



The Washington Group

Evaluation for International Men's Day - 19th November 2019

One of the fundamental themes this year for International Men's Day (IMD) was Men's Mental Health and Wellbeing. The Washington Group put out a Call for Action to key organisations working in the mental health field in Blackpool, with the aim of creating an event to support mental health in the workplace and to challenge the stigma of male suicide.

The Washington Group – (TWG) co-ordinated a task group, to plan and deliver the first International Men's Day Event in the town. The IMD Task Group included: Sue Littlefair The Washington Group, Debbie Terras The Washington Group, Chris Webb Deputy Police Crime Commissioner, Mike Crowther Empowerment, Neil Monks - Fulfilling Lives, Ruth Collinge Fulfilling Lives, Shughie Morrison Jobs Friends and Houses, Clinton Lee, Jobs Friends and Houses, Jamie Webster Army Med 3, Jason White Blackpool FC Community Trust, Zohra Dempsey Blackpool Council, Owen Hargreaves NSPCC/Better Start, Dave Hill ex army veteran, Emily McCurrie NHS and Paul Stewart, SAVE.

Aim: To link 100 Blackpool employers, with local community organisations, that offered support and information and to implement this practice within the workplace and to also be given the opportunity to take up the Time for Change offer.

Objectives:

To invite 100 employers from the Blackpool area to implement wellbeing projects in their organisations by:

1. Hearing Living Library stories from employed men who have been in crisis and how they are dealing with their emotions in everyday life.
2. Having the opportunity to attend interactive workshops that gave solutions and support in the workplace to situations arising with individuals in a work environment
3. Attending a small marketplace of community organisations who offer support within the local communities
4. Having the opportunity to sign up to the Time to Change Campaign
5. Making a pledge to change their culture and create a working environment for a positive mind set around suicide and mental health in men

Funding: Was provided by all the organisations on the steering group. The Army Covenant fund enabled not just funding but access to the army staff at Fulwood barracks.

The one day conference was hosted at Blackpool Football Club with the room facilities being given in kind.

The Event- was kindly hosted by Andy Mitchell from Radio Wave

Delegates listened to an opening speech from guest speaker ,Paul Stewart, former England Footballer and Director of SAVE and a member of the IMD Committee.

“I am delighted to be supporting IMD2019, I am a former professional Premiership Footballer who came forward in November 2016 regarding the physical and sexual abuse I suffered as a junior at the hands of a football coach in the mid 70’s.

As an adult the impact of the abuse on my adult life has been extremely debilitating, my mental health issues were a major problem, as I suffered and still suffer with depression, I have contemplated suicide on many occasions and have struggled with emotional connection. I believe that it is a major step forward for men, that recognition of mental health issues are highlighted with days such as the one I will be attending in 2019. The illness is not clearly visible and in a lot of cases is not spoken about openly due to the stigma surrounding the subject.

Organisations such as The Washington Group CIC UK and Empowerment, Blackpool, provide excellent support to sufferers of all types of mental health problems, and they endeavour to raise awareness through the great work they do, including events such as the IMD2019 event in November.

This was followed by an icebreaker from the Army Medical Corp. They provided an inspirational workshop which was creative and fun but with a serious message. Broken limbs can be mended but it is the trauma and mental health issues left behind that need to be addressed. Med3 were able to inform the audience of the work that is currently being undertaken with the British Army to promote talking about mental health. An ex -army veteran, also undertook a living library session to discuss his own issues and the work he was doing with ex -military personnel. Other living library sessions included Sam Tyrer – Ironman, Danny Sculthorpe - ex rugby player and Matthew Jones- a local artist.

Alongside the living libraries, each delegate attended interactive workshops to gain ideas and advice to implement wellbeing projects within their own organisations.

There were a range of workshops throughout the day and these included the following:

1. **Empowerment** -is the provider of the ‘Blackpool Time to Change Hub’. Part of a growing national movement to end mental health stigma and to empower

people to talk openly about their feelings around their own mental health. This year they are working hard to support men to be more confident about opening up about how they feel. Too many men in Blackpool are taking their own lives due to experiencing mental illness and literally suffering in silence because they do not have the confidence to open up. In their interactive workshop they shared creative ideas and suggestions that can all be put into practice whether it be at home, in the workplace or participating in hobbies and events, which will encourage and support men to have the confidence to share with others about how they are feeling as a means to getting on the road to recovery. Although a very serious subject, the workshop was fun, lively and thought provoking. For more information on 'Time to Change' please go to: <https://www.time-to-change.org.uk/>

