[Creating a healthy workplace improves mental wellbeing and productivity — UN](#)

10 October 2017 — People spend a large proportion of time at work, where experiences there factor into their overall wellbeing, the United Nations said on World Mental Health Day, noting that depression and anxiety disorders are common mental disorders that have an impact on our ability to work, and to work productively.

"Employers and managers who put in place workplace initiatives to [promote mental health](#) and to support employees who have mental disorders see gains not only in the health of their employees but also in their productivity at work," said the World Health Organization ([WHO](#)), placing mental health in the workplace as the theme of World Mental Health Day 2017.

On the other hand, WHO added that "a negative working environment, may lead to physical and mental health problems, harmful use of substances or alcohol, absenteeism and lost productivity."

On Twitter, [Secretary-General](#) António Guterres said [we can and must eliminate the stigma](#) that prevents people from speaking freely and seeking treatment for mental illness."

"Globally, more than 300 million people suffer from depression, the leading cause of disability. More than 260 million are living with anxiety disorders. Many of these people live with both" points out WHO.

A recent WHO-led study estimates that [depression and anxiety disorder](#)s cost the global economy one trillion dollars each year in lost productivity.

The UN health agency cited as risks to mental health inadequate health and safety policies; poor communication and management practices; limited participation in decision-making or low control over one's area of work; low levels of support for employees; inflexible working hours; and unclear tasks or organizational objectives.

To create a healthy workspace, WHO suggests, among other things, the importance of understanding the opportunities and needs of individual employees; interventions and good practices that protect and promote mental health in the workplace; and becoming aware of how the workplace environment can adapt to promote better mental health for employees and support sources where people can find help.

"Mental health interventions should be delivered as part of an integrated health and well-being strategy that covers prevention, early identification, support and rehabilitation," stresses WHO.

World Mental Health Day is observed on 10 October every year, with the overall objective of raising awareness of mental health issues and mobilizing efforts in support of better mental health.