

**Brachers Bitesize in partnership with West Kent  
Mind: Supporting employees' mental health**  
Thursday 14 October 2021

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**Host:**

Louise Brenlund, Brachers LLP

**Guest speaker:**

Ceri Hodgkiss, West Kent Mind

## Today's presenters



**Louise Brenlund | Senior Associate - Employment, Brachers LLP**

[LouiseBrenlund@brachers.co.uk](mailto:LouiseBrenlund@brachers.co.uk) | [Louise Brenlund](#) | [LinkedIn](#)

Louise qualified in 2005 and joined Brachers in 2010. She advises on all aspects of employment law, mainly acting for employers but also taking on complex, high-value employee claims work.

Louise is passionate about mental health and chairs Brachers' internal employee wellbeing group.



**Ceri Hodgkiss | West Kent Mind**

[Ceri.Hodgkiss@westkentmind.org.uk](mailto:Ceri.Hodgkiss@westkentmind.org.uk)

Ceri is Training Manager at West Kent Mind. She has been designing and delivering training courses, workshops and talks for the charity since 2019.

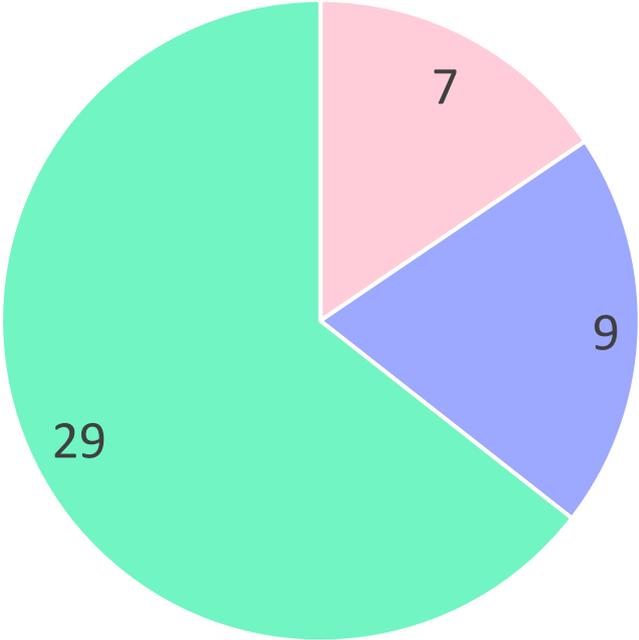
Ceri is a Mental Health First Aid Instructor and a volunteer for Shout 85258, the text support service.



- **Creating a mentally healthy workplace**
- **Noticing changes in staff wellbeing**
- **Practical tools for effective conversations**

# The cost of mental ill health

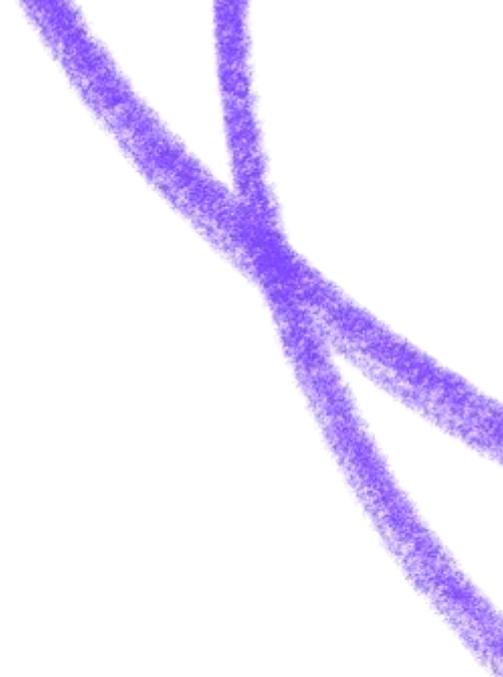
£ billion



■ Sickness absence   ■ Staff turnover   ■ Presenteeism

**The good news**

**5:1**



# Creating a mentally healthy workplace

- Prioritise and promote wellbeing
- Equip managers and staff with the skills to support themselves and others
- Provide access to – and information about – support



**Mental health is part of our overall health. It's how we feel, think and behave. How we cope with the ups and downs of everyday life.**



# Noticing changes

- **Mood** – responding differently; negativity / negative self-talk; low morale/mood; less engaged; loss in confidence; preoccupied; irritable; angry; ‘brave face’
- **Behaviour** – working longer; change in working patterns; timekeeping; change in performance or results; distracted; lack of focus; withdrawal; avoidance; loss of interest in social activities; change in appetite; frequent toilet trips; snappy; frequent, short notice or unexplained absences
- **Physical** – frequent physical health complaints e.g. headaches, stomach problems, back & neck pain; showing signs of fatigue; changes in appearance; weight loss or gain

# Enabling conversations

- Consider your approach
- Create a safe & supportive environment
- Be patient and go at their pace
- Show empathy
- Resist the urge to rescue
- Practice active listening

# Some helpful questions

- How long have you been feeling like this?
- Have you felt like this before?
- If so, what helped?
- How is your physical health and your sleep?
- What have you tried?
- What else might help?
- Who else could help?

# Resources and support

- GP
- West Kent Mind
- NHS Every Mind Matters
- Release the Pressure – call 0800 107 0160
- Samaritans.org – call free on 116 123
- Text Shout to 85258 (free on most networks) for text support from a trained volunteer
- Wellness Action Plans
- HSE Talking Toolkit



# Self-care





# Text to donate!

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70085

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70085

To donate £10 text WKM10  
to 70085

\*Texts cost donation amount plus one  
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Any Questions?

**Brachers**  
With you all the way



## About Brachers' Employment team

Our [Employment and HR team](#) take pride in delivering employment law and HR services that are tailored to your needs. We are dedicated to listening and learning about your business to understand the challenges you face, your ambitions, and how to retain your key asset, your people.

We are one of the largest employment and HR teams in the South East, working alongside businesses with 60,000 employees in the region.

We appreciate that business is about taking managed risks. Our commitment to you is that we will not sit on the fence but will make recommendations using the benefit of our judgment and experience.

## Book a free online consultation

If you would like more information on how we can support you with the issues covered in this webinar, [book a 30-minute online appointment](#) with a lawyer from our Employment team for an initial discussion on your needs and to find out how we can help.



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