

Best Mental Health in the Workplace Strategy:

LARGE COMPANY

Winner

Royal Mail Group

This award recognises a workplace with more than 750 employees that has implemented an exceptional mental health strategy, demonstrating an inclusive, preventive and supportive approach to wellbeing

One in 194 jobs in the UK is provided by Royal Mail Group (RMG), and the company understands that protecting and improving the health of its workforce not only improves its people and business metrics, but delivers economic and social benefit to the communities it serves. The company employs 142,000 people, and they are the biggest asset; the aim was to ensure that everyone in the company felt responsible for making sure employees went home safe and well every day.

In 2017, RMG launched the five-year mental health strategy 'Because Healthy Minds Matter' e-learning course, combining group-wide programmes and local activity to support healthy minds with a number of clear objectives: to increase awareness of mental health and reduce the stigma that surrounds it; to ensure colleagues knew where to go in a crisis; and to create signposts for tools and support.

The approach was very much one of partnership and external benchmarking, and the team worked with Business In The Community (BITC) alongside external stakeholders and the unions, to develop the tools and resources for employees. The initiative involved designing a video, z-cards and posters, as well as the launch of Health and Wellbeing ambassadors. HR support teams were upskilled and the



RMG's 'Because Healthy Minds Matter' e-learning course has been made available to 130,000 front-line staff to make sure they know where to go in a crisis

company worked with unions to deploy joint messaging to promote listening and signposting. Mental health campaigns were featured in internal worktime briefing sessions, in the employee magazine and on internal TV screens in all units.

Achievements

RMG is now well equipped to steer its strategy of mental health awareness

Highly Commended

- Making Mental Health Key to our Wellbeing Strategy
Brakes

Shortlisted

- Accenture UK 2020 Mental Health Strategy
Accenture
- Bank of England Mental Health in the Workplace
Bank of England
- Best Mental Health in the Workplace strategy
Direct Line Group
- Making the Connection
Skanska UK
- PepsiCo
PepsiCo

Judges comments

through the company. Membership of its Feeling First Class health and wellbeing website, used by employees and their families, has increased from 20,000 to 54,000. RMG has seen an increase in calls to the First Class Support employee assistance helpline of around 100 a month, as employees become more willing to talk about mental health.

The new Because Healthy Minds Matter e-learning course is included in manager induction days, and has been adapted and made available to 130,000 front-line colleagues via a Feeling First Class portal.

A First Class Mental Health toolkit is available on the company intranet as part of the health and wellbeing programme of the same name. It offers support across a number of health topics, including employee assistance, fitness, health, lifestyle and finance.

More than 1,800 managers have attended mental health First Aid training, and all mental health ambassadors are now combined mental and physical health and wellbeing ambassadors.

In 2020, RMG included a mental health question in its annual employee survey, which in its first year scored positively, and allows managers to assess local results. The company is frequently asked its opinion about such issues, and gives talks on its mental health initiatives. It has given interviews to BITC and the Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH), and always enjoys sharing its story. ■

The focus on management training and the high percentage of managers trained provides a strong foundation impacting behaviours and company-wide culture, while embedding training into onboarding processes demonstrates commitment to sustainability. Data here suggest increasing levels of engagement and use of support services. Some tracking on knowledge, attitudes and behaviours would be a good next step to help to demonstrate the full impact of this excellent programme.

A great success story in delivering external advice as to how the RMG has built their MH awareness strategy. Placing this as a five-year plan is wise as that's how long it takes in most organisations, let alone one with a reach of 142,000 employees.