

TeamWork

News & information for people with learning & work in mind

Issue 32 May 2010

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We are delighted to re-introduce *TeamWork*, the Workways newsletter bringing news and information for people with an interest in mental health and work-related matters.

TeamWork has been re-instigated at the suggestion of the Workways Support Group, which comprises of people who use our service. We are grateful for their help in developing this re-design and suggesting ideas for content. You can read more about the Group on page 4.

TeamWork is aimed at a broad audience of healthcare professionals, learning and work advisors, employers and people who use services, we plan to publish *TeamWork* four times a year and will be pleased to receive comments and suggestions for articles.

The Workways Team

Useful Numbers

BelInvolved Devon	201218
Connexions	203603
Citizens Advice Bureau	0844 4994101
Council Tax & Housing Benefits	265440
Exeter College	205222
Exeter Volunteer Centre	202055
First Step Project	202055
Jobcentre Plus	473916
MIND Exeter & East Devon	204499
Nextstep	0845 8 50 50 70
New Leaf	823720
Patient Advice & Liaison Service	402093
PLUSS	0800 91 777 92
Recovery & Independent Living	208900
Rethink	01395 224166
St Loye's Foundation	255428
Workways	677050

All prefixed by 01392 unless shown

Dates for your diary

- MIND week – week commencing 17th May (see page 2)
- Workways Support Group – 14th June
- Mental Health First Aid training at Workways – 16th-17th June
- Benefits Overview session at Workways – 29th September

If you are interested in any of the above, please contact us on 01392 677050.

Read *TeamWork* online at:
www.workways.org.uk

Workways Official Opening

April 20th saw the Official Opening of our new offices by Iain Tulley, Chief Executive (right) and Chris Burford, Network General Manager Exeter, East & Mid Devon, Devon Partnership NHS Trust. This event was attended by people who use our services, healthcare professionals, employers and learning and work advisors and was marked by the cutting of a celebratory cake.



Having outgrown our original premises in King Street, we were delighted to have had the support of Iain and other senior management within the Trust to acknowledge the need for providing improved offices for Workways. This was also in part a recognition of the service we provide and the work we do locally, regionally and nationally. Our new offices provide additional space for appointments and, reflecting our focus on learning and work, remain in a convenient location in the business community in the centre of town.

The new Fit Note

The Statement of Fitness for Work, or 'fit note', is a new Medical Statement that GPs have been issuing since April. It replaces the old 'sick note' and aims to focus on what an employee may be able to do at work rather than what they cannot do. Visit the Acas website at www.acas.org.uk for more information.

New Permitted Work Rules

From April, changes in Housing Benefit and Permitted Work Rules now allow anyone who receives Incapacity Benefit, Severe Disablement Allowance or Employment Support Allowance, plus Housing Benefit or Local Housing Allowance, and Council Tax Benefit to earn up to £93 a week without any of these benefits being affected.

Taking Care of Business: Mental Wellbeing at Work

Mind is launching their long-term employment campaign, 'Taking care of business: mental wellbeing at work' on Monday 17 May. Mind will be asking employees and employers to face up to mental health, showing that friendly, open and supportive work environments benefit everyone.

Each year, 1 in 6 workers experience depression, anxiety or unmanageable stress. Mind say that for too long mental health has been a taboo subject in the workplace, with millions of people feeling that they need to put on a 'brave face' and hide their mental distress. Mind show how millions of lives could be improved and millions of pounds could be saved if employers took simple, inexpensive steps to improve the mental wellbeing of their workforce. On the day of the launch, Mind is asking workers around London to reclaim their lunch breaks and join their mass picnic at Potters Fields Park, near Tower Bridge.

Email work@mind.org.uk for more details. Sign up to the campaign for free workplace and campaigners' guides, top wellbeing tips and receive Mind's campaign film, 'Behind the Mask' at www.mind.org.uk/work

Bullying in the Workplace

Bullying is an issue which can affect everyone, and is currently a very topical issue. For the person being bullied the effects are endless, from the immediate affect on the individual's sense of self, to causing prolonged damage to their mental health.

