



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Major Scottish Employers Take Action to End Mental Health Stigma on World Mental Health Day

A GROUP of major Scottish employers are taking action to tackle mental health stigma as part of World Mental Health Day.

ScotRail, Apex Hotels, engineering company Babcock and commercial law firm Burness Paull LLP have joined together with the See Me programme, to highlight the potential impact of mental health stigma and discrimination in work and ensure staff feel supported when they are struggling.

The organisations, which employ more than 8000 people between them, are working with the programme on a range of areas, including reducing absenteeism and presenteeism relating to mental health and promoting their role as a responsible, inclusive and caring employer.

All four have signed up to an eight month process with See Me, to analyse their policies and practices in relation to mental health, to challenge discrimination and improve the working lives of employees with mental health problems.

See Me, the national programme to end mental health discrimination, conducted a survey of Scottish workers in 2015, which found that 48% of people think that someone in their work with a mental health problem would be unlikely to disclose for fear of losing their job.

They also found 55% of people think that someone in their work with a mental health problem would be unlikely to disclose for fear of being moved to another post or passed over for promotion.

For World Mental Health day the organisations have put on a range of activity to encourage their employees to talk about mental health.

Tamar Tammes, managing partner at Burness Paull, said: "We are delighted that See Me has invited Burness Paull and other major employers in Scotland to help highlight the potential impact of mental health stigma and discrimination in the workplace. We are proud to play our part in making that happen.

"We are committed to helping and supporting everyone in the firm to improve their working lives and to ensuring staff feel supported when they're struggling. That is why we're very

much looking forward to working with See Me, sharing our experiences and learning from the other employers involved.”

Alison Atack, President of the Law Society of Scotland, said: “I’m very pleased to see that one of our law firms is among the group of leading employers taking part in the See Me programme.

“Many solicitors are drawn to the intellectual challenge and thrive on the high pressure that a legal career entails, but with this high pressure can come stress. We know that one in five solicitors experience a mental health issue at some stage in their career, so it’s crucial that we all work to remove any stigma and discrimination and ensure that people can find help when they need it.

“We launched [Lawscot Wellbeing](#) in May this year as a dedicated online resource that provides help and guidance for members and employers. We aim to work in collaboration with SeeMe and other organisations to equip everyone working in the legal sector with information and signposting to help manage emotional wellbeing – whether that’s their own, their client’s or a colleague’s.”

See Me workplace manager, Dr Patty Lozano Casal, said: “The workplace is one of the main areas in Scotland where people with mental health conditions are unable to live fulfilled lives.

“As Scotland’s Mental Health Strategy highlights, not having a job is the single biggest inequality that people with mental health problems can face.

“So it’s vital that employers in Scotland take action to ensure that people struggling with their mental health are treated fairly and are fully supported to stay in work.

“We want organisations to create a culture that is open in talking about mental health and where discriminatory behaviour is challenged. So it’s fantastic to see ScotRail, Babcock, Apex Hotels and Burness Paull LLP leading the way in making improvements.”

ENDS...

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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NOTES TO EDITORS

1. See Me is Scotland’s National programme to end mental health stigma and discrimination, enabling people who experience mental health problems to live fulfilled lives.

We do this by:

- Mobilising people to work together and lead a movement to end mental health stigma and discrimination
 - Working with people to change negative behaviour towards those with mental health problems
 - Ensuring that the human rights of people with mental health problems are respected and upheld
2. Follow See Me on Twitter or Instagram @seemescotland or find us on Facebook: Facebook/seemescotland, or at www.seemescotland.org
 3. See Me is managed by SAMH and the Mental Health Foundation and funded by Scottish Government and Comic Relief

