UNISON health and safety – we are the future

GUARDIANS OF HEALTH AND SAFETY

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Welcome

Mental Health and H&S

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974

Health and Safety at Work (N.Ireland)order 1978

The Employer has a duty to provide a safe and healthy workplace

Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 – Regulation 3

Risk assessment

3.—(1) Every employer shall make a suitable and sufficient assessment of—

(a)the risks to the health and safety of his employees to which they are exposed whilst they are at work; and

(b)the risks to the health and safety of persons not in his employment arising out of or in connection with the conduct by him of his undertaking."

Mental Health for Activists

Lets Clarify

Mental Heath vs Mental Illness

What is your understanding of the term Mental Health

What is your understanding of the term Mental Illness

(open for quick discussion)

Mental Health vs Mental Illness

Mental Health and '**Mental Illness**

are increasingly being used as if they mean the same thing, **but they do not.**

Everyone has **Mental Health**, just like everyone has health.

Mental health refers to our emotional and psychological state, our social well–being and how we feel about ourselves and interact with others. Mental health is not the same as mental illness, although poor mental health can lead to mental and physical illnesses.

Mental Health and Disability

The Equality Act 2010

(*1*)A person has a disability if—

(a)Person has a physical or mental impairment, and

(b)the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on Person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Section 75 (just because you are here !)

In general the legislation that applies in Northern Ireland is different to that for the rest of the UK, although many of the provisions that apply in the rest of the UK have been reflected in the legal framework in Northern Ireland via secondary legislation.

The Northern Ireland Act 1998 established the devolved Northern Ireland Assembly. Anti-discrimination legislation is devolved in Northern Ireland so the Northern Ireland Assembly is responsible for passing or amending anti-discrimination legislation

The main legislation is:

- disability: Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) and the Disability Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 2006 (DDO) something that we as reps in N. Ireland quote regularly at management meetings!

(There may be similar legislation on the other devolved regions)

Mental Health as a Disability

A **mental health** condition is considered a **disability** if it has a long-term effect on your normal day-to-day activity. This is defined under the Equality Act 2010. Your condition is 'long term' if it lasts, or is likely to last, 12 months. (www.gov.uk).

- **Conditions which _might_ be treated as a disability under the Equality Act**

- mental health conditions - for example, depression, schizophrenia, bipolar affective disorders, eating disorders, obsessive compulsive disorder

Not MH but also

- _learning disabilities_

- _learning difficulties such as dyslexia and dyspraxia_

- _autistic spectrum disorders_

- _impairments due to injury to the body or brain. (www.citizensadvice.org.uk)_

Activity

Mental Health Framework or Charter

In order for organisations to manage mental health effectively, they need to have a framework with which to address the issues.

As a group, name and explain 10 things that should be in this framework or Charter. Your workplace may have one in place already so please share and your experience and examples of good practice

You have:

20 mins

Group Activity
Getting to know each othe

- Break into smaller groups

- Nominate someone to give feedback

- If all groups can give **<u>one</u>** example from their discussion group (use of the flip chart.)

