

## Liverpool John Moores University (LJMU) - Mental health development action plan

LJMU's Strategic Plan 2017-2022 sets out the importance of having an environment where staff feel valued and supported, to enable a culture where everyone is respected equally, and diversity is embraced. Our approach and commitment to mental health support is further clarified within the University EDI priorities. This being to ensure a workplace where staff members with mental health conditions feel supported and are able to thrive.

### The response to Covid-19

During the pandemic we focused on three key areas for mental health support for staff, this information was shared through various news items and through the development of a [specific Coronavirus microsite](#).

The three areas included:

#### 1. Support for staff with pre-existing conditions

- Ensure counselling provision already in place is maintained.
- Enhance provision with further support to Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) through the use of SilverCloud Platform and Togetherall.

#### 2. Support for staff with emerging conditions (focus on self-help)

- The use of Silvercloud and Togetherall to further develop staff knowledge around mental health conditions.
- Telephone Support line.
- Implementation of a [library of short self-help videos](#) signposting where further support is available (developed in house).
- [Library of self-help literature](#), including external resources available for free.

#### 3. Preventative Measures

A focus on the wider wellbeing package was important to capture how wider wellbeing can both impact on mental health and support healthy mental wellbeing. This incorporated initiatives such as Motivate LJMU (a 12-week home exercise programme developed by LJMU School of Sports Sciences); Virgo Pulse Go activity challenge and various other information around staying active whilst at home and keeping to government guidelines at the time.

### 3-Stage Mental Health Development Plan

To support our ambitions around mental wellbeing, we carried out a 3-stage approach to mental health development for both line managers and staff.

Stage one - Mental Health Alertness sessions for Line managers. The use of the word Alertness was purposeful here, as the key was move Managers from having an awareness of the issue to being alert to the situation and having the confidence and tools to support staff members.

Stage two – Development of LJMU specific resources and guidance to increase mental health alertness within LJMU's workforce. The package of information was developed with input from internal LJMU specialists, tailored to our needs and available through the microsite. This included the development of bespoke LJMU Mental Health First Aid programme for staff which will be implemented in the coming months.

Stage three - Launch of LJMU Connectors. This is a voluntary role undertaken by employees with an interest and desire to support others. These individuals will form a peer support scheme

organically across the University. They are available for staff to contact, providing support, information and signposting to available support where needed (however there is a little more expectation than signposting, as we see this role as the conduit linking staff in with support and following up on this). The first cohort of LJMU Connectors has launched this summer with 15 members of staff across the University. Over the next 12 months we shall embed this role and evaluate its impact.

### **Ongoing developments**

The following are examples of enhancement to our mental health offering and the wider wellbeing packages:

- Implementation of Employee Assistance Programme: 24hr helpline and opportunity for up to six telephone counselling sessions. This process has clear pathways back into University resources and face to face provision (launched April 21).
- Development of LJMU Wellbeing Hub: central resource of wellbeing information and support. We will begin to utilise this hub for self-referral, triage and low-level diagnosis.
- There are currently three strategies that support the wellbeing agenda for the University: Health and Wellbeing Strategy, Sports Strategy and Active Travel Strategy. We will ensure that synergies exist between these to enhance staff wellbeing.

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