



Workplace Wellbeing Case Study: Mental Health Return to Work programmes

Case Study

Wellnz works with a telecommunications company with approximately 1000 employees. The nature of their work means that they provide essential services nationally across New Zealand. A Wellnz Case Manager received a referral from a concerned manager, needing help to get a staff member back into their full-time working capacity.

The background

A staff member had been struggling for a long time with mental health issues and as a result had not been at work in 3 months.

Dealing with the effects of a reduced workforce, the manager had taken on a lot of responsibility in trying to help their staff member return to work. To try help facilitate this, conversations had been had with family members of the staff member and Public Health Crisis team but were not providing the required assistance.

Unfortunately, no return to work plan had been set in place, nor was there any foresight into when that might be. The manager needed help to create a sustainable return to work programme for this staff member, with the ultimate goal of returning to their original full-time working capacity.

The presenting issues:

During the initial needs assessment completed by Wellnz, the staff member was presenting signs of sleep deprivation, anxiety, depression, work/life balance management issues, financial pressure and a disruptive home life, ultimately leading to stress and loss of self-care.

The staff member had been already been off work for a significant period of time and during this time had been admitted to hospital twice.

A Community Mental Health worker and Public Health Case Manager were already enlisted to help this person. Medication was prescribed; however, the staff member didn't feel the medication was helping.

The Community Mental Health team are not equipped to provide sufficient return to work support. Also, at the time of this case, there was also a significant wait in the Public Health system for Psychiatric support and advice.

The needs assessment and next steps taken:

It was identified in this case that the staff member needed a holistic approach to his return to work programme. It was imperative to ensure the root cause was addressed at the same time as the current and presenting symptoms.

The Public Health Case Manager was contacted to determine the services that were already being received to ensure Wellnz were not providing an overlap or gap of services.

The manager was advised that the staff member would require Occupational Therapy support as well as access to a Psychologist additional to what was already being provided by the Public Health system.

The outcome:

The Wellnz sourced Psychologist and Occupational Therapist provided strategies to cope with increased stress at both home and work and how to manage stressors as they arise. These strategies are still being used to this day.

The staff member is still participating in nutrition and fitness programmes set in place with positive results.

It was also reported their sleep was improving and they had steadily increased their hours over a period of two months and had now returned to work in their original full-time capacity.

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