



MHFA England



MEDIA GROUP

Mental Health First Aid England

49-51 East Road

London N1 6AH

+44 (0)20 7250 8062

info@mhfaengland.org

www.mhfaengland.org

From:

Open letter from business, education and mental health leaders

Correspondence contact: Professor Mark Watson-Gandy

Chairman

Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) England

49-51 East Road

London N1 6AH

To:

The Rt. Honourable Theresa May MP

Prime Minister

Office of the Prime Minister

10 Downing Street

London SW1A 2AA

Date: 18 November 2018

Dear Prime Minister,

Re: Amendment to the Health and Safety at Work first aid regulations

We as the Chairman of Mental Health First Aid England and CEO of Bauer Media Group, along with leaders of some of the UK's biggest employers, write to ask that the Government prioritises its manifesto pledge to amend the Health and Safety regulations, so that workplaces are required to make provision for mental as well as physical first aid.

The commitment to explicitly include mental health in the First Aid regulations is supported by both employers and by the wider public. Since May 2018 over 200,000 people have signed the Bauer Media change.org petition calling on the Government to make mental health first aid mandatory in all workplaces.

There are both economic and human reasons for protecting mental health in the workplace and combined, these reasons present a powerful case for updating the law.

Each year, workplace mental health issues cost the UK economy almost £35 billion,¹ with 15.4 million working days lost to work-related stress, depression or anxiety.² But the cost is

not just financial, because left untreated mental ill health impacts a person's relationships with friends and family and ultimately their quality of life.

Requiring employers to implement some basic steps to protect an employee's mental health would reduce these impacts.

As an employer we have a duty of care to our staff and whilst some employers are at the forefront of change, equalising their number of mental health first aiders with physical first aiders, we cannot afford to leave anyone behind. Cost cannot be a reason for objections because in the long run it is inevitable that making mental health first aid in the workplace mandatory will save money.

Success will ensure employees across the country can access a trained staff member to receive initial support and guidance if they are dealing with a mental health issue at work. Success will ensure every employee has the right to a mentally healthy environment. Success will mean we can finally break the stigma of mental health in the workplace.

We all have mental health just as we have physical health. So please enact a change in the law to reflect this.

Yours faithfully,



Professor Mark Watson-Gandy
Chairman
Mental Health First Aid England



Paul Keenan
CEO
Bauer Media Group

Alastair Campbell

Association of Colleges, David Hughes, Chief Executive

British Independent Retailers Association, Andrew Goodacre, CEO

Bowmer & Kirkland, John Kirkland, Chairman

Building Mental Health, Martin Coyd OBE, Director

Bupa, David Hynam, UK CEO

Business in the Community, Amanda Mackenzie OBE, CEO

Centre for Mental Health, Sarah Hughes, CEO

The Chartered Institute of Building, Chris Blythe, Chief Executive

City Mental Health Alliance, Poppy Jaman OBE, CEO

The City UK, Miles Celic, CEO

Channel 4, Jonathan Allan, Chief Commercial Officer

Chartered Management Institute, Ann Francke, CEO
Community Union, Roy Rickhuss, General Secretary
Construction Industry Council, Graham Watts OBE, Chief Executive
Direct Line Group, Simon Linares, HR Director
Exterion Media, Jason Cotterrell, Managing Director
Ford of Britain, Andy Barratt, Chair and Managing Director
Guild HE, Gordon McKenzie, Chief Executive
Hogan Lovells, Susan Bright, Managing Partner
Kelly Hoppen MBE, Business Owner, Author, Designer
LawCare, Elizabeth Rimmer, CEO
Lord Sugar
Mace, Mark Reynolds, CEO
MediaCom UK, Josh Kricheski, CEO
Mental Health Nurses Association, Evri Anagnostara, Chair
NASUWT - The Teachers' Union, Chris Keates, General Secretary
NABS, Sam Orrin, Senior Partnerships Manager
Natasha Devon MBE
Otsuka, Ole Vahlgren, President and CEO
PRCA, Francis Ingham, Director General
Professor Lord Patel of Bradford OBE
Publicis Media, Sue Frogley, CEO
PwC, Kevin Ellis, Chairman and Senior Partner
Reed Smith, Carolyn Pepper, Partner
retailTRUST, Richard Boland, CEO
Rethink Mental Illness, Mark Winstanley, CEO
Royal Mail, Dr Shaun Davis, Global Director of Safety, Health, Wellbeing & Sustainability
SANE, Marjorie Wallace CBE, CEO
Schroders, Peter Harrison, Group Chief Executive
Standard Chartered, Tracy Clarke, CEO, Europe & Americas
Starcom, Jodie Stranger, CEO UK Group & President Global Clients EMEA
St John Ambulance, Martin Houghton-Brown, Chief Executive
Student Minds, Rosie Tressler, CEO
7 Stars, Jenny Biggam, Co-founder

Thames Water, Karl Simons, Chief Health, Safety & Security Officer

Three UK, David Dyson, Chief Executive

Unite the Union, Len McCluskey, General Secretary

Universities UK, Alistair Jarvis, CEO

University of the Arts London, Marie Kan, Head of Service Counselling, Health Advice and Chaplaincy

Weight Watchers, Chris Stirk, Senior VP and General Manager

Wavemaker UK, Paul Hutchinson, CEO

WHSmith, Stephen Clarke, CEO

Young Minds, Emma Thomas, Chief Executive

¹ www.centreformentalhealth.org.uk/News/mental-health-problems-at-work-cost-uk-economy-349bn-last-year-says-centre-for-mental-health

² www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/overall/hssh1718.pdf