

# Employee Network of the Year

## Winner Accenture

This category looks to identify a workplace that has established a successful peer network of champions and advocates: a team of workers who commit to supporting colleagues in addition to their day job

When Accenture reached out to its network to ask for mental health advocates, they received a healthy response. Using the appetite and stories of employees, the UKI Mental Health Programme Team was conceived with a mission to respond to and prevent mental health issues experienced by employees. Accenture already had a successful LGBT allies' network and set about constructing a similar model for mental health. It soon became clear the topic resonated strongly with employees.

Today, Accenture has more than 2,000 Mental Health Allies trained to be ambassadors for the programme, to open up conversation around mental health and act as trusted 'go-to' colleagues for those seeking support. The Mental Health Strategy focuses on the three pillars of Prevention, Intervention and Care at Work, aiming to make it safe for everyone to talk, ensure people know where to get help, and make staff mental health-aware: 20% are expected to have been trained as Mental Health Allies by 2020 in a programme that includes UK people at all levels.

There will be online resources for line managers, including advice on return to work and workplace and workloads adjustments, as well as access to various support networks and closed calls for those affected by mental ill-health.



UK Mental Health Allies are a trained group of ambassadors and advocates offering trusted "go-to" resources for people seeking support or information for themselves or a colleague on mental health

Accenture's strategy combines leadership training with support resources and its Mental Health Allies, who help spread the message through their own stories and voices. The Mental Health Allies training

# Highly Commended

→ Breathe – Mental Health Network  
Norton Rose Fulbright

## Shortlisted

→ Mental Health Community EY  
→ The Thrive Network Slaughter and May

**Presented by:**

**Goldman Sachs**

programme has trained more than 2,000 employees to open up conversations on mental health and better understand the Accenture ecosystem of support.

Various campaigns have enabled employees to share stories via Media Exchange; staff now feel confident to discuss personal topics across a wide range of subjects. During Mental Health Awareness Week, the network hosted multiple sessions at client sites and offices on mental health awareness and organising webinars.

## Achievements

Since its inception five years ago, the Mental Health Programme Team's practices have been rolled out across various countries, with more than 3,500 employees trained (2,000 in the UK). This global reach has seen incredible leadership buy-in and inspired mental health research, which found that 9 in 10 people in the UK experience mental health conditions at work.

This year Accenture has held 25 briefing sessions for employees and clients, covering mental health issues in the workplace. The open conversations are having a positive impact on staff, and training sessions create environments where staff can share personal stories, from senior leaders to junior employees. All staff now have access to an Employee Assistance Programme line, and the Thrive programme on prevention is to be piloted in three countries from September. ■

## Judges' comments

Great to hear thought was given to scaling the approach in order to ensure a larger number of people could be trained. This really is gold standard for how an organisation can best support their people – resources allowing. Particularly impressive is the tech-enabled support and focus on precursors

Great to see the company building on an already successful (allies) network. I was particularly inspired to see that the team developed a bespoke program to meet the needs of their employees after trying an off-the-shelf version. I like how the training is going into deeper topics like sleep. Great to see the internal recognition it has attained