



What are Mental Health Champions and Why Should I Have Them?

Mental Health and the Workplace

Mental Health in the workplace is a topic that is being discussed more and more frequently, more openly, and most importantly from a perspective of support and wellbeing. And it's something at Gateway HR we're fully behind.

The stigma surrounding mental health is finally being challenged and a responsibility is being placed on workplaces to play their part in this. A lot of individuals will spend more time at work than they do anywhere else, and so it provides a valuable opportunity to managers, colleagues, and business owners to support one another with mental health concerns or issues.

Working alongside someone every day, you start to know them on a level where you can spot if something is different, or it may be that you've created a safe and supportive culture and environment where individuals are comfortable sharing if they are experiencing and issues with their mental health.

So, with workplaces offering such a valuable opportunity to provide support to one another, it's vital that individuals feel confident in having what can often be tricky conversations and in knowing what they can do to help. **This is where MHFA England can help** – with their diverse range of courses suitable for individuals at all different levels and covering specific areas of mental health (such as suicide awareness) where applicable, the opportunities to train and develop your team in this area will help with enabling your team to have the confidence to provide support to one another, and in ensuring that you're exercising your duty of care as an employer in safeguarding your team.

MHFA Champions

If you're interested in considering some Mental Health training for your teams but aren't sure where to start, the first course to look at would be 'MHFA Champions'. It can be run online or in a face-to-face format and is suitable for individuals at all levels. The aim of this course is to provide knowledge and confidence to individuals in providing Mental Health First

MHFA Champions' own tagline reads "Empower your organisation to deliver on your wellbeing strategy by building a network of MHFA Champions" and we agree that all businesses should be considering training like this to do just that. Mental health will be high on the agenda (and if it's not, it should be) of all organisations in the coming year to support with enhancing the wellbeing offering to its teams, as a team who feel valued, engaged, and supported will bring countless benefits to your company.

The role of a Mental Health Champion is to promote good mental health, manage events to support with this, and to meet regularly with senior management to discuss any trends and need for resources from the organisation. It's a vital role within an organisation, and you may be surprised how many individuals may be interested in taking on responsibilities such as this.

If you're interested in this training, you can read more about it in detail here [MHFA Champions · MHFA England](#).

At Gateway HR, we take the mental health of our team and clients seriously, and so we offer Mental Health Champion training in the form of a full day followed by a half-day, or this can be split into 3 half-days if that is preferential to our clients.

Why should I have Mental Health Champions?

With more and more responsibility being placed on employers and managers/supervisors to provide support to their teams when they are experiencing poor mental health, it's important that your team are trained and feel comfortable and well equipped when managing challenging conversations and situations.

By having individuals within your team that are trained in this area, you will start to feel the benefits of a more valued and supported team, possible reduced sick days, reduced levels of presenteeism, and support in the form of early intervention if managers/colleagues are able to signpost at a much earlier stage.

Conversations surrounding mental health can often feel daunting and can also be triggering for certain individuals depending on the circumstances. By having one (or more) trained Champions within your workplace that your employees can be directed to, you can feel assured that your team are receiving the right support and advice that has been guided by formalised training.

Further Training Opportunities

The full list of training available from MHFA England includes:

- Mental Health First Aid
 - o Can be taken face-to-face or online and is suitable for staff at any level who are interested in gaining the skills and ability to firstly spot signs of anyone who may be experiencing poor mental health, and to provide appropriate support and signposting.

- Mental Health Skills for Managers
 - o This course is available online, and as the name says is tailored to those in a management role with direct reports.

- Mental Health Knowledge for Managers
 - o This is a digital set of learning tools that managers can have access to instead of a structured course, so offers a great alternative to the Skills training.

- Return to Work and Mental Health
 - o This course is aimed at HR Professionals to provide them with tools to support employees from a HR and mental health perspective, blended into one

- Mental Health First Aid Refresher
 - o Online or face-to-face, half-day course for Mental Health First Aiders and Mental Health First Aid Champions to refresh their skills and to keep their knowledge up to date

- Mental Health Aware
 - o This course can be held online or face-to-face and is an introductory course designed to raise awareness of mental health

- Suicide First Aid: Aware
 - o Half-day course designed to build awareness of suicide and to give participants the confidence to intervene with people at risk of suicide. This is suitable for anyone looking to build their knowledge in this area

- Suicide First Aid: Understanding Suicide Intervention
 - o Full-day course to provide support and guidance to those working in roles that have direct interaction with people, providing understanding and confidence in intervening with people at risk of suicide and in implementing suicide safety from a first aid perspective.

If you're interested in finding out more about our Mental Health Champion course or if you have any questions on any of the content in our blog, please contact our team who are on hand and more than happy to answer any questions you may have!

We know that talking about mental health can be tricky and sometimes may be triggering for some individuals. If you have any serious and immediate concerns, either for yourself or for someone you know, please contact the Samaritans on 116 123 for free, 24/7.



Any questions, call us on 01536 215240 or email client@gatewayhr.com