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To: All Branches

Dear Colleagues,

World Mental Health Day 2022 – Theme 'Make Mental Health and Wellbeing For All A Global Priority':

Introduction - The World Federation for Mental Health (WFMH) and World Health Organisation (WHO):

The World Federation for Mental Health (WFMH) announced World Mental Health Day 2022 will again take place today on 10 October. The World Health Organisation (WHO) also recognises World Mental Health Day every year. The theme of 2022's World Mental Health Day, set by the World Federation for Mental Health (WFMH), is 'Make mental health and wellbeing for all a global priority'.

The WHO has been working for many years to make sure that mental health is treated on a par with physical health. This is the firmly established policy of the CWU, TUC and many Trade Unions. Mental health problems exist in our lives, families, workplaces and communities, impacting everyone. We must do as much as possible to prevent mental ill-health – as individuals, as Union Reps and as a society. We will continue to call on national governments, employers and health and safety regulators to prioritise reducing the factors known to pose a risk to people's mental health, enhancing those known to protect it and creating the conditions needed for people to thrive.

World Mental Health Day focuses attention on the need to talk about mental health in general, how we need to look after it, and how important it is for those in crisis to talk about things and get help if they are struggling, to get support and not be stigmatised.

Greater Investment – Greater Access

At a time when the world has been confronted by the unprecedented mental health consequences and impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on billions of people, the WFMH and WHO are using the day as a focal point to call for the urgent redress and investment in mental health and to rebalance the mental health inequalities that exist – a call which they say can no longer be ignored. Now more than ever greater investment in mental health is needed to ensure that everyone, everywhere has access to mental health care. The under investment in mental health has left large treatment gaps globally. Mental health is an investment and not an expense and should be prioritised to avert a further catastrophe.

The worldwide pandemic arose against an already dire mental health landscape that saw mental health conditions on the rise across the globe. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO) about 450 million people live with mental disorders that are among the leading causes of ill-health and disability worldwide.

According to the WFMH, the treatment gap remains large with 50% of people with mental disorders in high income countries and 85% of persons in low-and middle income countries having no access to treatment (WHO Report). Fragile health systems have not been able to address or cope with the large inequalities and treatment gaps and need for mental health care. Nations' stretched health systems are further stretched and challenged by the increase in demand for mental health interventions as a result of the Covid-19 virus pandemic.

Hard and drastic lockdown measures implemented to reduce COVID-19 transmissions and deaths saw the enforcement of physical isolation and distancing become a new reality disrupting natural social interactions.

Parallel to emotional and health implications, large scale socio-economic fallout was witnessed as markets and economies were destabilised. The overwhelming impact of the virus has revealed and exposed the deep inequalities and levels of poverty experienced by many causing further mental distress and vulnerability.

According to WHO's 'Mental Health Atlas' survey, governments spend on average 3% of their health budgets on mental health, ranging from less than 1% in low-income countries to 5% in high-income countries. The WHO has called for the scaling up of investment for support, treatment, psychosocial counselling and antidepressant medication. The WHO state that the returns far outweigh the costs and for every £1 put into scaled up treatment for common mental disorders, there is a return of £4 in improved health and productivity.

Despite hundreds of millions of people around the world living with mental disorders, mental health has remained in the shadows. Despite a growth in mental health awareness, mental health investment has been stagnant across the globe. It is clear that greater movement and action needs to be seen within countries to increase access to mental health for all.

The WFMH state that the spotlight has increased on mental health and the stocktaking of how greater access to mental healthcare can be improved must always be a continuous process. We can always do more to strengthen mental health response and support in our communities. These investments are not purely the government's responsibility, nor should doctors be the only answer for those suffering. These investments are the responsibility of all. More importantly, they indicate that we ourselves are an untapped resource in mental healthcare.

World Mental Health Day is simply not a one-day event! However, it provides the opportunity to maintain a focus on mental health and maintain the attention of governments, policy-makers and all stakeholders to ensure action for greater investment in mental health – making good mental health a reality for all – everyone, everywhere.

World Mental Health Day provides an opportunity for all stakeholders involved and working on mental health issues to talk about their work, and what more needs to be done to make mental health care a reality for people worldwide.

MIND

Mental health problems can affect anyone, any day of the year and World Mental Health Day is a reminder for us all to continue to show our support for better mental health and to start looking after our own mental wellbeing as well.

UK mental health charity 'MIND' say prioritising mental health has never been more important than it is now. That's why this year MIND wants to bring everyone together with their better mental health campaigning. Making positive change can seem hard, especially during uncertain times, and sometimes, it can be hard to know where to start. MIND urges people to take the opportunity to find out more about the MIND mental health initiative and how you can start with one thing.