Bullying in the workplace is a much too common occurrence, and as the victim has to face the perpetrator/s most of their week, the stress can become unbearable. Employers have a moral obligation to stop bullying and it is also financially viable to do so, as the victim is likely to be less productive or even off sick for long periods of time. As 1 in 4 people are currently experiencing bullying issues, it comes as no surprise that 80% of employers are struggling with absence issues. Absence due to stress is costing the UK economy as a whole roughly £13.4 billion. If the person leaves their job, then the employers have to pay to re-train another employee, and these sorts of situations will lead to more people being unable to work and turning to public services, having an impact on the entire society.

There are all sorts of different types of bullying, but they all leave the victim feeling just as distressed. If you feel that you are being bullied, there are a number of ways that you could try to deal with the situation:

- 1) Get advice – if at all possible, you could try to deal with the problem informally, by speaking to a colleague, manager or employee representative who may be able to advise you or offer ways to sort the situation out.
- 2) Talk to the bully (or ask someone else to do so) – the person may not realise how their behaviour is affecting you
- 3) Keep a written record of incidents and relevant documents
- 4) Consider making a formal complaint, which would follow the employer's grievance procedures

You don't have to manage this process alone; there are plenty of organisations who will help you through. For example, Workways can help support you and the employer through these situations, and people often use a representative from their trade union to help them.

New Government Commitments on Employment and Mental Health

Last December saw the joint launch of four important publications that together will shape how government will approach mental health and employment in Great Britain.

- **Working Our Way to Better Mental Health: A Framework for Action** is the first GB-wide National Mental Health and Employment Strategy, addressing well-being at work for all and better employment results for people with mental health conditions in and out of work. This report has come out of the earlier work by Dame Carol Black and MINDFUL EMPLOYER was represented on the steering group which developed the strategy.
- **Realising Ambitions: Better employment support for people with a mental health condition** is a Dept for Work & Pensions-commissioned, independent review led by Rachel Perkins. It examines strengthening employment, health and wider state support to help people with mental conditions on out of work benefits. Workways was one of several organisations consulted in this Review
- **Work, Recovery and Inclusion** is a cross-government delivery plan for England to support people in contact with secondary mental health services into work. It forms part of the Government response to the Perkins Review mentioned above and makes a number of references to MINDFUL EMPLOYER.
- **New Horizons: A shared vision for mental health** is a cross-government report produced by the Dept of Health including commitments to action by 11 government departments. For the first time it sets out a new approach with the twin aims of improving people's quality of life and well-being, and improving the quality and accessibility of services for people with poor mental health.

All documents are available to download at www.workingforhealth.gov.uk

Workways Support Group

The Workways Support Group offers a safe environment for people who use our service to come and share their experiences. It also provides opportunity to gain information on a variety of subjects through guest speakers and opportunity to borrow books which the group own.

The group also provides valuable feedback on the service and opinions are sought from them on all new developments, such as this newsletter.

Anyone who is using, or has used, the Workways service is welcome to attend the group. The group meets at Workways on the 2nd Monday of every month – the next meeting will be on **Monday 14th June 2010**.

If you would like any further information about the Support Group then contact Becky or Cathie at Workways on 01392 677050.

If you have any ideas or feedback regarding *TeamWork*, please get in touch:

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Advertise in *TeamWork*

Do you provide information, advice, training or support to people with mental health issues, employers or learning and work organisations?

You can advertise your service to our readership of over 1700 healthcare professionals, employers, learning and work organisations, and also on the Internet.

An advert costs just £25 inc VAT per edition.

Workways is a service of Devon Partnership NHS Trust
Working in partnership with

Devon Partnership 
NHS Trust


European Union
European Social Fund
Investing in jobs and skills


Including Jobcentres and
social security offices




Adding to Life

Promoting mental health through learning and work