Maritime Wellbeing

Professional Care Provision

Hints and tips for ship managers

Introduction

Mental wellbeing affects everyone, every day.

The mental wellbeing of seafarers is of fundamental importance to safe shipping operations. Being able to spot mental health issues in yourself, and raise them with others if needed, is essential.

No one, including seafarers, is immune to mental ill-health. Difficult life events and other stressors can affect anyone's mental health, at any time. It is essential that seafarers are able to access professional help easily and without fear of negative consequences. This document provides information to support ship managers in identifying and/or reviewing mental health services for seafarers.

Review of in-company services available

As **people** start to talk about mental health, some may need help. It is important to know what **support** is available within your company, so that you can direct people to the right help should they need it. Conduct a review with the aim to identify what support you have in place already and what other resources you may need. Some of the areas to be reviewed are:

- HR systems

- Crew management policies

- DPA arrangements

- Employee Assistance Programme / helplines

- Tele/Radio-Medical Advisory Services* – does it include mental health conditions?

*these are external medical support systems that ship managers may have in place through which ships can call on for any type of medical advice and support e.g. International SOS

Key components for mental health services

When considering mental health service providers it may be useful to review whether they:

- Have professional assurance

  i.e. that the counsellors and psychologists are clinically trained and qualified;

- Have transparent management systems

  This includes how the service is managed, how data (including personal or confidential data is stored) and reporting. Data reporting should be available to understand which elements of the mental health services are being utilised and by how many people, but data gathering needs to be limited to ensure that users cannot be identified;

- Are confidential

  and have robust systems for maintaining confidentiality.

- **Have processes available for review** and include information such as how calls are managed, how call operators are trained and the process for escalating concerns;

In-Company Services

- Are independent

  and external to your company;

- Are culturally appropriate

  to your workforce e.g. to differing customs, thinking, attitudes and feelings;

- Are accessible 24/7

  or for a substantial amount of time and via a variety of media e.g.

  - Web

  - Phone app

  - Telephone

- Are free to the user