



IT IS TIME TO PRIORITISE
MENTAL HEALTH IN THE WORKPLACE

World Mental Health Day 10 October 2024

WMHD CAMPAIGN TOOLKIT 2024

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#WorldMentalHealthDay #WMHD2024



Message from the President

“It is time to Prioritize Mental Health in the Workplace”

Chosen through a global vote involving WFMH members, stakeholders, and supporters, this year’s theme, **“It is Time to Prioritize Mental Health in the Workplace”**, is a call to action that resonates worldwide. With over 2000 participants from 116 countries, the selection process was truly inclusive, and the resulting theme reflects the awareness of an urgent need and profound opportunity.

Employed adults spend more time working than any other activity during their waking hours. In a myriad ways, and at its best, work can provide a livelihood and be a source of meaning, purpose, and joy. However, for too many people, work falls far short of its potential, failing to enhance our lives and detracting from our mental health and well-being in ways that result in excessive distress and mental ill health.

Mental health issues, such as depression and anxiety, are pervasive in workplaces globally, impacting productivity, attendance, and overall performance. When left untreated, the staggering economic cost is estimated at US\$1 trillion annually by the WHO.

The COVID-19 pandemic pulled the curtain back on the dramatic need to address mental health issues in the workplace. Today, around the world, enlightened leaders strive to meet their duty of care, recognizing that addressing the mental health needs of their workforce is not only beneficial for individuals but also for healthy and high-performing organizations.

The data consistently demonstrate that prioritizing workplace mental health is good for people, companies, and communities.

World Mental Health Day 2024 will highlight various aspects of mental health at work, from workplace conditions and stress management to the importance of social inclusion and empowerment. The goal is clear: to champion mental health in the workplace and build best



practices that create cultures where workers have the potential to contribute productively and thrive.

As WFMH President, I am excited about global collaboration and partnership with all stakeholders, including business corporations, to make a tangible difference. Altogether, let us prioritize mental health in the workplace and create a brighter future for all.

Tsuyoshi Akiyama

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WFMH President

World Mental Health Day 2024 Global Briefing

“It Is Time To Prioritise Mental Health In The Workplace”

On 10 October 2024 we will be celebrating World Mental Health Day with the theme **‘It is Time to Prioritise Mental Health in the Workplace’** chosen by a global vote open to the public, including World Federation for Mental Health (WFMH) members, stakeholders, and supporters.

The World Federation for Mental Health (WFMH) was established in 1948, is the oldest mental health advocacy organisation in special consultative status with the United Nations since 1963 and has been admitted into official relations with the World Health Organization (WHO).



From its inception, WFMH stressed the importance of mental health and world citizenship as a priority for all governments. WFMH’s role is in influencing how this can be achieved through collaboration with a range of different agencies such as the United Nations, UNESCO (United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation), WHO (World Health Organization), food and agricultural organisations, ILO (International Labour Office) and other organisations and institutions with an interest in promoting mental health and world citizenship. In 1992, in pursuit of these founding objectives, WFMH founded an annual World Mental Health Day on 10 October to expand education and advocacy about mental health.

The 2024 World Mental Health Day theme **‘It is Time to Prioritise Mental Health in the Workplace’** provides us with an opportunity to re-ignite our efforts to promote global citizenship and mental health awareness by making our workplaces a healthier place, especially as 60% of the global population is in employment and employees spend 60% of their time in the workplace.

The recognition that work is important to well-being is not new. Over five thousand years ago people in the Egyptian civilisation organised their lives around work and families and believed

that this led to a healthy life. Modern research supports this, and helping people with employment should be considered a standard mental health wellbeing intervention especially as only 10-15% of people with serious mental health problems are in employment.

We need to place more emphasis on the link between mental health well-being and employment and re-emphasize the importance of employment support as part of the treatment offered to people with mental illness. Imagine the benefits of increasing rates of employment amongst those with a serious mental health problem from 10% to 50% – this will result in benefits to society by making people less reliant on state benefits and decrease mental health stigma by increasing social inclusion of people with a mental health difficulty.

