Edinburgh Napier University Mental Health Champions Network

Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing

The University is committed to placing health and wellbeing at the heart of the experience of working at the University and to ensure that all members of staff are able to work in a supportive, health-promoting and caring environment, where they are valued and respected.

The university provides varied support and tools for colleagues experiencing mental health issues and this information is detailed on the staff intranet. There is also support and information dedicated towards Line Managers to help them provide support to their staff.

The university is also keen to remove the stigma of mental ill health and offer support to Line Managers and staff to seek help and in some cases, notify HR of sickness absence attributed to mental health and wellbeing. This is to ensure that staff receive the proper support to help them recover and return to or continue to attend the workplace feeling confident.

Who can become a Mental Health Champion?

Colleagues who have completed the 12 hour Scotland's' Mental Health First Aid (SMHFA) course and received the completion certificate can volunteer to become a Champion. Those who have completed the course are asked if they wish to become a volunteer and have their names and details added to the Campus Champion list.

See appendix for details of what is Mental Health First Aid and details of Scotland's' Mental Health First Aid (SMHFA) course.

What is a Mental Health Champion?

Mental Health Champions are a point of contact for an employee who is experiencing a mental health issue or emotional distress, helping the person get appropriate help, and also provide early intervention for someone who may be developing a mental health issue. A Mental Health Champion is not expected to act as a counsellor or share their own experiences (if they are not comfortable doing so).

A Mental Health Champion also takes action to raise awareness of mental health problems amongst staff, challenges mental health stigma, and provides peer support to colleagues.

Why do we need Champions?

We all have mental health just as we have physical health and some people may experience problems, some may be minor and temporary while some may be serious and all consuming. Mental

health problems are very common with 1 in 4 people experiencing poor mental health in any year, meaning that most people are likely to know someone who has personal experience of mental health problems within their family, friend or work circles.

At Edinburgh Napier, almost 36% of absences from work are caused my mental health problems which includes workplace stress. The university is committed to reducing the number of mental health problems caused by the workplace and while it cannot stop mental health caused by personal circumstances, the university is keen to support staff who are experiencing issues.

Most people know very little about mental health and unfortunately, stigma is still an issue. Many people say they have not told colleagues about their mental health problems due to a fear they would be treated differently or thought less of and therefore do not seek the appropriate help.

What do Champions do?

A Mental Health Champion can be supportive in a number of ways;
- Follow the SMHFA steps (ALGEE) if a person is in immediate crisis or life threatening situation
- Understand and recognise the signs of mental health problems/conditions
- If you see a colleague in (non-life threatening) distress, provide comfort to understand the situation
- Signpost the person to the university support tools which also details external support tools
- Provide a listening ear (sometimes that is all people want and need)
- Raise awareness of mental health and make it part of normal conversation to help tackle stigma

How does the Network operate?

The university promotes the Mental Health Champion Network through a number of channels;

- Mental Health Champion Network list is on the staff intranet divided into Campus support
- Mental Health Champion's will promote they are a Champion by having the following signature on their email; *I'm a Mental Health First Aider. You're welcome to talk to me about anything.*
- During induction, staff will be informed about the mental health & wellbeing support available and this will include the Mental Health Champion Network

If a colleague approaches a Mental Health Champion for support the Mental Health Champion should offer to meet them/speak with them in the most comfortable (workplace) environment for the colleague within core working hours.

Colleagues approaching a Mental Health Champion should be confident that the conversation is confidential. However, if the Champion has a serious concern for the colleague's safety and wellbeing then the standard University Safeguarding Policy guidelines apply and the Champion can seek advice from HR.

Mental Health Champion Campus List

Sighthill Campus

Name	School/Professional Services area	Phone number	Email
Claire Biggar	Principal's Office	X 6401	c.biggar@napier.ac.uk
Dr Georgios Andronikos	School of Applied Sciences	X 3427	G.Andronikos@napier.ac.uk
Graham Short	Principal's Office	X 6277	G.Short@napier.ac.uk
Sadie Kemp	School Applied Sciences		S.Kemp@napier.ac.uk
Dr James R Munro	School Applied Sciences	X 3472	J.Munro@napier.ac.uk
Josephine Brown	School Applied Sciences		J.Brown5@napier.ac.uk
Mel Kinchant	Academic Skills	X 2261	M.Kinchant@napier.ac.uk
Dr Amanda Pitkethly	School Applied Sciences	X 3201	A.Pitkethly@napier.ac.uk
Liz Young	Health & Safety Team	X 6373	l.young@napier.ac.uk

Craiglockhart Campus

Name	School/Professional Services area	Phone number	Email
Tori Spratt	The Business School	X 4440	v.spratt@napier.ac.uk
Eleni Theodoraki	The Business School	X 4717	E.Theodoraki@napier.ac.uk
Lesley McRobb	Information Services	X 2588	L.McRobb@napier.ac.uk

Merchiston Campus

Name	School/Professional Services area	Phone number	Email
Dr Suha Jaradat	School of Engineering & the Built Environment	X 2489	S.Jaradat@napier.ac.uk

Bainfield Student Accommodation

Name	School/Professional Services area	Phone number	Email
Lee Mangan	Property & Facilities	X 3713	l.mangan@napier.ac.uk
Brydon Connolly	Property & Facilities	X 3497	b.connolly@napier.ac.uk

Appendix

What is Mental Health First Aid?

Mental Health First Aid, like any other type of first aid, is the help given to a person before appropriate professional help or treatment can be obtained.

First aid of any type has the following aims;

1. To preserve life
2. To prevent deterioration of any injury or illness
3. To provide healing
4. To provide comfort to the person who is ill, injured or distressed

Mental health first aid is the help given to someone experiencing a mental health problem before other help can be accessed.

The aims of Mental Health First Aid are;

1. To preserve life
2. To provide help to prevent the mental health problem or crisis developing into a more serious state
3. To promote the recovery of good mental health
4. To provide comfort to a person experiencing distress
5. To promote understanding of mental health issues

SMHFA does not teach people to the therapists. However, it does train people in;

- How to ask about suicide
- How to recognise the signs of mental health problems or distress
- How to provide initial help
- How to guide a person towards appropriate professional help

http://www.smhfa.com/