

MORSE Month 2020

Week 3: Safely

Activity: Spotting the signs

Facilitator: Manager, supervisor, team leader or trainer

Who can take part: all are welcome

Where can this take place: crew rooms, offices, breakout areas

Time: 10 minutes

Additional resources: none



In this activity we look at potential signs that your colleagues might be suffering from poor mental health.

Objectives

- Improve knowledge and awareness of mental health
- Know what to do if you suspect one of your colleagues/team members is showing the signs.

How do I facilitate this activity?

We recommend this activity is facilitated by a manager, supervisor, team leader or trainer

- Gather as many team members (no limit) in the best location possible to complete this activity.
- Read the **scenario** to the group
- Ask them the **questions** (see below) and discuss the answers as a group - make sure you listen to the answers! You can also read out the suggested **answers**.
- Read the **signs to look out for** so everyone in the group can improve their understanding of the potential signs and behaviours that somebody could be struggling with their mental health/wellbeing or related illness.

To join the MORSE Month 2020 Teams site, click on the option to 'Join or create a team' and type in the code **gesbdm6**. Alternatively, you'll find all the resources on [WeAreMenzies.com](https://www.wearemenzies.com).

Scenario

Francois is a Refuelling Agent/Operator based in an airport in France and has been working in his current role for about four years. He has very good attendance at work, rarely sick and he is always on time for his shift – he's never been late for work! He is a happy go lucky guy who chooses to keep his personal life private from work but does share the occasional item on his passion for fishing.

As a colleague of Francois, you have noticed over the last couple of months that he has been late for work and seems a bit more withdrawn than normal. He also had an incident a couple of days ago where he left the fuel panel door open on an aircraft he had just fuelled and failed to spot it during his walkaround inspection. The panel door was not spotted prior to pushback and the aircraft needed to return to stand after taxiing - thankfully spotted by an Airfield Ops worker.

During the investigation Francois explained that he had been distracted lately due to personal reasons. He went on to say that he was psychologically unwell and emotional due to a number of family issues. He also confirmed that he was not focused during his working tasks and had thought about quitting his job before the recent incident occurred.

Questions

1. Who's responsible for declaring/informing problems or issues that might affect your (or other persons) safety at work?
2. Is it correct that Managers can (and should) only act if team members speak to them verbally about any problems, they might be experiencing?
3. Should Francois have declared that his mental health was not good, and he may need some support?

Answers

1. Everyone has a responsibility to declare anything that could affect their safety (and that of others) in the workplace – in most countries this is law.
2. This is a common misunderstanding; everyone has a responsibility to report something that they see or feel that could affect safety. To simply say "well he didn't say anything to me" is a mindset we want to change and move to a proactive way of thinking where we are constantly assessing our colleagues for the signs and symptoms that indicate someone might be struggling with their mental health and act.
3. The simple answer to this is "Yes" – If you believe that you or anyone in your team could be a risk to themselves or others you need to act and inform your line manager. This can be a tough/tricky decision to make but asking for help/support is the best thing to do and could prevent someone from being hurt...

Signs to look out for

A change in personality - If someone is acting like a very different person, or not behaving like they do normally.

Uncharacteristic anxiety, anger, or moodiness - Severe changes in emotion are a cause for alarm, especially if they are persistent.

Social withdrawal and Isolation - If an individual is "closing off" socially, cancelling social engagements, or spending too much time alone, this can be a serious warning sign.

Lack of self-care or unsafe behaviours - Persons with mental health issues often lose concern over their own health and well-being, engaging in unsafe behaviours like drinking and drug use. In addition, a lack of hygiene, or lack of concern with appearance, may be indicative of a mental health issue.

A sense of hopelessness or feeling overwhelmed. Mental health difficulties often cause people to give up – to feel like life is just too hard, or that they will never feel "normal" again.

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