A 2020 systematic review found that high unemployment rates in young people are associated with long term physical, mental health, and social difficulties. These problems include cardiovascular disease, an increase in criminal behaviour, poor lifestyle choices, increased rates of smoking, alcohol use and substance use, increased rates of suicidal behaviour and increased mortality from alcohol related problems.

In general, even though employment is positive, some working patterns can be detrimental for health when they lead to increased stressors including long work hours, night shifts and weekend work when there are not enough rest periods or being around harmful substances. Such stressors are associated with burn-out and other stress-related mental health problems, absenteeism and presenteeism, and reductions in productivity with a personal and societal cost.

Despite knowing that employment when work conditions are favourable is good, many people who have experienced mental health difficulties choose not to disclose these issues to employers because of fear of stigma and discrimination.

We need employment laws that adequately protect and support people who disclose and have mental health difficulties. Mental health should be a globally protected characteristic enabling the development of healthier more supportive workplaces. We all have the right to a safe and healthy environment at work. Employment is good and supports mental well-being. Being productive and not isolated also decreases risk factors for suicide.

The global community needs to act urgently to ensure that the workplace is a healthy place where peoples' mental health and well-being can flourish and for employers, productivity can be enhanced.

This will mean addressing inequality and parity issues and employment including gender, race, and health-related disability while also recognising that home is increasingly a workplace, especially since the recent Covid 19 pandemic.

Mental health and employment are important. The bidirectional relationship between mental health and the workplace is crucial to understand. Even the healthiest employees can suffer physically and mentally in an unhealthy work environment. Prioritizing mental health in the

workplace is essential for fostering a productive and supportive atmosphere. When employers actively address mental well-being, it results in reduced stress, lower absenteeism, and increased employee engagement. By implementing policies such as flexible work hours, providing access to mental health resources, and encouraging open conversations about mental health, companies can cultivate a culture of care that boosts morale and enhances overall performance and innovation. Investing in mental health is not just compassionate—it is a strategic business decision that benefits everyone.

I am incredibly grateful to the global citizens that have helped WFMH in choosing this year's global campaign theme, thanks also to WFMH Executives and Board Members including those who have advised the Secretary-General and contributed to this brief.

We invite you to join this year's World Mental Health Day campaign.

Gabriel Ivbijaro

Professor Gabriel Ivbijaro MBE JP

WFMH Secretary-General

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22 May 2024

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Be a Partner - Join us in this year's campaign.

Campaign Hashtags and Acronyms

#WFMHWorldMentalHealthDay #WMHD2024 #WorkplaceMentalHealth
#PrioritizeMentalHealthintheWorkplace #MentalHealthintheWorkplace
#WorldMentalHealthDay2024 #WorkplaceWellness

Campaign Links

[WMHD Website](#) | [WFMH Instagram](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Facebook](#) | [LinkedIn](#) | [YouTube](#)

For queries, please email us at: wmhdofficial@wfmh.global

How to Organize a Demonstration in Support of Mental Health

We have gathered some general information for you to use as your plan for the demonstrations for Mental Health and World Mental Health Day. Please note that requirements are different in every country and community – please find out the laws and requirements for your particular area and avoid any legal issues that might disrupt or cancel your demonstration. The different types of demonstrations that we are encouraging are:

Vigil

These are gatherings where people stay in one place. They are generally solemn and reflective and intended as a peaceful way of honoring or highlighting a person or group of persons or a subject of great concern.

March

A march is a gathering of people who move from one designated point to a pre-decided destination. Marches are good if you have a large crowd or when you want to cover a large area.

Bicycle Rally

It is a peaceful demonstration/gathering of cyclists, who travel in an organised manner and on a pre-determined route to spread awareness about a particular subject. Bicycle rallies are great if you want to cover a much larger area. You can tie-up with cycling clubs in your city to gather support and have a bigger turnout.

Digital Engagement

This will include organizing virtual marches for maximum engagement and outreach, webinars, web-conferences, activities based on expressive arts open to virtual participation, and online public education campaigns.

