

News story: This is Me Cumbria

The Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) and Sellafield Ltd joined other big businesses to back the 'This is Me' campaign, which has launched in Cumbria.

More than 120 business leaders attended the 'This is Me' event in Penrith today.

The new video features people from employers across the county to show people that anyone can suffer from mental health issues and that it's okay to talk.

'This is Me'

Adrian Simper, NDA's director of strategy and technology, said:

For years we have had a relentless focus on people's physical safety and well-being at work. But we have yet to give the same attention to people's minds.

The opportunity to make the workplace a more productive, safer and fulfilling place is too great to miss.

The 'This is Me' in Cumbria event is testament to the drive to continue raising awareness at a local level. We need to continue the momentum and work towards breaking the stigma around mental ill health.

Sellafield Ltd's equality, diversity and inclusion lead Alan Rankin, said:

We were delighted to help launch this campaign in Cumbria. This follows the [North West](#) launch last year.

We know that mental health at work is one of the biggest challenges faced by employers. This campaign creates a powerful way of allowing employees to share personal stories and experiences that enables colleagues to talk more openly about mental health.

The Cumbrian launch builds upon our year of activity to promote mental health and well-being and coincides with 'Time to Talk' day, which is an annual event to encourage people to speak about their mental well-being.

Rob Johnston, chief executive of the Cumbria Chamber of Commerce, hosted the launch event. He said:

Mental ill health is the leading cause of sickness absence, costing

employers an average of £1,035 per employee per year.

It's in businesses' interests to tackle this issue and that's a message the chamber has been pushing by offering toolkits, advice and a podcast for employers.

We hope that, through 'This is Me', we can reinforce this message and confront the stigma around mental ill health.

Employees are invited to join events this week and raise money for mental health charities.

The 'This is Me' campaign challenges the stigma around mental health at work and aims to break the culture of silence by supporting people to tell their own stories.

The campaign was started by the Lord Mayor's Appeal in the City of London, in association with Barclays, and is being rolled out across the country.

Barclays is backing the Cumbrian launch alongside the NDA, Sellafield Ltd, BAE Systems, Cumbria Police and Cumbria Chamber of Commerce.

Alan Rankin added:

Around 1 in 4 people in the UK experience a mental health problem each year, and by 2030 the estimated cost of staff mental health related issues nationally is set to rise to £32.7 billion.

As responsible businesses we all have an obligation to get involved and take an active interest in the wellbeing of our staff whilst creating environments where those in need can get the help and support required both now and in the future.