

INMO CAMPAIGNS FOR MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORTS

A mental health and wellbeing initiative has been launched by the Irish Nurses and Midwives Organisation (INMO) to bring awareness and education around mental health supports to all INMO members. It follows recent research findings which revealed that 91% of survey respondents had experienced mental exhaustion while off duty.

This 12-month 'Let's Talk About It' campaign, launched by the INMO in partnership with Cornmarket, was created on the back of a comprehensive research project that looked at the wellbeing of nurses and midwives.

The research identified key themes affecting overall wellbeing including workplace and organisational stressors, COVID-19 stressors, physical health impacts, mental health impacts and knowledge of available services.

Key findings from the research:

- As a result of the Mental Health Impact from COVID, 91% of respondents stated they had experienced mental exhaustion while off duty, and 61% of respondents had considered leaving their healthcare profession*.
- 98% of respondents want mental health support tailored to nurses and midwives**.
- Up to 50% of respondents don't know where to access free mental health support for nurses and midwives**.

Based on these findings, the INMO collaborated with Cornmarket to create an educational awareness campaign that would provide INMO members with access to practical advice and support. An online digital hub has been created with access to informational programmes, podcasts, webinars and events, helpful articles and video content and research.

FATIGUE AND BURNOUT

The supports will also include bespoke content to help INMO members identify the signs of fatigue and burnout, tips for managing mental and emotional stress, therapy tools and content on the impact of night shifts.

Campaign Ambassador Bríd O'Meara is a Mental Health and Wellbeing Consultant, a registered psychiatric and general trained nurse with over three decades of experience working in Mental Health in Ireland.

She said that the 'Let's Talk About It' campaign was important in today's climate, not least given the events of the past year. "The aim is to create awareness amongst INMO members of

the indicators of compromised wellbeing and provide access to tailored practical advice and information on supports available.

"As a psychiatric and general nurse, I'm thrilled to be involved with this initiative as it is so close to my heart. I know this campaign will bring more awareness to mental health and provide supports to our incredible healthcare professionals."

BENEFICIAL SUPPORTS

The initiative will drive awareness and education and also partner with trusted mental health experts and wellbeing programmes to deliver beneficial supports. The collective includes Zevo Health bespoke resources, Aware Life Skills CBT programmes, '50808' Text About It, Employer EAPs and the INMO 24-hour Counselling Phone Line.

Karen McGowan, INMO President, said: "Our members are healthcare professionals working in incredibly difficult circumstances; 91% of our members had experienced mental exhaustion when they were off duty, while 61% thought about leaving the profession*.

"This campaign will encourage members to utilise the services available to them, while starting a conversation around the serious need for mental health and wellbeing support for frontline workers."

The initiative will also include a podcast series with former nurse, Norah Casey, whom McGowan said will help build trust and education through normalisation and shared experience. "This will be one of many elements of the campaign and one that will hopefully resonate well with our members."

Clodagh Ruddy, Head of Client Services at Cornmarket, said: "As the administrator for the INMO Salary Protection Scheme for many years, Cornmarket has a unique understanding of the conditions which cause claims. With this in mind, an initiative around mental health and wellbeing was built into the scheme during its last review."

* Cornmarket's Let's Talk About It Research Project (April 2021), based on responses from 2,642 nurses and midwives from the INMO Covid-19 Mental Health Survey (October 2020).

** Cornmarket's Shape the Initiative Survey (March 2021), based on 1,134 responses from INMO Income Protection Scheme Members.