2. **Owen Hargreaves Betterstart-Dads4Life** is a Blackpool community group championing specific interests and issues for dads. The group enables dads from the local community to contribute to the overall Better Start program and develop social and peer support networks to help support Dads. Members have the opportunity to work alongside peers in order to help plan and deliver activities, events and services for Dads with young children 0-4. Dads4Life also gives people the chance to learn and develop new skills whilst making a real difference to the future and children of Blackpool. Dads will provide a 'Dads Challenge' which is a fun approach to an activity such as the build a bird box challenge to encourage conversation and engagement in other Better Start activities.
3. **Blackpool Transport** offered an interactive workshop which gave some headline messages for employers to take back to the workplace. The 'be the shoulder' model is a community of employees at Blackpool transport who are there to listen, support and signpost their colleagues who are experiencing poor mental health. This model has recently been used successfully at Edinburgh trams and started with Merlin in December. Blackpool Transport are also a time to change employer and are also signed up as "a supporting employer for the "where's your head at" campaign
4. **Lancashire Care Sam Tyrer** - The focus of this workshop was to educate the attendees on the pressures young people are feeling, why mental health issues seem to be getting worse, the impact of social media (including educating them on apps that they may not have heard of), to talk about self-harm and educate attendees on the drugs which are available for young people
5. **Emily Bromley -Big Whitewall (BWW)** is an online mental health service. During the workshop, Emily completed a live demonstration of the site. Areas of the service that were covered were art and writing therapies, peer support, psycho-educational materials and online courses. Emily also explained how residents of Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre will be able to access the site and the clinical moderation that takes place within BWW.

6. **Lancashire Fire & Rescue Services- Bekki Ford shared** the journey to embed wellbeing throughout the service. The aim of their journey is to embed a modern culture that actively rejects mental health stigma and provides support for each other. A culture that STRIVES to look after the 'whole person' rather than just one element of wellbeing. Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service have also been Time for Change Champions since 2016 and they will share their experience.

Marketplace

Delegates were able to browse a marketplace of community projects and enterprise organisations, who were able to offer support on mental health in the workplace.

These included:

Time for You, Toyland, Cybelevelo, Mortgages and financial services , Adcroft Hilton Insolvency practitioners , Renaissance and Horizon, Blackpool Community Trust, Samaritans, Disability Confident DWP, Lancashire Mind, Access Fylde Coast, State of Mind Sport, Blackpool Carers Centre, Suicide Prevention, Grief Recovery Method Specialist.

The event was so successful that Emily McCurrie, the Suicide Training Prevention Coordinator for NHS England was able to take some ideas from this event and undertake her own at Preston Grass Hoppers for colleagues in Cumbria and Lancashire NHS. This has resulted in Paul from the world of football and Danny from rugby league, creating a 45 second film about mental health which has been widely shared on social media.

ONLINE EVALUATION

At the end of the event an evaluation took place through an online survey and the results are listed below:

Feedback/Evaluation

Q1. How would you rate the keynote speaker?

Excellent 94.12%

Good 5.88%

Q2. How would you rate the Living Library Workshops?

Excellent 47.6%

Good 47.6%

Q3. How Would you rate the workshop you attended in the morning session?

Excellent pitched at the right level 41.18%

Very Good 5.9%

Good 17.65%

Q4. How Would you rate the workshop you attended in the morning session?

Excellent pitched at the right level 43.75%

Very Good 25%

Good 18.75%

Q5. How did you rate the marketplace and the information offer?

Extremely helpful 43.75%

Very Helpful 50%

Helpful 6.25%

Q6. How has International Men's day made an impact on you and your organisation?

I have signed up for time to change 6.25%

Will be reviewing our company's wellbeing offer to our staff 31.25%

I will be contacting one or more of the marketplace organisations for support to develop our wellbeing offer 31.25%

Q7. Do you want to receive any further information about Time to Change?

Yes 31.25%

No 68.75%

Q8. Would you be interested in attending an International Men's Event in 2020

Yes 100%

Further responses from the survey

1. Fantastic day thank you and although I do not employ people I found the day helpful in regards to knowing what services are out there so I can signpost my clients to the services. Brilliant, keepup the fab work
2. Great Day, Thank you, I felt the wholeday was pitched perfectly to the audience who attended. I really found Paul S and Danny S extremely thought provoking /inspiring. I have discussed Time to Change with our Director and am hopeful that in the New Year we will be able to engage fully with the TimetoChange team at Empowerment. Thank you for the invite.
3. Excellent well organised event
4. Loved the presence of the Army there. Their workshop was great and it was useful to have this after Paul's talk. This was incredibly powerful and he was very brave to share it.
5. The day flew by with lots of quality content and meaningful interactions
6. Excellent day and lots of information
7. Really powerful and well organised event. Thank you Debbie and Sue , what an amazing team you are
8. Excellent day and lots of information
9. Excellent, thanks
10. Fabulous first IMD2019 event. I would look at how you keep the attendees at the event all day

TWG would like to say a really Big Thankyou to everyone who was involved and supported the 1st International Men's Day event in Blackpool



The Washington Group



RECOVERY COMMUNITY
The Next Step