Mental health is just like physical health: everybody has it and we need to take care of it.

Mental health problems affect around one in four people in any given year. We all need to take care of our mental health and wellbeing whether we have a mental health problem or not. Mental wellbeing describes how you are feeling and how well you can cope with day-to-day life. It can change from moment to moment, day to day, month to month or year to year.

MIND has produced a range of information, guidance and some tips and practical steps people can take to improve and maintain their wellbeing, including making time for yourself, building positive relationships and getting active. MIND has information on both common and rarer problems such as:

- MIND – 'What is Mental Health?' video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AUWhdmKyOE8>
- Depression - <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/types-of-mental-health-problems/depression/about-depression/>
- Anxiety and panic attacks – <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/types-of-mental-health-problems/anxiety-and-panic-attacks/about-anxiety/>
- Schizophrenia- <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/types-of-mental-health-problems/schizophrenia/about-schizophrenia/>
- Bipolar disorder – <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/types-of-mental-health-problems/bipolar-disorder/about-bipolar-disorder/>

Living with a mental health problem can often have an impact on day to day life, making things that others might not think about a bit more difficult. MIND has put together some tips and guides to help people cope with everyday things like money, work, university and more. Work can have a significant impact on our mental health and wellbeing, but there are steps we can take to be mentally healthy at work. Read their information on dealing with stress, managing difficult relationships, asking for support and advice on returning to work if you've had time off with a mental health problem.

- Wellbeing tips – <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/tips-for-everyday-living/wellbeing/wellbeing/>
- Tips for everyday living – <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/tips-for-everyday-living/>
- Tips for staying well at work – <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/tips-for-everyday-living/workplace-mental-health/work-and-mental-health/>

Mental Health Foundation (MHF)

The Mental Health Foundation has produced an excellent guide booklet "MHF Our Best Ever Mental Health Tips" (Backed by Research) and a copy of their guide booklet is attached along with another of their guide booklets "How to Support Mental Health At Work."

The MHF also produce a range of excellent guide books to order:

- How to look after your mental health

- How to support mental health at work
- How to manage and reduce stress
- How to overcome fear and anxiety
- How to look after your mental health using mindfulness
- How to look after your mental health using exercise
- How to sleep better
- How to look after your mental health in later life
- The truth about self-harm

The guide books can be ordered at the following link:

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/publications>

Rethink Mental Health

Rethink Mental Illness campaigns nationally and locally to improve the quality of life for everyone severely affected by mental illness by ensuring their clinical, financial, social, practical and physical health needs are fully met. The charity campaigns to push mental health up the public agenda and campaign to change government policy. They are inviting anyone interested to join in and campaign with them.

Rethink Mental Health support groups are run by volunteers, many of who have lived experience of mental illness either personally or in a caring role. Rethink MH has over one hundred and forty groups meeting across the country growing and developing according to the needs and aspirations of those who use them.

Rethink MH is calling on everyone to share their message that mental health must be a priority across the country. Details on the Charity's support groups, campaigning, advice and information etc is available on the charity's website at:- <https://www.rethink.org>

Samaritans

Samaritans is a registered UK wide charity aimed at providing emotional support to anyone in emotional or mental distress, struggling to cope or at risk of suicide. The core of Samaritans' work is a telephone helpline (116 123), operating 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Samaritans was the first 24-hour telephone helpline to be set up in the UK. In addition, the organisation offers a drop-in service for face-to-face discussion, undertakes outreach at festivals and other outdoor events, trains 'Listeners' to provide support and undertakes research into suicide and emotional health issues. Samaritans receive over 5,000,000 calls for help by phone, email, text, letter etc., and face-to-face at a branch. Samaritans volunteers are given rigorous training to be non-judgmental and empathetic. By listening and asking open questions, Samaritans volunteers try to help people explore their feelings and work out their own way forward.

Samaritans – New “SHUSH” Listening Tips Poster

The Samaritans have produced and launched an excellent new poster and guide “SHUSH listening tips – top tips for becoming a better listener” and a copy of their guide poster is attached.