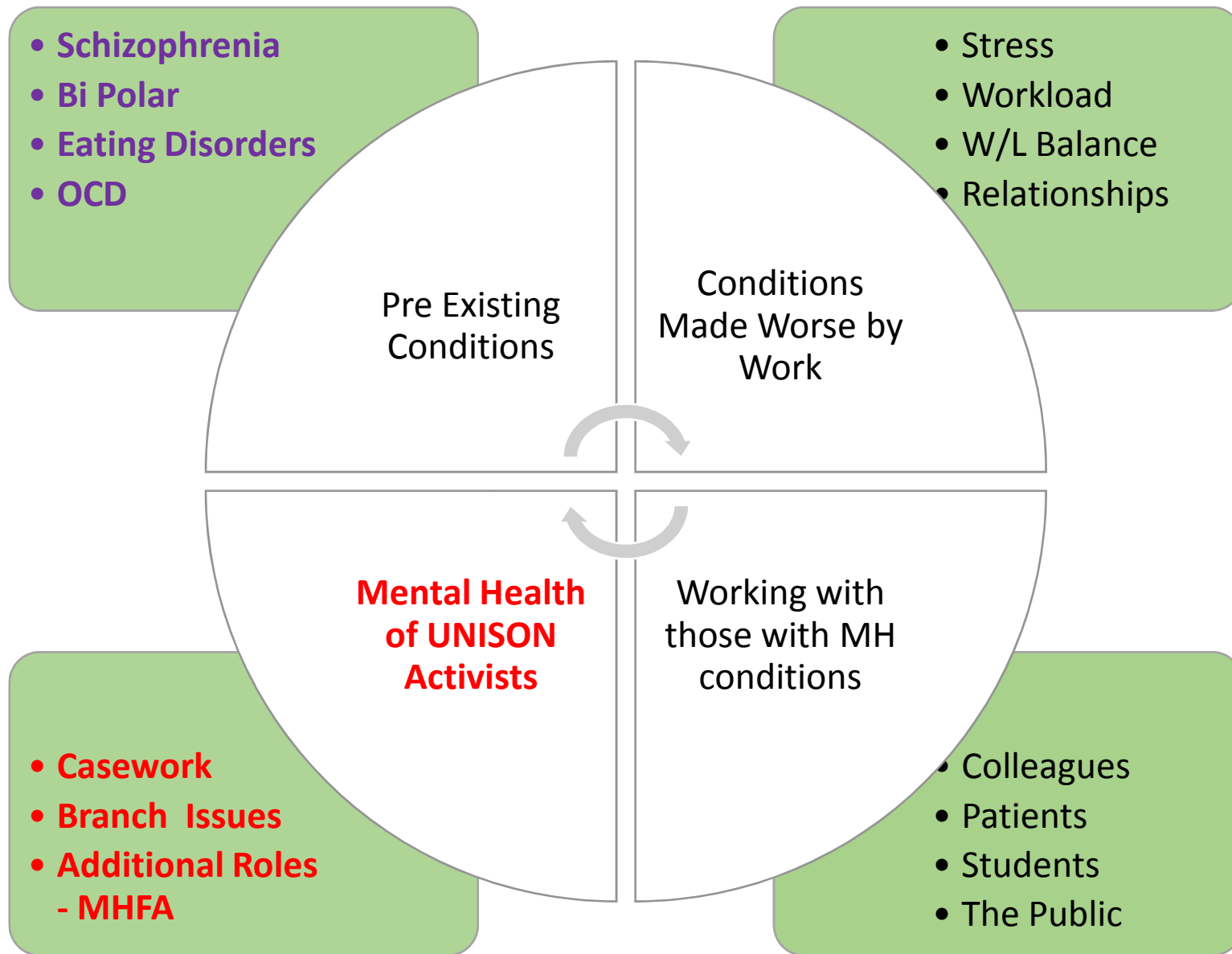# Examples that should be in a good Mental Health Charter or Framework for an Organisation

➢ All organisations recognise the value of promoting good mental health.

➢ Mental health has equality with physical health within the Health and Care system i.e in funding and delivering of service.

➢ People with mental health problems should be involved in all aspects of development and delivery of a service.

➢ Easy and early intervention to stop more serious problems developing, Access to Occupational Health services etc.

➢ Wide range of organisations will need to work together to ensure the best outcomes .

➢ Humanity, dignity and respect shown to everyone equally.

➢ Ensure equal accessibility for all groups within the organisation.

Examples that should be in a good Mental Health Charter or Framework for an Organisation continued

➢ Provide service that aim to support people through equality of opportunity.

➢ Keep people safe. High quality risk management and recognition of duty of care *(this is were the role of the UNISON Health and Safety officer and all reps is very important to ensure that this happens!).*

➢ Ensure there are supportive policies in place e.g. flexible working for work / life balance, domestic violence policy , anti bullying policy and a supportive sickness policy. Ensure that all managers are educated properly in the implementation of these policies . (that they do not sit on a shelf and gather dust!) .

➢ Information and education for all managers and staff to get rid of all stigma associated with mental illness.

