

# Employers must engage workers in addressing mental health

KUALA LUMPUR: Employers need to ensure that workplaces are both physically and mentally healthy for all employees.

Malaysian Employers Federation executive director Datuk Shamsuddin Bardan said work-related stress was a key issue of concern in the country.

He said stress, depression or anxiety of employees, if not managed well, would be costly to the workers and organisation.

“As employers, we need to ensure that employees’ mental health is properly addressed. It is important that employers take steps to incorporate mental health at the workplace. Among others, employees should be allowed to take a five-minute break at intervals to do simple exercises,” he told the *New Straits Times* yesterday.

Shamsuddin urged employees to speak out and voice their concerns to their employers to address issues of concern.

“Malaysians, generally, are not open to discussing their problems and over time, this will lead to bigger problems, like severe depression, and some may even opt to leave the job. Normally, people who are suspected of having mental stress would keep it to themselves. This shouldn’t be the case.

“Those suffering from poor mental health problems must seek guidance or medical attention. They must come forward and discuss with the experts on how this matter can be best addressed.

“Employers, on the other hand, must understand the issues faced by employees and look at ways to best address them.”

He also stressed the need to address the stigma around talking about mental health and in getting people suffering from mental health issues to seek help from medical experts.

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