



P R E S S R E L E A S E

Embargoed until Monday 16 May

New Taskforce Tackles Mental Health Issues In the Law

A new cross-profession taskforce to promote and support mental health and wellbeing in the legal community launches this week.

The Legal Professions Wellbeing Taskforce was initiated by the Law Society and is driven by LawCare, a charity which provides support to the legal community. The taskforce brings together representatives from legal professional and educational establishments, those with legal expertise and knowledge of the sector.

“Law can be a demanding career. Many of us are drawn to the intellectual challenge and thrive on the high pressure our work entails, but with this high pressure can come stress,” explains Jonathan Smithers, President of the Law Society. “It is vital for legal professionals that there is greater awareness of the importance of mental health and greater openness to enable conversations about this issue.

“The Law Society provides a range of resources to support good practice management and resources for mental health and wellbeing, and the taskforce provides a welcome opportunity to work collaboratively with experts from across the legal sector to enhance mental health and wellbeing provision throughout our diverse community.”

Fifteen partners have pledged allegiance: the Law Society, LawCare, Bar Council, the SRA, CILEx, CILEx Regulation, the Law Society’s Equality Diversity and Inclusion Committee, the Institute of Trade Mark Attorneys, the University of Law, BPP, Newcastle University, Linklaters, City Mental Health Alliance, Junior Lawyers’ Division, and the Bar Standards Board.

“Published data demonstrates that the culture and practice of law can have a negative impact on mental health and wellbeing,” says Elizabeth Rimmer, Chief Executive of LawCare. “LawCare has identified that there is very low awareness of the support and services available to those in the legal community, and that there is stigma attached to acknowledging mental health issues. There is also a lack of knowledge in the community itself about good

practice and what that looks like, and to date there is no evaluative research on the effectiveness of existing wellbeing programmes.”

The Legal Professions Wellbeing Taskforce will bring representatives together to identify areas where collaboration will be beneficial; identify mechanisms for establishing and sharing best practice; identify how to improve the perception of mental health and well-being, and address stigma as a barrier to accessing support.

“We also need to consider how those in need of support can find it and trust it but, overall, we’re keen to develop tangible actions and solutions,” concludes Ms Rimmer.

For more information on the taskforce and its members, go to www.lawcare.org.uk/taskforce

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For more information contact:

Yvette Murphy, Communications Advisor, LawCare. M: 07791 327 238

E: ymurphy@lawcare.org.uk

Harriet Beaumont, Press Officer, The Law Society. T: 020 7320 5830

E: Harriet.Beaumont@LawSociety.org.uk

Notes to Editors:

LawCare is a charity which provides support to members of the legal professions in the UK and Ireland facing personal and profession problems. LawCare runs a completely confidential, free and independent Helpline **0800 279 6888** where the trained staff and volunteers have experience of working in the law.

LawCare raises awareness about the value of health and wellbeing in the legal community and the support available, working in partnership with regulatory and professional bodies. It also provides education on a range of topics related to wellbeing, and has a series of downloadable factsheets on the website, www.lawcare.org.uk

The Law Society is the independent professional body for solicitors. It represents and supports its members, promoting the highest professional standards and the rule of law.

The Law Society also works to ensure that no-one is above the law, and to protect everyone’s right to have access to justice. It promotes England and Wales as the jurisdiction of choice and the vital role legal services play in the economy. It also works internationally to open up markets to its members and to defend human rights, while supporting members with opportunities in the domestic market.