



Press release
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IoD Jersey Announces Suicide Prevention Awareness Initiative in Collaboration with Jersey Recovery College

The Institute of Directors (IoD) Jersey, through its Workplace Wellbeing and Productivity Sub Committee, is proud to announce a new collaboration with Jersey Recovery College to raise awareness about suicide prevention in the community.

This initiative underscores a commitment to mental health advocacy and support in businesses, recognising the profound impact of suicide on individuals and the wider community. The intention of the initiative is to raise awareness, give individuals knowledge and tools and reduce stigma through training and education.

The training has been designed and delivered by local mental health charity, Jersey Recovery College (JRC), as part of its Mental Health at Work programme. It will be delivered either in facilities provided by the recipient organisation or in an alternative safe environment. Over the duration of the 2-hour course delivered by a qualified practitioner in conjunction with someone with lived experience the participants will be able to:

- Identify myths about suicide
- Discuss fears around talking about suicide
- Recognise signs of emotional distress
- Develop ways of talking about suicide
- Consider whether they could support someone experiencing thoughts of suicide

The idea behind the initiative came from IoD Jersey's Chair of Industry Sub-Committee, Alex Ruddy, who organises Run for Kezia, which was set up by Alex's daughter and friends following the death of Kezia Mason two years ago. Run for Kezia in turn fundraises for Kezia's Fund which provides grants for projects to support the mental health and well-being of children and young people in Jersey.

The first nine sessions of this vital programme are generously sponsored by the Mason family, a testament to their dedication to this important cause.

Rob Mason said "We are delighted to be able to support the Suicide prevention training via this IoD and JRC initiative. We hope the training will not only equip people with the skills to recognise and support individuals in distress but also fosters a culture of empathy and openness. By actively reducing the stigma associated with discussing suicide, organisations create a ripple effect that extends into the wider community."

Beth Moore, CEO of Jersey Recovery College, said: "We already do a lot of work with local businesses around improving mental health, we also address the important issue of suicide awareness and prevention through our Community programme. This partnership with the IoD is an important step forward in reaching more people with these important skills and tools."

Suicide prevention is a critical issue that affects communities worldwide, and the IoD is dedicated to playing a proactive role in addressing it. Recent statistics, including those from Samaritans' report "The economic cost of suicide in the UK," highlight the demographic of concern, particularly working-age males. These figures emphasise the urgency of collective action to provide support and resources to those in need.

As a leading voice in the business community, the IoD believes it is well-positioned to advocate for suicide prevention awareness and support initiatives being brought into the workplace. It's extensive network and reach ensures effective mobilisation of resources, with the ability to raise awareness, and foster collaboration among businesses and organisations to address this pressing issue. JRC will provide the mental health and training expertise to bring this initiative to life.

The initiative has received support from several Island businesses already, as well as the Chamber of Commerce, reflecting widespread demand to highlight this important issue. Moving forward, the IoD intends to self-fund the initiative, with potential sponsorship from larger corporates and grants to sustain and expand its impact.

Peter Bradley, Director of Public Health, Government of Jersey, says: "As we work towards finalising the Government's Suicide Prevention Strategy we are pleased to acknowledge and support the IoD in their awareness programme.

"Suicide is a community issue and the workplace is an important environment in our lives. Equipping boards with targeted training, delivered by professionals through Jersey Recovery College is a forward-thinking initiative designed to enhance the wellbeing of our working population and wider community."

Andrew Welsby, HR Director at Jersey Electricity who are supporting the initiative, says: "We are committed to supporting the physical and emotional wellbeing of our colleagues. We recognise the varied backgrounds of our team and understand that some individuals may be at higher risk of experiencing mental health challenges. We are therefore proud to support the IoD and Jersey Recovery College in their suicide awareness initiative.

"This vital programme will equip our staff with the necessary understanding to address this critical issue effectively. As senior leaders, we have an inherent duty of care towards our workforce, initiatives such as these provided by the IoD are invaluable additions to our existing wellbeing programmes, fostering a safer and more supportive environment for all."

For more information about the IoD and JRC's Suicide Prevention Awareness Initiative or to inquire about how you can get involved, please contact: officer.jersey@iod.net

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Notes to editors

IoD Jersey was founded in 1966 and has over 700 members from all sectors of the business community, both private and public sectors.

The local branch promotes the business sector and strives through lobbying to ensure that political decisions do not stifle local business and free enterprise.

The Institute of Directors (IoD) was founded in 1903 and obtained a Royal Charter in 1906. The IoD is a non-party political organisation with approximately 35,000 members in the United Kingdom and overseas. Membership includes directors from right across the business spectrum – from media to manufacturing, professional services to the public and voluntary sectors. Members include CEOs of large corporations as well as entrepreneurial directors of start-up companies.

Jersey Recovery College (JRC) is a local mental health charity. It provides education and training opportunities for those experiencing mental health difficulties and the families, friends, colleagues and professionals who support them in Jersey.

JRC courses support adults to enhance their knowledge and understanding of mental health conditions, recovery, wellbeing and life skills. Community courses are free to attend and are self-referral. The Mental Health at Work programme is designed to create mentally healthy workplaces, working as a social enterprise to help fund the rest of the charity. All JRC courses work to provide hope, opportunity and empowerment.