

Best Not-for-Profit/Charity Internal Wellbeing Programme

AWARDS

THIS CAN HAPPEN GLOBAL.

In association with

A&O SHEARMAN

Winner// MENTAL GUARD

This award honours those not-for-profit and charitable organisations for their internal wellbeing programmes. Entrants should outline how they support their colleague's wellbeing.

This systemic approach transformed professional wellbeing in Ukrainian education from informal support into a structured and accountable system.

The full-scale war in Ukraine fundamentally reshaped the emotional landscape of education. School psychologists, educators and crisis responders were supporting children affected by trauma while managing their own exposure to grief, uncertainty and prolonged emergency conditions.

Mental Guard recognised that sustainable support for children is impossible without protected and supported professionals. The programme therefore embedded wellbeing, supervision, training and crisis response into everyday educational structures rather than relying on ad hoc support.



Mental Guard established a Rapid Response Group of trained psychologists and crisis specialists.

From Individual Responsibility to System Responsibility

Mental Guard established a Rapid Response Group of trained psychologists and crisis specialists, supported by clear activation protocols, supervision pathways and follow-up procedures. Documented safeguarding standards, role clarity and escalation frameworks helped reduce ambiguity and emotional overload during critical incidents.

A structured training programme equipped psychologists, educators and crisis responders with skills



Regular training conducted for psychologists, school administration and teachers

in crisis literacy, early detection, safeguarding, ethical boundaries and professional self-care. Regular supervision and peer-reflection groups created protected spaces to address secondary trauma, burnout risk and professional isolation. Early detection was supported through digital tools, with psychosocial warning signals triggering professional review rather than automated decisions, preserving human oversight in high-stakes situations.

Results & Impact

Over two years, more than 20,000 people received structured psychological support through on-site and online interventions and consultations. More than 40 professional interviews and field research cycles informed continuous

improvements to the support model.

The Rapid Response Group was operationalised and deployed during critical incidents, providing immediate stabilisation while ensuring structured follow-up for professionals involved. Mental State Assessment also scaled from a 20-school pilot to citywide implementation, helping identify psychosocial strain earlier and distribute workloads more predictably.

Training has reached significant scale, with 5,200 educators trained through almost 400 training sessions and debriefs. Supervision and peer-support structures have strengthened professional connection and created a shared culture of accountability and care. ■

Judges' comments

- + The scale is impressive.
- + Exceptionally strong and important programme, delivered in circumstances of extraordinary pressure.

Shortlisted

- Alzheimer's Society
- Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust