

World Mental Health Day, 10 October 2024

From Stress to Strength: The Impact of Mental Health Support in the Workplace

KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA, October 9, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- As the

world continues to face unprecedented challenges, including geopolitical tensions, extreme weather events, disease outbreaks, and economic uncertainty, the mental health of employees has become a pressing concern. This year's World Mental Health Day theme, "Mental Health at

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Foo Pei Lynn

Work”, is a crucial reminder for organisations to take action to safeguard their workforce’s mental health and wellbeing. In alignment with this theme, International SOS, the world’s leading health and security risk services company, encourages organisations worldwide to recognise the critical importance of mental wellbeing and resilience within their workforce.

Heightened anxiety

The increasing frequency and intensity of global crises, coupled with elevated job demands, are contributing to heightened levels of stress and anxiety, further exacerbating mental health concerns among the global workforce. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), an estimated 15% of working-age adults are experiencing a mental disorder at any single point in time.

Additionally, International SOS assistance data reveals that over the past two years, the top five mental health-related assistance requests the organisation received are:

1. Anxiety
2. Depression
3. Panic disorder
4. Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
5. Acute stress

Burnout has also become a prominent issue among employees, with one in four employees worldwide reporting symptoms of burnout. The International SOS Risk Outlook 2024 report highlights employee burnout as a major threat impacting organisations.

Economic impact

Moreover, the economic impact of mental health issues cannot be ignored. The WHO estimates that globally, approximately 12 billion working days are lost annually to depression and anxiety, resulting in US\$ 1 trillion in lost productivity per year.¹ These figures highlight the importance for employers to create a workplace that promotes mental wellbeing and underscores the immense cost of neglecting employee mental health and wellbeing at work. Organisations play a pivotal role in shaping the mental health landscape by implementing policies and practices that promote wellbeing.



Ms Foo Pei Lynn, Psychologist, International SOS Malaysia, said, “World Mental Health Day is a timely reminder for organisations to acknowledge and address the profound importance of mental wellbeing within their workforce. The workplace environment can have a significant impact on employee mental health, both positive and negative, by either fostering wellbeing or contributing to stress and anxiety. Just as we invest in employee physical safety, it is important to also understand that mental health is integral to overall health. It is therefore imperative to prioritise mental resilience.

“Organisations can empower their employees to navigate challenges, thrive and contribute to a more positive and productive workplace by creating a supportive work environment that fosters open communication, empathy and understanding. Providing access to mental health professionals, counselling services, and employee assistance programmes is essential to ensure employees are equipped to navigate the complexities of today’s global landscape.”

To support the mental health and wellbeing of their workforce, International SOS provides advice for organisations:

1. Cultivate a supportive work culture with strong leadership commitment: Create a workplace culture and environment that prioritises and promotes open communication on mental health. Ensure mental wellbeing initiatives are seamlessly integrated into relevant policies and practices to provide robust support.

2. Provide accessible resources: Ensure employees have a toolkit of mental health resources at their fingertips, from counselling to self-guidance materials.
3. Promote work-life balance: Offer flexible work arrangements and remote work options to help employees manage their personal and professional lives effectively. Encourage regular breaks and empower employees to prioritise their wellbeing.
4. Training and education: Implement comprehensive mental health awareness campaigns to reduce stigma. Roll out mental health training, enabling everyone to spot, understand and assist with mental health challenges.
5. Monitor and assess: Seek feedback and continuously monitor the mental health of employees through surveys and assessments, and adapt programmes as needed.
6. Invest in emotional wellbeing: provide access to mindfulness sessions and stress management training—partner with certified mental health professionals to offer confidential counselling and support services.
7. Employee Assistance Programmes (EAPs): Provide EAPs that offer confidential counselling and support services to employees. Promoting the availability and benefits of EAPs can encourage employees to seek help without fear of stigma, fostering a culture of openness and support.

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