

LawCare News

Welcome

to the Autumn edition of *LawCare News*.

The summer is traditionally a quieter time for us, and across the legal profession, but this year we were preparing for our 20th anniversary celebration and conference, which took place in London on Tuesday 10 October, which was also World Mental Health Day.

I'm proud to say the day was a great success. The conference, Making Mental Health Matter, brought together over 70 attendees from across the legal community and the jurisdictions. The half-day event was an opportunity to stimulate thinking about why mental health matters in the legal community, and was followed by a party with cake and a short speech from our vice-chair, Robert Venables.

Mr Venables outlined the history of LawCare, which has moved from being a charity with the limited remit of supporting solicitors with addiction and related problems, to one that offers help to the whole profession throughout the UK and Ireland on a wide range of issues encompassing, amongst others, stress, depression, anxiety and bullying at work.

Making Mental Health Matter echoed the theme of this year's World Mental Health day - mental health at work - and we launched a new booklet, Look After Others, Tips for Good Mental Health and Wellbeing at Work, to help organisations start to create a culture that encourages people to be open and honest about their mental health, and to access the support they may need. You can **download the booklet here**.

We had a great lineup of speakers and panellists. Professor Richard Collier of Newcastle Law School set the scene with what is currently known about mental health in the legal profession; Chris Parsons, Chairman of the India Practice of Herbert Smith Freehills, shared his personal story of mental health issues, and Jo Loughran, Director of Operations at Time to Change, spoke of how the campaign helps organisations to change the way they act and feel about mental health. In the afternoon Alex Aldridge, publisher of Legal Cheek, was in conversation with Lizzie Lockett, Acting CEO of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons, about the success of Mind Matters, the programme they have put in place to help people in their profession who are experiencing mental health issues.

Last, but not least, there was a very engaging panel discussion hosted by Eduardo Reyes, Features Editor of the Law Society Gazette. Eduardo drew out the organisational approaches to mental health from Nigel Jones, Chair of City Mental Health Alliance and a partner in Linklaters, Bryan Scant from the Junior Lawyers Division of the Law Society of England and Wales, Kirsty Hood from the Scottish Faculty of advocates, and Antoinette Moriarty of the Law School of Ireland Counselling Service. This was a lively and enlightening session, which drew many questions from the floor.

We are very pleased with all the positive feedback we've had, and we're inspired by the participants' motivation to work together, and with us, to continue to raise awareness about why mental health matters in the legal community, to promote the benefits of good mental health in the workplace, and to ensure that those in need of help and support know how and where to find it.

I hope you have a good quarter, and a great Christmas break. Do visit our website www.lawcare.org.uk to access details of the support we provide and the information and resources we have available.

Elizabeth Rimmer, CEO



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LawCare Top Tip: Keep Active

Find a physical activity you enjoy,
and make it part of your life.

You will feel better, it will boost your
self-esteem and reduce stress

**Download our Top Ten Tips
for good mental health
and wellbeing**

Looking After Yourself

Looking After Others

Bar of Northern Ireland Wellness Week

Trish McLellan, LawCare's Coordinator for Scotland and Northern Ireland delivered a presentation during the Bar of Northern Ireland's Wellness Week, which ran from 18-22 September.

It included talks, workshops and drop-in clinics to help evaluate and improve both physical and mental wellbeing. Ms McLellan addressed members in a CPD accredited presentation on the compelling case for organisations to look after the wellbeing of members and the support Lawcare offers to the legal community. This was followed by a healthy lunch!

"The Bar Wellness Committee and the team at the Bar Library deserve huge congratulations for producing such an impressive programme for their members," comments Ms McLellan, "especially as it is the first time they have run an event of this nature. I was very pleased LawCare was able to participate."



Why Wellbeing Matters in Edinburgh

Trish McLellan, LawCare's Coordinator for Scotland and Northern Ireland, was invited into the Edinburgh offices of Maclay Murray and Spens LLP on Friday 18 August to deliver a presentation 'Wellbeing...Why it Matters'.

As part of its health awareness month, the law firm was keen to raise awareness of mental health issues. All the staff who attended the presentation also took a supply of LawCare resources: the Top 10 Tips leaflets in particular proved very popular. They also retained a supply of LawCare's A5 leaflets for their staff area for those who had been unable to attend the event.

"It was a pleasure to visit MMS," comments Ms McLellan. "We're always pleased to hear of organisations engaging with the wellbeing agenda. It's encouraging that there appears to be growing acceptance that in addition to ensuring lawyers are properly trained in the delivery of black letter law, an equally vital component is looking after the health and wellbeing of those providing those services."



Good Turnout for Sunny LCGP

There was a good turnout at the 49th Legal Charities Garden Party [LCGP] in Middle Temple Gardens on the evening of Thursday 6 July. Over 700 people attended, including incoming Law Society President Joe Egan and outgoing President, Robert Bourns.

A brass band played while guests mingled in the sunshine, visiting 15 organisations, including law firms and chambers, ranged around the gardens. LCGP is the brainchild of Dennis Gordon, the principal founder of the Holborn Law Society, and it was set up in 1968 with the aim of raising funds for charities which support lawyers and their dependents. LawCare is one of the beneficiary charities, as are the Solicitors' Benevolent Association, the Barristers' Benevolent Association, The CILEX Benevolent Fund, and the IBC Benevolent Fund.

"It was great to see so many at the party," says Elizabeth Rimmer, CEO of LawCare. "Most of the LawCare team were there, including our chair Bronwen Still, and it was a great opportunity to meet our supporters, old and new. "The LCGP has raised over £500,000 for the charities since 1987 alone. It is important that the legal profession as a



whole – including the judiciary, barristers, solicitors and legal executives – get behind the LCGP so that it, in turn, can financially support the charities that provide assistance. "It goes without saying that we at LawCare are extremely grateful for the support we receive from the LCGP."

LawCare Delivers Support to CILEx

Ann Charlton, LawCare Coordinator for England and Wales, recently presented at two CILEx events about the charity's work.

The first event on 30 June was a Staff Training Day, while the second event on 7 July, was a Branch Personnel Day. Ms Charlton spoke in detail about what LawCare does, the type and number of calls we receive, who we help and in what situations.

"I was also able to tell them about our work to reduce stigma as well as helping people to talk about when they are having issues," says Ms Charlton. "I also encouraged people not to be so afraid of speaking up."



Read more of our news at www.lawcare.org.uk/news



Wednesday 1 November is National Stress Awareness Day

National Stress Awareness Day is organised by the International Stress Management Association every year. National Stress Awareness Day enables major goals to be achieved, including raising profile, achieving publicity about stress and stress prevention, and promoting the importance of wellbeing for individuals and organisations.

This year the theme echoes that of World Mental Health Day in October, with the focus on mental health and the promotion of wellbeing in the workplace. Ending the stigma associated with mental health is an organisational imperative, and the campaign will be looking at how employers are responding to mental health issues and hear from people about their experiences with mental health challenges.

www.isma.org.uk/national-stress-awareness-day