The charity advise that if you're worried someone might be experiencing suicidal thoughts then the charity would encourage you to ask the person directly as asking someone if they're suicidal won't make things worse. Evidence shows it could protect them. If someone is feeling suicidal, it might be hard to get through to them. They might be distant or distracted or feel disconnected from the world and their own emotions. They might not respond right away. But asking someone directly if they're having suicidal thoughts can give them permission to tell you how they feel. If someone does let you know that they are having suicidal thoughts,

always take them seriously. You don't have to be an expert, just being there to listen and showing you care can help them work through the crisis and what's going on. Let them know they're not a burden and there's always someone they can turn to – whether it's a family member, friend, professional help or a 24/7 helpline like Samaritans. People who have been suicidal have often said it is a relief to talk about thoughts they are experiencing. Just being there to listen and showing you care can help. If they want to talk to someone else about how they are feeling, they can call Samaritans. The key advice from Samaritans is: **It's OK to ask about suicidal thoughts. It could save a life.**

The 'SHUSH' listening tips poster is attached and covers:

Top Tips for becoming a better listener:

S – Show You Care
H – Have Patience
U – Use Open Questions
S – Say It Back
H – Have Courage

'Promoting Good Mental Health In The Workplace Event' - Tuesday 18 October At 10:30am – A Free To Attend, Live, Virtual Event From The Health And Safety Executive (HSE)

Employers have a legal duty to protect workers from stress at work by undertaking a risk assessment and acting on it. Recognising the signs of stress will help employers to take steps to manage, mitigate and prevent the negative effect that stress has on a workforce. In this event the HSE will raise awareness of the preventative measures that organisations can take to identify and manage work-related stress. The process of identifying conditions in the workplace that can cause stress and addressing them before they cause harm is the most effective way of ensuring that workers go home healthy and safe at the end of every working day. This strong focus on worker health and safety, in turn, benefits organisational performance. This event will give participants access to HSE experts and the HSE risk management approach. NEBOSH and TSO will join to highlight official HSE training, resources, products and services. After the presentations, expert panel members will answer questions to provide further advice on how to identify and reduce risks, in order to prevent harm. (See LTB 361/22).

Registration for this free to attend event is by completing the form on this webpage link:

<https://events.streamgo.live/promoting-good-mental-health-in-the-workplace/register>

Enquiries contact: estie@westernbusiness.media or call on **01342 314 300**

This is a virtual on-online event at 10:30am on Tuesday 18 October 2022.

Mental Health Awareness and Mental Health First Aid Training Courses for CWU Reps

The Union provides Mental Health Awareness and Mental Health First Aid Training Courses in both face to face and on-line formats. Contact the CWU HQ Equality, Education and Training Department for further information, details, dates and arrangements.

Royal Mail Group – 'First Class Support'

Royal Mail Group members can access the fully confidential and independent 'First Class Support' via the website at: <https://royal-mail-group-limited.lifeworks.com/>. A helpline service is also available 24/7 (Tel: 0345 266 5060). Whether you need to speak to someone in the moment, access counselling support, or something else, instant support across all areas of wellbeing including physical health, mental health, financial wellbeing as well as practical home and work issues are available. Members' Registration is via their RMG-pay number i.e., RMG-12345678.

Website Links:

- HSE Guide to Work-Related Stress – <https://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/>
- NHS Every Mind Matters – Dealing With Stress At Work – <https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/mental-health-issues/stress/>
- World Health Organisation (WHO) – <https://www.who.int/news-room/detail/09-09-2019-suicide-one-person-dies-every-40-seconds>
- International Association for Suicide Prevention (IASP) – <https://www.iasp.info/>
- World Federation For Mental Health (WFMH) – <https://wfmh.global/>
- United For Global Mental Health (UFGMH) – <https://www.unitedgmh.org/>
- MIND – <https://www.mind.org.uk/get-involved/world-mental-health-day/>
- SAMARITANS – <https://www.samaritans.org/>
- Mental Health Foundation (MHF) – <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/>
- Rethink Mental Illness – <https://www.rethink.org/get-involved/awareness-days-and-events/world-mental-health-day/>

Samaritans 24 Hour Helpline

The Samaritans message is - Whatever you're going through, a Samaritan will face it with you, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. **Call 116 123 for free**

Attachments:

- SAMARITANS – 'SHUSH' Listening Tips Poster – Top Tips For Becoming A Better Listener
- MENTAL HEALTH FOUNDATION (MHF) – Our Best Mental Health Tips Guide Booklet
- MENTAL HEALTH FOUNDATION (MHF) – How To Support Mental Health At Work Guide Booklet

Associated LTBs

- LTB 361/22 Promoting Good Mental Health in the Workplace Free Virtual HSE Event on 18 October 2022
- LTB 359/22 World Suicide Prevention Day
- LTB 263/22 LRD New Booklet - Stress, Mental Health Guide For Trade Unionists
- LTB 219/22 Mental Health Awareness Week May 2022
- LTB 165/22 Stress Awareness Month April 2022
- LTB 142/22 CWU Wins Two Major Mental Health Awards
- LTB 067/22 Mental Health First Aid Training

Yours sincerely



Dave Joyce
National Health, Safety & Environment Officer