World Economic Forum Global Agenda Council on Mental Health
Case Study Examples of Good Practices for Addressing Mental Health in the Workplace

AT A GLANCE – CASE STUDY: KING & WOOD MALLESONS

RATIONALE & DEVELOPMENT
Together with four major Australian law firms (Allens, Ashurst, Clayton Utz & Herbert Smith Freehills) and The College of Law in Australia, King & Wood Mallesons (KWM) developed resilience@law. The initiative aimed to raise awareness around mental health and stress, address stigma, and provide education, self-care strategies, support and resources. Resilience@law was the catalyst for developing the Firm’s approach to mental health. With one in three lawyers expected to experience some form of mental illness during their career, KWM recognises mental health is a key issue within the legal profession globally.

PROGRAMME
Psychological wellbeing is integrated into the firm’s broader strategy for implementing their workplace Health & Wellbeing Program ensuring a holistic and integrated approach to health.

- **Resilience@law:** Screening of resilience@law DVD and national launch of The College of Law training program
- **Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) Training & Recognising and Managing Mental Health in the Workplace workshops:** Builds skills of HR staff to recognise and manage mental health issues
- **Partner workshops and discussions on mental health:** Sessions help to raise awareness and reduce stigma
- **Building resilience workshops:** Sessions help people take responsibility for their own wellbeing and help identify personal stressors and build resilience
- **Psychological Rehabilitation Program:** Support to remain at work while dealing with mental health issues
- **Wellbeing Officer Program:** Program to help with prevention and early identification of mental illness; and to create an environment that encourages people to speak up and seek help
- **Psychological Wellness Toolkit:** Resources to assist HR and managers to manage mental health issues. For example: case studies, draft emails, links to resources, processes/flow charts, and more.
- **TJMF Psychological Wellbeing: Best Practice Guidelines for the Legal Profession**
- **R U OK? at Law ‘look deeper’ campaign:** 12-month awareness campaign tailored to the legal profession
- **Broader Health and Wellbeing Program:** Comprehensive range of services e.g. gym memberships; health checks; onsite massage, yoga, reflexology, Pilates; Employee Assistance Program (EAP); and flexible working

STAKEHOLDERS
- Resilience@law was spearheaded by the managing partners and HR directors of the firms, with HR teams at each organisation undertaking MHFA training before launching the initiative internally
- KWM aims to engage partners and staff at all levels across the firm to raise awareness and educate people about psychological wellbeing. The Firm has partnered with external training and psychological rehabilitation providers to provide training to their HR teams and ensure best practice care is provided

MONITORING & EFFECTIVENESS
- 66% increase in calls to the Firm’s EAP provider within the first six-weeks of showing the Resilience@law DVD
- A significant decrease in days taken off work
- 68% of Wellbeing Officers surveyed had approached someone they were concerned about and 30% were approached by someone with a concern

KEY TAKE-AWAYS, LESSONS LEARNT, POINTS OF INTEREST
- The resilience@law initiative won the AHRI 2011 Martin Seligman Health and Wellbeing Award. The *Beyondblue Annual Report* (2011) noted lawyers are more aware of mental health issues than they were as a group in 2009
- The College of Law now provides a mental health module in its practical legal training
- Training should be considered an investment. Training HR staff is key, as they are best placed to help others
- Providing initiatives on-site is a great way for time pressured lawyers to be tested for health issues
- Specialist providers of mental health training and psychological rehabilitation should be carefully selected as the cheapest may not be the most effective. Shop around for the most appropriate EAP for the legal profession
- Tailor messages to the particularities of the industry and the nature of the work as well as to the audience. E.g. lunch-time training for time-pressured lawyers; clearly address the question of ‘what’s in it for me?’ in all communications; emails are a simple and cost-effective way to communicate

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PROFILE

Organisation: King & Wood Mallesons
Sector: Legal
Country: Australia

“Through executing the Resilience@Law campaign, the overall objective is to create a mind-set shift and cultural change in how the legal profession deals with mental health. It has opened up dialogue with people in the legal profession now openly talking about mental health and feeling OK to do so.”