MH Concerns

- **Schizophrenia**
- **Bi Polar**
- **Eating Disorders**
- **OCD**

- Stress
- Workload
- W/L Balance
- Relationships

Pre Existing Conditions

Conditions Made Worse by Work

Mental Health of UNISON Activists

Working with those with MH conditions

- **Casework**
- **Branch Issues**
- **Additional Roles**
  - MHFA

- Colleagues
- Patients
- Students
- The Public

Stress At Work

UNISON Stress Survey 2017

Key points of UNISON survey

Nearly 10,000 members completed the UNISON Stress at Work Survey

60% of employers have nor spoken to their staff about stress at work

87% feel that services are suffering (at least sometimes) due to staff pressure at work

67% feel that "excessive demands of the job" are a source of their stress at work

39% feel that their "work / life balance" is to blame

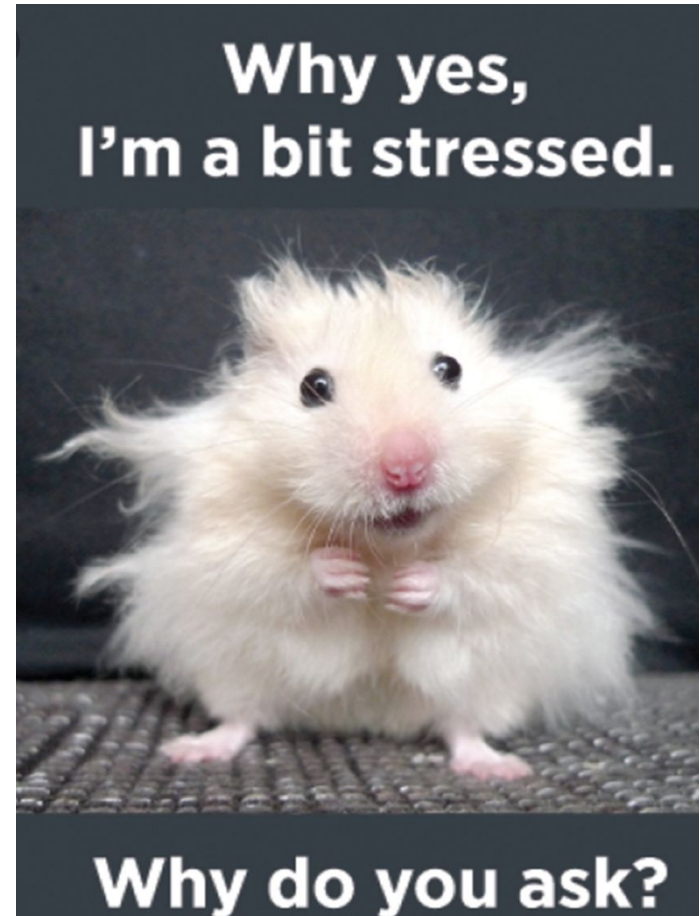29% attributed "interpersonal relationships" (inc B&H) on their stress

Stress and Mental Heath At Work
Things to consider.....

Long hours and no breaks

Unrealistic deadlines

Unmanageable workloads

Lack of control over work

Restructuring and Constant Change

Lone working

Shift patterns

Low pay

Bullying

PEOPLE

What Should Employers Do?

FULFIL THEIR LEGAL OBLIGATIONS

What Could Employers Also Do....

Promoting positive mental health in the workplace: take a step by step approach to improve the mental health of staff and provide support processes for staff that experience mental ill health

Managing staff experiencing mental ill health: providing training, guidance and support for managers who thinks a team member may be experiencing mental ill health. This includes spotting the signs that a team member may be experiencing mental ill health, tips on how to approach talking to them about their mental health and how to support them in their recovery

Dealing with stress in the workplace: understanding the causes of work-related stress and how to reduce it in the workplace. Providing training and guidance on spotting a team member that may be experiencing stress, how to approach talking to them and support them

Managing anxiety in the workplace: understand what anxiety is and what signs may indicate a team member is experiencing anxiety.

