in touch (with consent).
- Make it clear there's no rush back to work if they don't feel ready.



# Supporting a return to work

- The first day back is very important - manage effectively.
- Meet on their first day back.
- Keep in regular contact over the first few days and weeks.
- Agree duties / tasks they'll perform.
- Explain the value of the return-to-work process/procedures.
- Help them to think about what they want to share with colleagues.





# Wellness Action Plans

- What well and happy looks like.
- Early warning signs.
- Triggers.
- Steps we and our line manager can take to manage.
- Steps we can take ourselves when we're experiencing poor mental health.



## Wellness Action Plan

Guide for people working in a workplace





# **Training and guidance for line managers**



# How confident are you and your leaders?

1. Awareness of the most common mental health and wellbeing problems at work.
2. Actively challenging stigma.
3. Using tools to support team and 1:1 conversations.
4. Understanding of the link between mental health and performance.
5. Mindful of the law, and reasonable adjustments.



# What peer support do you have?

- Managers / Leaders specifically
- You aren't alone
- Mentor or coach
- Your global network



# Creating work- life balance





# What are your low hanging fruits?

## Helpful habits:

- Fake 'commutes'
- Diary management - start/finish times
- Stick to a routine – sleep hygiene

## The right to switch off:

- 30-min lunch break – environment.
- Annual leave – truly Out of Office
- Work and personal laptop logins and phones.





# 5 ways to support your wellbeing



TALK & LISTEN,  
BE THERE,  
FEEL CONNECTED



DO WHAT YOU CAN,  
ENJOY WHAT YOU DO,  
MOVE YOUR MOOD



Your time,  
your words,  
your presence



REMEMBER  
THE SIMPLE  
THINGS THAT  
GIVE YOU JOY



EMBRACE NEW  
EXPERIENCES,  
SEE OPPORTUNITIES,  
SURPRISE YOURSELF



# Thank you for listening. Go easy on yourself.

Mental Health at Work Commitment info and  
resources:



For Mind's e-Learning products:

[workplace.mind.org.uk](https://workplace.mind.org.uk)