STOP MENTAL ILLNESS STIGMA CHARTER

MENTAL HEALTH
SUPPORTIVE
RESPECT
INCLUSIVE
STOP STIGMA
INFORM
STIGMA
LISTEN
RECOVERY

MENTAL ILLNESS DOES NOT DISCRIMINATE, BUT SOMETIMES PEOPLE DO.

WHY FOCUS ON STIGMA?

Nearly half (45%) of all Australians will experience a mental health issue at some stage of their lives.

Despite this, people living with mental illness often experience stigma and discrimination from friends, family, employers and the community as a whole.

People who have experienced mental illness report that the negative effects of stigma can be worse than the actual symptoms of their illness.

These effects can be so harmful to people affected by mental illness that they can alter the way they value themselves and compound the impact of the illness itself.

When stigmatising attitudes are acted on, they often lead to discrimination where people are treated differently because of their health status.

"Stigma almost cost me my life. While there were no barriers to accessing the help I needed, my greatest fear was being diagnosed with a mental illness and the impact this would have on my life" – Jodie

"At Murray PHN, we are proud of our work in developing and implementing the Stop Mental Illness Stigma Charter. We encourage other organisations to support people living with mental illnesses by implementing this Charter in their workplace"
- Matt Jones CEO, Murray PHN

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An Australian Government Initiative

Need more information?
www.murrayphn.org.au/stopstigma
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What is the Stigma Charter?

A Charter is a written document that guides the behaviour of an organisation. By signing the Stigma Charter, an organisation shows its commitment to stopping the stigma of mental illness. The Charter aims to reduce mental illness stigma through a series of commitments.

The commitments are:

- We will be informed
- We will listen
- We will be mindful of our language
- We will be inclusive
- We will challenge the stereotypes
- We will be supportive
- We will promote recovery

The Charter is completely voluntary. It is not an accreditation, an award or a set of quality standards but it is a hallmark of good corporate practice that supports employees, customers and clients who have experienced mental illness.

The organisation is supported with documents providing further information on mental illness, understanding stigma and guidance in implementing the Charter.

Why adopt the Charter?

Organisations that sign the Stop Mental Illness Stigma Charter are committing to improving the lives of people who have, or have had an experience of mental illness.

Reducing stigma creates a supportive and inclusive environment for all.

By joining other local organisations in reducing stigma, your company or group can become a part of movement that is actively working towards halting the debilitating impact of mental illness stigma in our community.

You will also be making a tangible statement to your staff, customers and visitors about your organisation's commitment to reducing the stigma of mental illness.

Who can adopt the Charter?

The Charter can be used by any organisation, including sporting clubs, schools, associations, retailers and charities.

Organisations do not need a thorough knowledge of mental illness – the most important step is to demonstrate an awareness of the impact of mental illness stigma, and to commit to work to prevent it.

How do organisations join?

Simply sign the Pledge and display your certificate and Stop Stigma poster in a public area. This demonstrates your commitment to implementing the Charter and stopping mental illness stigma in your organisation.

The decision to sign the Pledge certificate is usually made by the Board, the CEO or the owner of your organisation.

Supporting documents with the Charter implementation package include:

- The Stop Mental Illness Stigma Charter
- A Pledge certificate
- How to use the Charter booklet
- Mental Illness factsheet
- Understanding Stigma booklet
- Links to the Stop Mental Illness Stigma webpage murrayphn.org.au/stopstigma

For further information and downloads:
w: murrayphn.org.au/stopstigma
e: stopstigma@murrayphn.org.au