DEVELOPMENT STAGE

King & Wood Mallesons is a global law firm headquartered in Asia. Along with four major Australian law firms (Allens, Ashurst, Clayton Utz & Herbert Smith Freehills) and The College of Law, King & Wood Mallesons developed resilience@law. Resilience@law was established to take a leadership role in raising awareness and understanding of the nature and impact of stress, depression and anxiety across the legal profession. A DVD was produced and shared around Australia and within the major law firms to encourage people to talk about their experiences of living with a mental illness. The DVD shows people in the legal profession sharing their experiences of mental health and illness. A learning program was developed and implemented at The College of Law to help educate graduate lawyers about mental health and resilience.

As well as raising awareness around stress, depression and anxiety the resilience@law initiative aims to remove the stigma around mental ill-health conditions and provide education, self-care strategies, support and resources.

With one in three lawyers expected to experience some form of mental illness during their career, King & Wood Mallesons recognises mental health is a key issue within the legal profession and has implemented a number of initiatives to help support their people.

PROGRAMME

King & Wood Mallesons is committed to supporting their people and taking a proactive approach to supporting a psychologically healthy workplace, preventing mental ill-health, recognising issues early and intervening, and providing support programs.

Resilience@law was the catalyst for developing the firm's approach to mental health. The initiative was launched in cities across Australia with the five firms taking turns to host events. The events included the launch of the resilience@law DVD and the national launch of The College of Law training program for lawyers at the threshold of their careers.

King & Wood Mallesons leveraged the strong foundation of the resilience@law program to introduce a range of initiatives throughout its own firm. These include:
The firm recognises the importance of identifying and treating mental health concerns early. As part of their commitment to support a psychologically healthy workplace and a policy of taking action to prevent, identify, support and assist rehabilitation, the following initiatives have been implemented.

**Wellbeing Officers**

King & Wood Mallesons introduced the Wellbeing Officer program to help with prevention and early identification of mental illness, and to create an environment that encourages people to speak up and seek help. Partners and staff were asked to volunteer to be trained as Wellbeing Officers, with over 140 people (more than 1 in 10) volunteering (see Appendix A - Wellbeing Officer Invitation).

Wellbeing Officers are a point of contact, similar to First Aid officers. They are encouraged to watch out for others, help with identifying potential issues and to make connections to help people find support. They are also able to provide information on how the firm supports its people. The role of a Wellbeing Officer is to be a 'spotter' and to connect people with others who can help them find the right support.

The firm partnered with an external management and psychological consulting organisation, Centre for Corporate Health Pty Ltd, to provide the training. The workshops included training on how to recognise the signs and symptoms of mental illness, managing high risk situations, supporting mental health in the workplace, how to refer people to seek help, and a coaching model on how to have a conversation. The Wellbeing Officers are listed on the firm’s intranet to enable people to easily identify their closest contact.

**Recognising and Managing Mental Health in the Workplace Training**

The prevalence of mental illness in the legal profession related to stress, depression and anxiety, underscores the importance of early identification. The firm recognises the importance of Human Resources (HR) staff being equipped with the skills to recognise and manage mental health issues. HR staff have either completed the two-day Mental Health First Aid training and/or a one-day Recognising Mental Health & Managing Mental Health in the Workplace workshop. The training has enabled HR staff to recognise when someone requires help and provided a framework to assist with managing mental health concerns in the workplace. HR staff are now more confident in recognising and responding to mental health concerns and people are more comfortable seeking support.

**Psychological Rehabilitation Program**

As part of King & Wood Mallesons commitment to supporting mental health issues, the firm has partnered with a psychological rehabilitation provider, Resilia, to provide best practice support for its people. Resilia’s senior psychologists work closely with the HR staff, supervisor/manager, employee, and relevant treating practitioners to provide practical adjustment and recovery plans for modified work or return to work strategies, treatment and recommendations.
King & Wood Mallesons recognises that there are significant health benefits in remaining at work in some capacity when experiencing a mental health issue. People are encouraged to recognise issues and seek help early. Flowcharts, policies and processes have been developed to assist HR and provide a consistent approach when managing mental health concerns. The firm is committed to providing a coordinated case management approach, engaging and investing in experts to assist with managing mental health issues. HR are encouraged to engage Resilia as soon as they become aware of a mental health concern to ensure best practice support is provided.

