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**Time to Talk Day 2018 - Thursday 1 February - "Time To Change" Campaigning To End Mental Health Discrimination and To Change The Way We Act and Think About Mental Health:**

**To: All Branches**

Dear Colleagues,

Time to Talk Day 2018 will take place on Thursday 1 February and the CWU will be supporting the event. Time to Talk Day resources are set out in this Letter to Branches along with attachments and links to assist Reps and Members participate and support the campaign day and get involved ongoing.

It's easy to think there's no right place to talk about mental health. But the more we talk about it, the better life is for all of us.

Too many people with mental health problems are made to feel isolated, worthless and ashamed. Time to Talk Day is a chance for all of us to be more open about mental health – to talk, to listen, to change lives.

Wherever you are – at home, at work or participating in clubs, hobbies, pastimes and leisure activities – have your conversation about mental health this Time to Talk Day.

Why not plan a local workplace event, take a look at the attached Time To Talk communications packs for organisations, employers and people championing the cause.

If you are planning to get involved and organise something in your Branch area workplaces, or at home or in the community with others, the communications packs can help.

For the first time this year sister campaigns; Time To Change Wales, See Me Scotland and Change Your Mind Northern Ireland are joining in and supporting 'Time To Change Day'.

It's easy to think there's no right place to talk about mental health. But the more we talk about it, the better life is for all of us.

Mental health problems affects one in four of us yet people are still afraid to talk about it. For people with mental health problems not being able to talk about it can be one of the worst parts of the illness. So by getting people talking about mental health we can break down stereotypes, improve relationships, aid recovery and take the stigma out of something that affects us all.

Mental health problems can come about from any number of stresses and worries that all of us have at some time or another in our lives. Perhaps it's relationship problems, homelessness, job stress or money worries. It's important to recognise when things are getting serious. This is usually when the problem begins to interfere with our ability to cope day to day.

It's also important to remember that, with the right support, most people manage their mental health problems successfully and lead fulfilling lives.

The most common mental health problems include addictions, anxiety, depression, eating disorders. One in four people will experience a mental health problem at some point in their lives. That's a lot of people. Most of the time, people cope ok and find ways to switch off, chill out and relax. But when things start to take over and get on top of us, it can develop into something we need specialist help with. Everyone has bad days and some of the symptoms of mental health problems may not immediately seem obvious. Take a look at the list below, and if some of the things sound familiar, that you or a friend or colleague has been experiencing for a few weeks or more, something may need to be done:

- Problems getting to sleep, or waking up early in the morning and not being able to get back to sleep again.
- Feeling really knackered even when you haven't done much.
- Aches and pains for no apparent reason or feeling run down.
- Poor appetite.
- Not feeling like going out.
- Not being interested in the things you used to be.
- Feeling anxious and irritable for no real reason, or having difficulty managing your anger and 'flying off the handle'.
- Repeatedly getting headaches or migraines.

If you're concerned about yours or someone else's mental health, contact and talk to your GP or contact one of the groups listed below. If the person concerned wants to talk it over first, give one of the groups listed below a call. The people on the helplines are non-judgemental and will give individuals the chance to explain the way they feel, and give help on what to do next.

Too often, people who experience a mental health problem are also left with the burden to talk about mental health in the wider sense. Time to Talk Day encourages everyone to talk about mental health. And this year the organisers propose that Any Place is the Right Place to talk about mental health, whether you are at home, at work or participating in leisure activities.

You can talk about mental health at work. Thursday 1 February is Time to Talk Day – a day when everyone is encouraged to have a conversation about mental health. We know that it benefits all of us to talk about mental health. "Time to Talk Day" is run by "Time to Change" and the aim is to help spread the word that anywhere can be the right place to talk about mental health – including at work. Time to Change is England's biggest programme to challenge mental health stigma and discrimination and is run by the charities "Mind" and "Rethink Mental Illness". There are posters and top tips cards giving ideas on how to start conversations. There is also information about how to support colleagues, and where to go if they need support.

It's great to start the conversation in the workplace and we hope that the campaign materials and ideas help CWU Branches, Health and Safety Reps, Branch and local Reps to do this. Sometimes this can mean that people currently experiencing mental health problems will need some support as sensitive conversations may bring up difficult things. We would encourage you to highlight the support tools that are currently available from employees, Mental Health Charities, NHS etc. If anyone you know is experiencing mental health problems or needs

urgent support, there are lots of places they can go to for help. "Time to Change" is focusing on changing how we all think and act about mental health.

### **"The Time to Change Employer Pledge"**

Remember, Royal Mail, BT and Santander are amongst the employers that have signed the 'Pledge with the CWU. When signing the Time To Change Pledge employers demonstrate their commitment to change how the organisation thinks and acts about mental health in the workplace and pledges to:-

- Demonstrate senior level buy-in
- Demonstrate accountability and recruit employee champions
- Raise awareness
- Have policies to address mental health in the workplace
- Equip managers to have conversations about mental health
- Ask employees to share their personal experiences with mental health problems
- Provide information about mental health and signpost to support services
- Make sure that employees who are facing these problems get supported and feel supported

**Some local managers may need reminding of this commitment so on "Time To Talk Day 2018" as CWU Reps, if nothing else, why not talk to them and inform them or remind them of the pledge on "Time To Talk Day".**

### **Emergency Mental Health Support For Those In Crisis**

Emergency support for people in crisis is available from a number of charity organisations specialising in mental health crisis situations, providing confidential, non-judgmental emotional support for people experiencing feelings of distress or despair, including those that could lead to suicide. They are listed here:

**Samaritans** Telephone: 116 123 (Free 24 hours a day)

**Mind** Infoline Telephone: 0300 123 3393 (9am-5pm Monday to Friday)

**Rethink Mental Illness** Advice Line Telephone: 0300 5000 927 (10am-2pm Monday to Friday)

**SANE** - Saneline Telephone: 0845 767 8000 (6pm-11pm)

**PAPYRUS** (Prevention of Young Suicides) - HOPELineUK: 0800 068 41 41 (Mon-Fri 10am-10pm, Sat-Sun 2pm-10pm, Bank Holidays 2pm-5pm)

**CALM** (Campaign Against Living Miserably) dedicated to preventing male suicide. Telephone: 0800585858

### **'Time to Change' Champions e-learning!**

Time to Change provides access to useful e-learning information for those who wish to champion the campaign and it can be useful for anyone wishing to learn more. Each module is stand alone and anyone is free to take whichever modules they are interested in as follows:-

Module 1: Time to Change Champions Induction

Module 2: Handing out Time to Change Materials

Module 3: Running a Time to Change Coffee Morning

Module 4: Being a Champion Every Day

Module 5: Social Contact

Module 6: Speaking Out on Social Media

Module 7: Stigma and Discrimination: the Facts

**These are accessed at the following link:**

**<https://www.time-to-change.org.uk/champions/e-learning>**

**Attachments:-**



- MIND Managers Guide to Supporting Staff With Mental Health Problems
- Time To Talk Day Employers Communications Pack
- Time To Talk Day Champions Communications Pack
- Time To Change - Be In Your Colleagues Corner Poster
- Time To Talk Day – CWU Poster

Yours sincerely



**Dave Joyce**  
National Health, Safety & Environment Officer