Preparations Required

1. Pick a date (10/10/2024 would be great and most effective!) and secure a location. Check to see if you need a permit or some type of permission to hold your March or Vigil or Bike Rally in public. Please note that it will be critical to know your rights regarding any type of public gathering. Pick a heavily populated route or public gathering point.
2. Decide on your cause and the message you want to send to those watching. Make it simple, peaceful and strong. You can make banners, signs and handouts to spread your message. Please ensure that all such displays focus on the message that you seek to spread, being strong yet peaceful, spelled correctly and visually big enough to catch people's attention.
3. Plan and schedule speakers to address your crowd. You can schedule speakers to start your event, end your event or both. Keep the speeches short and to the point, remember this is a demonstration not a symposium.
4. Please ensure that your material is socially and culturally relevant and acceptable. You may also highlight inspirational stories of local people's struggles and successes in dealing with their mental illnesses (after taking their due consent) which may inspire more and more people to reach out and seek help.
5. Get the word out! Contact your advocates, friends, partners, etc. The idea is to try and include as many groups as possible to show the strength and solidarity within the community. Creating a unified coalition among different groups (mental health groups and professionals, medical groups, families, patients, doctors, nurses, etc.) is essential to creating a broad-based social movement and getting the most attention.
6. Assign tasks and determine roles for all involved. If working with different groups, ensure that you bring all leaders and frontrunners together to utilize and unify everyone's abilities, networks, and message.

This could be the single largest advocacy effort for mental illness across the globe! We hope you will join in and do everything you can to show your support. Be it 5 people or 500 people, we can all make a difference if we initiate action and just get the ball rolling!

7. Contact the media and write press releases announcing your plans. Please ensure to include the **'who, what, when, where'** information and be sure that all facts about your demonstration are available when you interact with the media.
8. Be sure to take pictures, keep notes of the entire event and send all your information to wmhdofficial@wfmh.global when you are done, so that we can show the world that we are united and we won't keep silent any longer and make sure that our voices are heard!

This could be the single largest advocacy effort for mental illness across the globe! We hope you will join in and do everything you can to show your support. Be it 5 people or 500 people, we can all make a difference if we initiate action and just get the ball rolling!

Effective slogans

- Highlight the importance of the issue
- Put a “face” on the issue
- Address specific audience
- Reflect an understanding of what would motivate change
- Are culturally relevant and sensitive
- Are also in native/vernacular languages
- Are memorable

Examples

- Mental Health Matters At Work
- Prioritize Mental Health
- It is time to focus on Workplace Wellness
- Employee Wellbeing Matters
- Healthy Workforce is the Best Workforce
- Mental Health and Well-Being for All - A Global Priority
- Mental Health Matters
- Healthy Mind, Healthy Body
- Dignity in Mental Health Matters.
- Nothing About Us Without Us
- March for Mental Health Reform!
- ALL Illnesses Deserve the Same Care and Treatment!
- Close to 1 Billion People are Living with a Mental Disorder...
- Look Around You — Do the Math.
- There is No Health without Mental Health!
- Mental Health Discrimination: Open Your Eyes to Our Reality
- Symptoms are not a Barrier to Recovery – Attitude Is
- I Need You and You Need Me
- Mental Health is Our Biggest Wealth
- Mental Health is Everybody’s Business
- Look After Your Mental Health
- Look Up! Look Out! Look Forward!
- Celebrate World Mental Health Day – Open Your Mind!

World Mental Health Day 2024

Sample Proclamation

WHEREAS, mental health is an essential component of overall well-being, and promoting mental health awareness is crucial for fostering supportive and inclusive communities; and

WHEREAS, the workplace plays a significant role in shaping individuals' mental health, and prioritizing mental health in the workplace leads to improved employee well-being, productivity, and overall organizational success; and

WHEREAS, as per the World Health Organisation, the global economy suffers an annual loss of approximately US\$1 trillion in productivity due to depression and anxiety alone;

WHEREAS, it is imperative to reduce stigma and discrimination at the workplace towards people with mental health issues;

WHEREAS, it is vital to promote awareness and education of employers and employees about the importance of mental well-being, in order to develop and implement workplace mental health policies that prioritize the mental well-being of employees,

WHEREAS, it is essential to create supportive work environments, to develop and promote employee assistance programs, to address workplace stressors and to promote peer support networks and encourage work life balance.

