

Health Bulletin

Based on the MHLW's *Guidelines for Maintaining and Improving the Mental Health of Workers*

Line-Based Care

Looking at the numbers, you can really see that the number of cases is increasing year by year, can't you?

What's particularly striking is mental disorders. The number has surged by about 1.7 times, jumping from 608 cases in FY2020 to 1,057 cases in FY2024.



Self-Care

This refers to care where workers notice their own stress and take action to cope with it. It is the mental health care that individuals practice by **themselves**.

Line-Based Care

This refers to care where managers and supervisors improve the work environment, handle consultations, and respond to any changes in their subordinates' condition. It is the mental health care performed by **managers and supervisors**.

Care by Internal Occupational Health Staff

This refers to care that involves supporting workers, managers, and supervisors, as well as planning and formulating specific mental health initiatives. It is the care provided by **occupational physicians, occupational health nurses, and HR/labor management staff**.

Care by External Resources

This refers to utilizing and receiving support from specialized institutions and experts outside the company. It is the mental health care provided by **external specialized organizations**.



So, the framework recommended by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare for organizations to address mental health consists of four pillars, right?

That's right. So today, let's focus on one of those pillars: Line-Based Care, and learn all about it.



Source: Excerpted from Table 14, "Percentage of Workers by Availability of Someone to Consult with About Stress and by Type of Consultant," in the *Overview of the 2022 Survey on Industrial Safety and Health* by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW).

(Age)	Having someone to consult with, including external resources	Coworkers	Managers	HR / Labor Management Staff	Occupational Physicians
20~29	84.9	65	66.2	11.4	5.3
30~39	91.7	76.5	73.4	24.9	9.6
40~49	87.9	67.8	64.1	10.6	5.7
50~59	84.9	64.9	62.2	8.7	8
60~	85.1	61.3	57	3.4	16.3

Survey Sample: 14,260 | Valid Responses: 8,144 | Valid Response Rate: 57.1% (%)

While about 80% to 90% of people consult with someone outside the workplace, that figure drops to 60% to 70% for colleagues and supervisors at work. This means nearly 20% of people don't consult anyone within their workplace, doesn't it?



Exactly. There are likely many people who feel unable to consult anyone and end up carrying the burden all by themselves.

Trends in the number of companies by compliance status of the Act on the Promotion of Women's Participation and Advancement in the Workplace

Category	Fiscal Year				
	FY2019 Survey	FY2021 Survey	FY2023 Survey	FY2024 Survey	FY2025 Survey
Overtime-related deaths, etc.	802	803	910	1,108	1,304
Cerebrovascular and cardiovascular diseases	194	174	198	221	247
	194	172	194	216	241
	Industrial accidents	0	2	4	5
Serious disasters due to business operations	608	629	712	887	1,057
	608	629	710	883	1,055
Mental disorders	0	0	2	4	2
	0	0	2	4	2
	Industrial accidents	0	0	2	4
Serious disasters due to business operations	0	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0	0

Source: Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, "Trends in the Number of Companies by Compliance Status of the Act on the Promotion of Women's Participation and Advancement in the Workplace"

Who are the "Managers and Supervisors" responsible for Line-Based Care?



Those with delegated authority

Definition: This refers to individuals who have been delegated the authority by the employer to direct and command employees.

Specific job titles: Generally, this applies to title holders such as department heads (General Managers) and section managers (Managers).

Roles and Responsibilities of Managers and Supervisors

Fulfilling the Duty of Care

The operational responsibility to ensure that subordinates do not compromise their physical or mental health.

Assessing and Improving the Work Environment

Adjusting workloads and establishing support systems.

Handling Consultations and Acting as a Bridge

The role of noticing signs of poor health and connecting individuals with specialists.

The 4-Step Action Plan

1. Notice

2. Approach

3. Listen

4. Link

Practical Line-Based Care

① Key Points for Observation

Observation: Notice "changes from the usual" early on

Attendance

- [] Increase in tardiness, leaving early, and absences
- [] Disproportionate increase in overtime and working on days off
- [] Failure to notify the office when taking time off

Work Performance

- [] Decline in work efficiency
- [] Delays in producing or delivering work results
- [] Lack of reporting, consulting, or general conversation in the workplace—or conversely, becoming unusually talkative

Behavior

- [] Lifeless facial expressions and a general lack of energy in movements
- [] Noticeable unnatural words and actions
- [] Noticeable increase in mistakes and accidents
- [] Disheveled clothing or poor personal hygiene

I'd really like you to proactively reach out to anyone who seems a bit different from usual

② Key Points for Active Listening

Active Listening: Listen to them attentively

Key Points of Active Listening

① Acknowledge and accept their feelings

Show genuine interest in the person, and convey that interest clearly through your facial expressions and attitude.

② Put yourself in their shoes

Listen while thinking to yourself,
"If I were placed in the exact same situation, I would probably say and do the same things they are."



By doing this, you can prevent yourself from listening with a judgmental or critical attitude, and instead make the other person feel genuinely heard and supported.

But after that, it can be hard to know exactly where to connect them, isn't it?

③ Key Points for Connecting

Connecting: Coordinate with "Occupational Health Staff" and "External Resources"

① Internal Occupational Health Staff [Via HR]

Occupational physicians, occupational health nurses, etc.

② External Resources [Confidential]

- **Company-contracted mental health consultation service** (Provided for employees)
- **Local public health agencies** (Public consultation resources)
 - Occupational Health Support Centers
 - Regional Occupational Health Centers (*Available only for workplaces with 50 or fewer employees*)
 - Mental Health and Welfare Centers
- **Medical & Specialized Institutions**
 - Clinics such as psychosomatic medicine and psychiatry
- **MHLW Phone/SNS Consultation Desk: "Kokoro no Mimi"**
 - (A support portal site commissioned and operated by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare)
- **External Consultation Desks** (Such as our company)
 - Consultation services available via email



The "skewer" of a "Yakitori Boss" represents one's "aspiration." It is also crucial to stay true to your core purpose—the very reason why you work.

Step 1: The "KE-CHI-NA-NO-MI-YA" Sign

A mnemonic used to spot early signs of mental health distress:

KE

Kyuka (Absence): Increase in leaves or late arrivals.

CHI

Chikoku (Lateness): Frequent tardiness or early departures.

NA

Nakigoto (Grumbling): More complaints or negative talk.

NO

Nouryoku (Ability): Drop in work efficiency or results.

MI

Miss (Mistakes): Increase in careless errors or accidents.

YA

Yametai (Resignation): Mentioning quitting or leaving.

2006: Proposed by Dr. Yasuna Suzuki

The "YAKITORI" Manager Model

Strive to be a leader who supports both work results and mental wellness:

YA

Yasashii (Kind): Supportive and empathetic to people.

KI

Kibishii (Strict): Maintaining high professional standards.

TO

Tottusuki-yasui (Approachable): Easy to talk to and consult.

RI

Riseiteki (Rational): Calm, objective, and non-emotional.

Proposed by Takashi Sato, Comprehensive Psychological Education Institute

Optimizing the Work Environment

Thermal Environment

Is appropriate temperature and humidity maintained consistently throughout the day?

Lighting & Daylight

Are brightness levels set effectively to reduce eye strain and promote focus?

Acoustic Environment

Ensuring noise insulation and providing a quiet space for deep concentration.

Air Quality

Maintaining thorough ventilation and the active removal of unpleasant odors.