

## New report reveals the inside story on depression at work

*People with depression are in need of more help and support from their employers and colleagues according to the results of new research revealed to coincide with Depression Awareness Week 2008 (21-26 April).*

A new report, published by Depression Alliance and funded by Servier Laboratories Limited, reveals the majority (79%)<sup>1</sup> of people diagnosed with depression in the UK<sup>2</sup> feel disclosing their condition to colleagues would have a detrimental impact on them, and nearly a third (32%) believe they have been turned down for a job.<sup>1</sup>

People with depression and anxiety make up nearly a tenth (9.8%) of the UK population of working age<sup>2</sup> and according to results revealed today 46% find that having a job helps them recover.<sup>1</sup> However, the *Inside Story* report reveals that people with depression still feel affected by stigma in the workplace including being discouraged from taking on exciting projects (51%), being avoided by colleagues (48%), receiving snide comments (47%) and even being passed over for promotion (50%). Partly as result of this only a quarter (25%) of people with depression inform their personnel departments of their condition.<sup>1</sup>

Launching the report Emer O'Neill, Chief Executive at Depression Alliance commented, *"Having a job is very important to people with depression so employers and colleagues need to have a much greater understanding of the challenges faced by people with depression in order to provide the support they need to contribute fully."*

The *Inside Story* report also reveals that many workplaces do not have the structures in place to support their employees, with 13.6% of respondents not having access to any support and 91% not having access to support when required. Flexitime, cover for time off and counselling were the three areas that came out of the report as being most desired by people with depression.<sup>1</sup>

The report also looked at the general impact of depression on daily life and low energy was highlighted as the most distressing aspect of their depression in 75% of cases.<sup>1</sup> A large majority of respondents (83%) stated that their work is adversely



affected by poor quality of sleep, helping contribute to over a third (40%) being forced to lose their job.<sup>1</sup>

*“Sleep disturbance can have a major impact in people with depression, and this data also highlights the importance of healthcare professionals and patients working in partnership to manage their depression in a way that will not negatively impact on their sleep”* concluded Emer O’Neill, Chief Executive at Depression Alliance.

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**References:**

1. Depression Alliance conducted the *Inside Story* survey amongst 288 members, February-March 2008.
2. National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence. Depression: managing depression in primary and secondary care. Clinical Guideline 23; Full Guideline. London. British Psychological Society & The Royal College of Psychiatrists, 2004. <http://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/index.jsp?action=download&o=29617> accessed 19/11/2007.

**Notes to editors:**

Depression Alliance is the leading UK charity dealing with depression. DA has been in existence for over 25 years. We are a member orientated charity and focus our efforts on sharing and promoting good practice, providing support, practical advice and activities that can make a difference to people who do or have experienced depression. Our work challenges the stigma associated with the condition. We promote and encourage research into the cause and prevention of depression and the dissemination of the results of such research. Our main activities are the coordination of:

- Self help groups: these are a national network of user led support groups
- Publications: leaflets that provide information on depression and related topics
- DA TALK: a self help chat room open only to our members
- Pen friend: a scheme whereby people with similar interests write to each other
- WEBSITE: [www.depressionalliance.org](http://www.depressionalliance.org) currently receives 50,000 hits a month
- A Single Step: our quarterly newsletter is circulated to all members
- Depression Awareness week: an annual national campaign in April that highlights specific topics related to depression
- Over 3000 members

The Inside Story Survey was supported by Servier Laboratories Ltd, in association with Depression Alliance.

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