What Should Employers Do?
Ensure that their Policies and procedures are fit for purpose

Does Mental Health at YOUR Work.....

- Have a separate policy?
  - Does it take into account the relevant areas of our "MH Concerns"?
  - Does it have links to other policies i.e. sickness absence, disability and equality, bullying and harassment, flexible working etc?
- Have procedures in place to support positive mental health management – such as supervision or mentoring?
  - Are their support systems in place for further help / advice / signposting?
- Have Mental Health First Aiders or Champions in place at work?
  - Is their further support / supervision for them?

Example of what some the Health Trusts are doing in N. Ireland to improve Wellbeing

Take5 steps to wellbeing — HSC Health and Social Care

- Give
- Be active
- Connect
- Keep learning
- Take notice

www.mindingyourhead.info

Mindfulness at Work: -Mindfulness helps us deal with life's ups and downs. Mindfulness is a state of present awareness, an ability to become more aware of you and the world around you in everyday life. This includes awareness of thoughts, feelings, breathing, physical sensations and awareness of surroundings all with an attitude of non-resistance, non-judgement and acceptance.
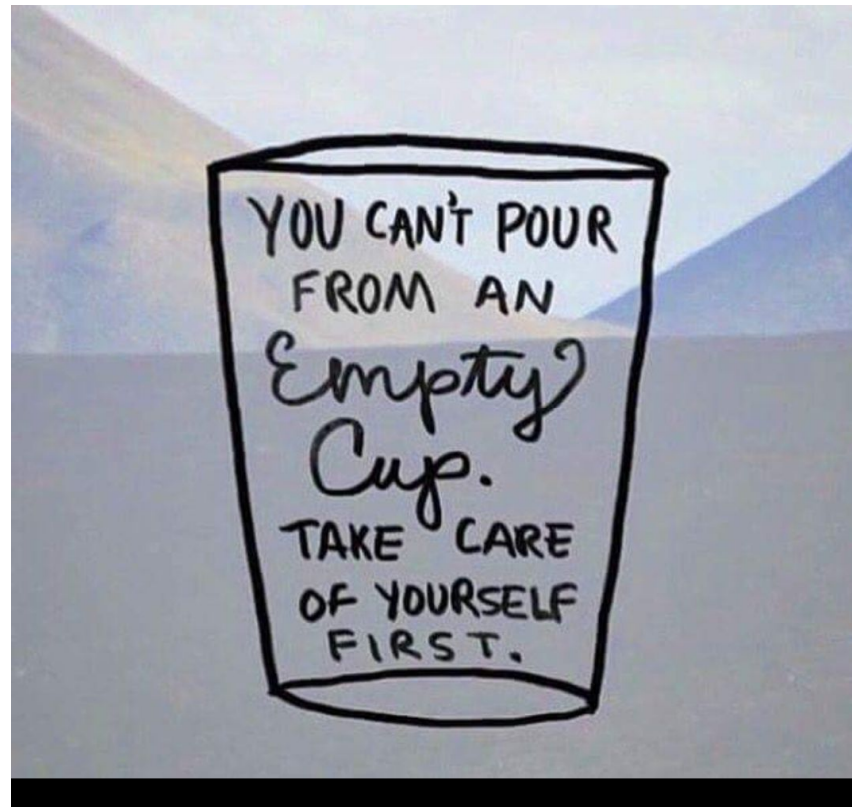
Looking after your Mental Health as an Activist

You are looking after the members , dealing with many complex issues in the work place

But are you looking after your own mental Health ?

Mental Health of UNISON activists

Some of the added or extra pressure on an activist can include:

- Casework

- Branch Issues

- Additional Roles - MHFA (mental health First Aider)

- *For discussion – anything else that may affect the Mental Health of our Activists?*

What can UNISON do to ensure to support their activists wellbeing?

Discussion from the activists:

Contact Us

healthandsafety@unison.co.uk

020 7121 5156

http://www.unison.org.uk/knowledge/health-and-safety/

https://www.facebook.com/UNISONHS

twitter.com/UNISON_HS

http://www.linkedin.com/company/unison