



Mental health and wellbeing: Our approach

Our vision is to create a culture free from stigma, where our people feel that they can discuss their mental health¹, know how to support others and where they can easily access support, not just in times of need, but to proactively build positive mental health. It's a journey, but we've already made significant progress.

At Herbert Smith Freehills, we know that when we support our people to prioritise their mental health, and to consider that of those around them, we strengthen engagement, productivity and excellence in client service.

Highlights

- Mental Health Champions programme in the UK, EMEA and Australia
- Global commitment to health and wellbeing announced October 2018
- Mental health awareness and training
- Launched global health and wellbeing hub, providing access to support, information and further resources across the firm
- Signatory of the Mindful Business Charter supporting mental health and wellbeing and encouraging more efficient ways of working

¹ Mental health is defined as "a state of wellbeing in which every individual realises [their] own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully and is able to make a contribution to [their] community" (World Health Organisation)



Mental Health Champions Programme

First established in 2015, our Mental Health Champion programme trains individuals from across all levels of the business to better understand common mental health conditions, how to spot early signs of mental ill-health and importantly sign-post individuals to the most appropriate support.

Having recently expanded the programme within Australia, our network of Mental Health Champions is key to embedding a supportive and inclusive culture in respect of mental health across the firm.



“This is Me” Campaign

Through campaigns such as “This is Me” where we showcase a range of people from all levels in the business including our Senior Partner, we’ve helped address the stigma which is so often associated with discussing mental health issues. Gaining buy-in and communicating support from visible senior leaders remains crucial to any mental health campaign or programme.



Health and Wellbeing – taking a holistic view

We understand that mental health is inextricably linked to both physical and social health, and more broadly our overall wellbeing. Our global commitment takes a holistic view of health and wellbeing and we’ve developed an internal hub offering resources, support and information across a range of areas including mental, physical, financial, social and occupational health and wellbeing.



The Mindful Business Charter

Launched in the UK as collaborative effort between law firms and clients, we’ve committed to making real change and encouraging individual responsibility, including through more effective emailing, smart and efficient meetings, more regular feedback and communication, mindful delegation of work and protected rest periods - all aimed at reducing unnecessary stress.



Culture

a work environment characterised by psychological safety and a sense of purpose where the language of mental health is commonplace to everyday conversations and where people see senior leaders role modelling behaviours which clearly prioritise mental health

Prevention

systems and resources exist to support our people in developing their knowledge and skills in respect of their own mental health as well as how best to support others

Treatment

effective practices exist to provide accessible and timely sign-posting to support and treatment free from judgement, including time off from work and support in returning to work

Key contacts



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