

Best New Workplace Approach to Mental Wellbeing

THIS CAN HAPPEN. A&O SHEARMAN
GLOBAL AWARDS 2025

in association with

A&O SHEARMAN

Winner // ROYAL MAIL

This award is given to a workplace that has recognised the importance of mental wellbeing, and within the past 18 months has taken steps to change the culture via a holistic and focused approach.

During the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent cost-of-living crisis, Royal Mail colleagues faced intense pressure as essential workers. This was further compounded by industrial action and a large-scale operational transformation programme, leading to rising stress levels, absences, and mental health concerns.

At the same time, internal surveys revealed that many managers lacked confidence discussing mental health and were under-utilising available support tools such as the Help@Hand app. Royal Mail recognised that fostering open, informed conversations around mental wellbeing was critical to sustaining workforce resilience and engagement.

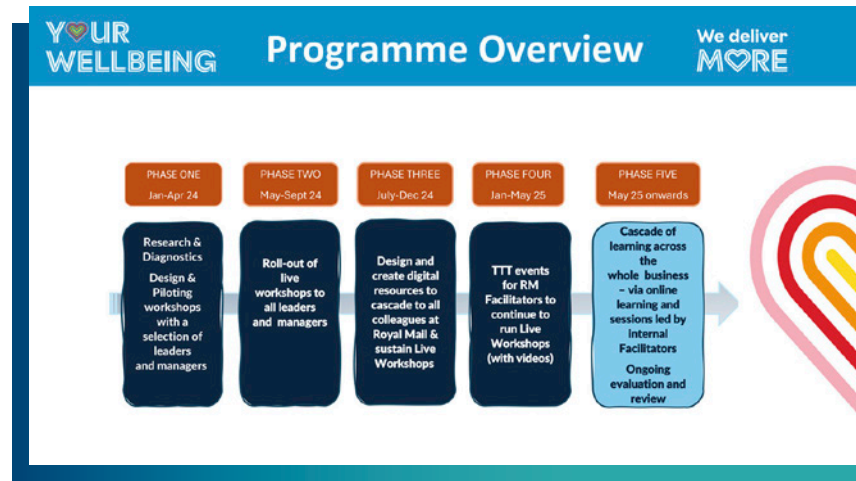


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Building Confidence and Connection

In partnership with Steps, Royal Mail developed a bespoke, drama-based awareness and learning programme focused on mental health awareness and practical communication. The initiative combined emotional storytelling with evidence-based learning, encouraging managers to reflect, connect, and act. The aim was twofold: to normalise open discussions about mental health in the workplace, and to equip leaders with the practical skills and confidence to support their teams compassionately.

Over five months, more than 5,000 leaders took part in 41 live



Royal Mail's 2024-25 Mental Health Programme Overview

workshops exploring how to spot signs of distress, hold supportive conversations, and look after their own wellbeing. To sustain impact, digital resources and video scenarios were created for ongoing use, and 24 internal facilitators were trained to continue delivering workshops across the business. This ensured that learning cascaded naturally, reaching colleagues at every level.

A Measurable Cultural Shift

The results have been transformative. Ninety-seven percent of participants found the workshops effective, with managers reporting a 28% increase in confidence identifying mental health issues and a 23% rise in

confidence supporting colleagues. Royal Mail's efforts also earned national recognition - achieving Tier 2 status in the CCLA Mental Health Benchmark, up from Tier 4, and ranking among the UK's top ten most-improved companies. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with participants highlighting greater empathy, improved listening, and a stronger sense of connection. As one manager put it, "The best training session I've ever had in 20 years."

As the programme continues to cascade through the organisation, Royal Mail's ambition is to extend its reach to all 120,000 frontline colleagues. ■

Judges' comments

- + Really impressed by the clarity of goals and objectives here with measurable outcomes.
- + This is a very clear, ambitious and well thought out strategy.

SHORTLISTED

- Lucion Group
- Swizzels