

One in three Aussie men fear discussing mental health at work could risk their job

PRESS RELEASE, Australia, Monday 9 September 2019: One in three employed Australian men (33%) fear their job could be at risk if they discuss their mental health at work, according to new research* from Movember.

The poll, conducted by Ipsos MORI surveyed 1,000 Australian men aged between 18 and 75. It found that almost half (49%) of employed men would be worried about colleagues making negative comments behind their backs if they discussed mental health issues at work.

Published ahead of World Suicide Prevention Day, the research reveals that despite growing awareness of the male mental health crisis, many employed men are reluctant to open up about their problems in case it has a negative impact on their career. Two in five (40%) think they could be held back from promotion if they discussed mental health issues at work.

The majority of men are aware of the availability of mental health days in their workplace, with about three in five (59%) employed men said they would be able to take time off work, if they were struggling with their mental health or other personal issues.

However, this research suggests that stigma surrounding mental health is still preventing men from talking about their problems and seeking help when they need it.

Commenting on the findings. Movember's global mental health and suicide prevention director Brendan Maher said:

“Although we've made great progress in starting to talk openly about how we are feeling, there are many men worried that a personal mental health challenge might be revealed, especially in the workplace.

“We need to find effective ways of tackling that stigma so that men aren't discouraged from getting the help they need.

“In the workplace, this can start with leaders encouraging conversations about the tough stuff and reminding staff that they won't be marked down and will be supported if they are struggling.”

Mark Kelly, a thirty-year-old electrician from Enmore, Sydney has been a Mo Bro since 2011- since then he has raised awareness of men's health and over \$80K for Movember. Over the past ten years he has struggled with depression himself, experiencing it first when he was just 20. Back then, his family spotted changes in his behaviour and helped him get the support he needed. At the time, if he was struggling at work, he felt uncomfortable talking about this:

“In my early twenties I was more likely to tell my boss that I was sick or had the flu than speak openly about my mental health. Looking back, it was mainly because I felt embarrassed. My attitude is totally different now and I'm fortunate to have developed a really good relationship with my boss. My marriage broke up late last year and he made sure I knew that I could take time off if I needed. This was a weight off for me at a stressful time.

“Personally, I think opening up at work helps your career. When your manager or workmates are aware that you’re struggling, they show signs of solidarity. If anything, I feel much more supported and confident at work now than when I hid my struggles.”

Three out of four suicides are men¹ and it remains the leading cause of death for men under the age of 44².

Risk factors that may increase a man’s vulnerability to poor mental health and suicide include relationship breakdown, acute stress, persistent low mood and social isolation³.

To coincide with World Suicide Prevention Day, Movember’s [Man of More Words](#) campaign is focused on encouraging men to open when they are going through a tough time.

Through a series of videos and social media posts, the charity is sharing the stories of men who have benefited from speaking up.

Movember’s research also shows that almost three quarters of men (74%) polled believe that talking openly is an effective way of tackling problems.

Brendan Maher adds: “We’re asking everyone be a ‘Man of More Words’. We know it can be sometimes difficult to have those conversations but it’s crucial that people reach out to someone when they are facing a tough time.

“It could also mean reaching out to a friend who you think might be having a tough time - and taking the time to stop and really listen to him.”

To learn more about the campaign and how you can effectively help the men in your life to open up visit www.movember.com

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Notes to Editors

Please remember to print local help lines should your media outlet choose to share suicide statistics and information. The local helpline numbers are: Lifeline 13 11 14; Beyond Blue 1300 22 4636; Suicide Call Back Service 1300 659 467.

Media Contact:

For further information or to arrange an interview, please contact – Muireann Kirby, Media Relations Specialist, Movember Australia via muireann.kirby@movember.com / 04 32118221

Research:

*All research unless otherwise stated was conducted by Ipsos Mori. Ipsos MORI conducted a quota survey through its online panel of 1,000 Australian men aged 18-75. Response quotas were set based on age, region and working status and the final data were weighted to reflect these profiles. Fieldwork ran from 2nd August - 12th August 2019. 662 men participated who are currently employed.

About Movember:

Movember is the leading charity dedicated to changing the face of men's health around the world. With a singular goal to stop men dying too young, the foundation supports the

following causes: prostate cancer, testicular cancer, mental health and suicide prevention. Movember is working towards its goal to halve the number of deaths from testicular cancer by 2030. Since 2003, the support of more than 5 million participants has funded over 1,200 innovative projects across more than 20 countries. To donate or learn more, please visit movember.com

References:

1. Australian Bureau of Statistics 3303.0, 2017 Report, Causes of Death, Australia. Last accessed 3 Sept 2019. <https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/3303.02017>
2. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2019 Report. Last accessed 3 Sept 2019. <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/life-expectancy-death/deaths-in-australia/contents/leading-causes-of-death>
3. Black Dog Institute, 2014, Men's experiences with suicidal behaviour and depression research report (funded by Movember). Last accessed 3 Sept 2019. <https://www.blackdoginstitute.org.au/docs/default-source/research/evidence-and-policy-section/mens-health-report-170315-final.pdf?sfvrsn=0>