WHEREAS, it is imperative to recognize the impact of mental health on individuals, families, and communities, and to reduce stigma surrounding mental illness at workplace and elsewhere through education, advocacy, and support; and

WHEREAS, World Mental Health Day serves as an opportunity to raise awareness, promote understanding, and advocate for policies and initiatives that support mental health and well-being for all;

WHEREAS, close to 1 billion people around the world are living with a mental disorder and relatively few people around the world have access to quality mental health care;

WHEREAS, the global community and workforce is reeling under the effects of economic downturns, work from home situations, wars, displacement, and the climate emergency, all of which have adversely impacted the well-being of the world citizens;

AND WHEREAS, the World Federation for Mental Health has designated the theme for World Mental Health Day 2024 “It is Time to Prioritize Mental Health in the Workplace”, high-lighting the importance of creating mentally healthy work environments and addressing mental health challenges in the workplace;

THEREFORE, I , _____, (TITLE) _____ OF THE _____ (TOWN/ COUNTRY AGENCY, ORGANIZATION, MINISTRY) _____ DO HEREBY PROCLAIM 10 OCTOBER 2024 AS WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY IN _____ TOWN/CITY/COUNTRY _____
urge all governmental and non- governmental mental health organizations and agencies to work in concert with elected and appointed public officials, and private bodies to promote awareness and education of em- ployers and employees about the importance of mental well-being, to develop and implement workplace mental health policies that prioritize the mental well being of employees, to create supportive work environments, to develop and promote employee assistance programs, to address workplace stressors and to promote peer support networks and encourage work life balance.

I further urge all citizens to join and support the local, state/provincial, and national non-gov- ernmental organizations that are working to make mental health a priority in communities throughout our nation.

Together, we will all make a difference and promote mentally healthy communities and citi- zens!

Signed _____

Title _____

Ministry/Office/Agency _____

Date _____

(SEAL)

Sample Media Release for Signing

The World Mental Health Day Proclamation

October 10, 2024

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

____MAYOR (OR OTHER OFFICIAL) OF ____ (town, city, or country) ____PROCLAIMS OCTOBER 10 WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY IN __(locale)__

The (official's title/position/office), the Honorable (name), designated October 10 as World Mental Health Day 2024 in (locale) through the signing of a Proclamation issued by (legislative body, office, department).

The Proclamation signing ceremony was organized by ____ (organizing organization or agency), ____ and was attended by (members of the organization, public officials, community leaders, and private citizens, etc.).

The Proclamation urged all governmental and nongovernmental mental health organizations and agencies to work in concert with elected and appointed public officials to apply universal preventive measures that reduce the risk of mental illness, to promote awareness and education of employers and employees about the importance of mental well-being, to develop and implement workplace mental health policies that prioritize the mental well-being of employees, to create supportive work environments, to develop and promote employee assistance programs, to address workplace stressors and to promote peer support networks and encourage work life balance.

The theme for World Mental Health Day 2024 as "It is Time to Prioritize Mental Health in the Workplace"; highlights the importance of creating mentally healthy work environments and addressing mental health challenges in the workplace.

The World Federation for Mental Health (WFMH) established World Mental Health Day in 1992; it is the only annual global awareness campaign to focus attention on specific aspects of mental health and mental disorders and is now commemorated on all continents of the world and in nearly all countries on October 10 through local, regional and national World Mental Health Day commemorative events and programs.

Put a brick in the wall

Close to one billion of the world population are living with mental illness and the majority have no access to care. In many low-, and medium-income countries most of the help is provided by family members or NGO's (non-governmental organisations). Our health systems are not well equipped to deal with the mental health crisis and emerging illnesses.

To support this year's World Mental Health Day goal of encouraging and facilitating greater collaboration between governments, citizens and planners so that effective processes can be established to deliver mental health and well-being services to the entire global community, the World Federation for Mental Health would like to provide direct support to some small NGO's in low income countries who have difficulty in obtaining the support required to continue the good work that they are doing.

We are calling on our supporters and members to help us to do this and have set up a virtual wall to which you can make a donation.

| | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------|---------------------------|
| less than \$10 | \$35 | \$50 |
| \$100 | \$500 | \$1.000 |
| \$5.000 | \$10.000 | more than \$10.000 |

All donors will be named on the 2024 World Mental Health Day Virtual Wall.

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