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To: All Branches

Dear Colleagues,

World Mental Health Day 10 October 2019 - Focus On Suicide Prevention: "A Day For "40 Seconds of Action"

World Mental Health Day, on 10 October, is a day for us to unite in our efforts to improve the mental health of people around the world. The theme selected for this year's Day is 'suicide prevention.'

Last month during World Suicide Prevention Day on 10 September, which has been observed for more than 15 years, the World Health Organisation (WHO) working with the World Federation for Mental Health (WFMH), the International Association of Suicide Prevention (IASP) and United for Global Mental Health (UGMH) began efforts to raise awareness of the scale of suicide around the world and the role that everyone can play to help prevent it. The campaign will continue through to 'World Mental Health Day' on 10 October, emphasising that every 40 seconds someone loses their life to suicide.

On this year's World Mental Health Day, in addition to the events and activities which have been taking place over the last month the WHO, WFMH, IASP and UGMH are encouraging everyone to prepare to take "40 seconds of action" on 10 October to help improve awareness of the significance of suicide as a global public health problem, to improve knowledge of what can be done to prevent suicide; reduce the stigma associated with suicide; and let people who are struggling know that they are not alone. Put simply, this is an opportunity to show care. Everyone can take part in whichever way makes most sense. Activity may be private, for example, initiating a conversation with someone you are worried about or sharing a message of hope with someone who is struggling; or it may be public, for example posting a video message, distributing posters, leaflets, information or writing and lobbying MPs, MSPs, MLAs about action you would like them to take on this issue.

Here are some more ideas:

- If you are struggling, take 40 seconds to kick-start a conversation with a family member, friend, colleague, Union Reps, MH Ambassador - about how you are feeling.
- If you know someone who is struggling or distressed, start a conversation and ask them how they are doing.
- Raise awareness amongst members in the workplaces in your Branch or constituency area with messages about mental health and/or preventing suicide.

- Talk to local management and the Health and Safety managers about promoting positive messages of support to the workforce about resources available to them in the workplace or local community in times of mental distress.
- Distribute posters, leaflets, information to the workforce in their workplaces.
- Write and lobby MPs, MSPs, AMs, MLAs about action you would like them to take on suicide prevention and mental health.

Key facts and figures

- Suicides are preventable.
- One person dies by suicide every 40 seconds.
- A prior suicide attempt is an important risk factor for suicide.
- Suicide is the second leading cause of death among 15-29 year-olds.
- Suicide affects people of all age groups in all countries.

Links:

- WHO - <https://www.who.int/news-room/detail/09-09-2019-suicide-one-person-dies-every-40-seconds>
- IASP - <https://www.iasp.info/>
- WFMH - <https://wfmh.global/>
- UFGMH - <https://www.unitedgmh.org/>
- MIND - <https://www.mind.org.uk/get-involved/world-mental-health-day/>

Attachments:

- CWU - Work & Suicide Guide
- CWU - Repts Work Stress Guide
- Rethink Mental Health - 'Suicidal thoughts and How to support someone' - Factsheet
- NHS - 'Help For Suicidal Thoughts' - Factsheet

Further communications on WMHD will follow.

Yours sincerely



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