**Health and Wellbeing Program**

Psychological wellbeing is integrated into the firm’s broader strategy for implementing their workplace Health and Wellbeing Program ensuring a holistic approach to health. The Health and Wellbeing program consists of a comprehensive range of initiatives including: free and subsidised gym memberships; flu vaccinations; skin checks; health checks; seminars, onsite massage, reflexology, yoga, pilates, monthly newsletters and awareness campaigns; and an Employee Assistance Program.

The firm also supports flexible working arrangements and has introduced an Agile Working program, enabling people to work in a more adaptable way. The firm actively supports and encourages different working arrangements such as working from home or different locations, shifting work schedules to accommodate sporting, social, family and personal commitments or starting late and finishing late.

**TJMF Psychological Wellbeing: Best Practice Guidelines for the Legal Profession**

The Tristan Jepson Memorial Foundation (TJMF) was created in memory of Tristan Jepson, a former University of NSW law student, young lawyer and comedian. Tristan suffered from severe clinical depression and took his own life in 2004, just four weeks after his 26th birthday.

The Foundation’s objective is to decrease work related psychological ill-health in the legal community and to promote workplace psychological health and safety.

King & Wood Mallesons was a founding signatory of the TJMF Psychological Wellbeing: Best Practice Guidelines for the Legal Profession and an active member of the Guidelines Subcommittee that researched and launched the Guidelines.

The Guidelines promote psychologically healthy workplaces and are intended to support firms to raise awareness of mental health issues, and to understand the initiatives and methods of management that assist in the creation of and maintenance of psychologically and supportive workplaces. The firm continues to work towards implementing the Guidelines and encourages other organisations to sign up to the Guidelines - [www.tjmf.org.au](http://www.tjmf.org.au)

**R U OK? at Law ‘look deeper’ campaign**

18 law firms, including King & Wood Mallesons, partnered with “R U OK?” to develop a 12 month awareness campaign tailored to the legal profession. The aim of the R U OK? at law ‘Look Deeper’ campaign is to encourage people to look out for one another and support each other by having regular, meaningful conversations. During the campaign videos and stories are shared by people who have overcome adversity, or who have supported a colleague in similar circumstances. All resources are publically available at [www.lookdeeper.org.au](http://www.lookdeeper.org.au)

King & Wood Mallesons has taken a proactive approach in opening discussions and sharing ideas and resources in relation to psychological wellbeing and mental health matters. In particular it has been at the forefront of discussing mental health and work practices within the legal profession. They have openly spoken about the programs implemented within the firm and shared resources to assist other organisations implement programs. The firm works with other organisations and the broader community to help raise awareness about mental health issues and support psychologically healthy workplaces.
MONITORING & EFFECTIVENESS

- The resilience@law initiative was the start of a major cultural change in the legal profession – it made it OK to say “I am not okay”. Within the first six weeks of showing the DVD there were 36 new calls to King & Wood Mallesons Employee Assistance Program (EAP) provider – a 66% increase in utilisation.

- Over 100 people attended the Wellbeing Officer training across five Australian Centres. A survey of the Wellbeing Officer Program found that 68% of those that responded had approached someone they were concerned about; 30% were approached by someone with a concern; and that Wellbeing Officers had responded to situations they may have previously ignored.

- As a result of mandatory training of HR staff on recognising and managing mental health in the workplace, they report that they are now more confident in responding to mental health concerns and people are more comfortable in seeking support.

- By implementing the Psychological Rehabilitation Program and engaging the services of a specialist external provider, the firm is able to assist their people to remain at work while dealing with mental health issues. Two-thirds of mental health cases are being managed with a senior psychologist.

- Attendance and participation in the workplace health program continues to increase, with attendance recorded and monitored at all events. Anecdotally, the program has translated to improved staff engagement and retention. “Providing initiatives on-site is a great way for time pressured lawyers to be tested for health issues that they would have otherwise had difficulty in finding time to attend to”. King & Wood Mallesons believes the money spent on gym memberships and other benefits is a good investment as it is highly valued by staff.

- The firm has seen a significant reduction in days taken off work due to mental health issues.

- Improved tracking, monitoring and reporting of mental health issues has helped raise awareness amongst HR and management, including at Board level. This has led to an increase in support of investing in initiatives to raise awareness and support a psychologically healthy workplace.

Appendix
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