

NEWS/BUSINESS/FINANCE/LIFESTYLE EDITORS
[For Immediate Release]

Community Business launches pioneering research:
Embracing Mental Health in the Workplace in Asia

Hong Kong, 12 July 2018 – [Community Business](#), a leading not-for-profit organisation advancing responsible and inclusive business practices in Asia, has extended its portfolio of research, by releasing its latest report: [Embracing Mental Health in the Workplace in Asia](#).

This pioneering research is timely, given the increasingly focus worldwide on mental health. In 2017 the World Health Organization revealed that depression is the leading cause of disability worldwide, with over 300 million people being affected. There is growing recognition that the workplace is one of the key environments that affects mental wellbeing and health and that workplace stress is a key contributing factor. Yet, fearful of the stigma and taboo surrounding the topic of mental health, few companies today are addressing this critical aspect of employee wellbeing in their organisations in Asia.

The research presents the business case for addressing mental health in the workplace, the context of mental health in five markets across Asia (China, Hong Kong, India, Japan and Singapore), corporate case studies and summary recommendations for companies looking to put mental health on their corporate agenda.

“One of our core values at Community Business is to be pioneering. For us that often means tackling and addressing issues that many may not be ready to address or shy away from. We know the subject of mental health is a highly sensitive one – but it is an issue our workplaces cannot ignore. Our new research, *Embracing Mental Health in the Workplace*, is designed to increase collective understanding on the issues, facilitate more open dialogue and highlight the critical role that companies have to play in creating supportive work environments.” commented Kate Vernon, Executive Director at Community Business and author of the research.

This research is the first of its kind looking at mental health in the workplace in Asia. In addition to extensive secondary research and review of existing resources, it is based on in depth interviews with a number of mental health experts in different markets across the region as well as corporate representatives with expertise and insights on employee wellbeing. On a market by market basis, the research explores:

- statistics relating to the incidence of mental health drawn from secondary sources
- key environmental factors contributing to the incidence of mental health
- challenges for those experiencing mental health issues
- legal context and Government response
- local initiatives

“This latest research represents a bold start to addressing the knowledge gap on this critical aspect of employee wellbeing throughout Asia. We acknowledge that it will take a long-term and collective effort to bring about culture change, but we remain committed to playing our role in reducing the stigma and promoting a more positive approach to mental health challenges in the workplace” said Nitin Prasad, Chairman, Shell Companies in India and Lead Sponsor of the research.

The report features corporate case studies, showcasing what companies are already doing to take a proactive approach to mental health in their workplaces in Asia. These include: Barclays, BNY Mellon, Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer, GSK, IBM, Linklaters and Shell.

Based on the knowledge shared by the experts and the insights gained by the companies featured, the research provides a set of summary recommendations for companies looking to put mental health on their corporate agenda in Asia. These include:

- Take steps to reduce the stigma
- Build infrastructure to support
- Promote positive mental health
- Intervene early
- Provide proactive support
- Reduce workplace stress

The full 84-page report and summary extract, can be downloaded [here](#).

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About Community Business

[Community Business](#) is a not-for-profit organisation (Hong Kong Charity Number 91/6560) whose mission is to lead, inspire and support businesses to have a positive impact on people and communities. A recognised leader in advancing responsible and inclusive business practices in Asia, Community Business facilitates networks, conducts research and events, leads programmes and campaigns and provides training and consultancy. Our focus on responsible business is aligned to 5 mission-led themes:

- Building responsible leadership
- Investing in local communities
- Tackling workplace inequality
- Ensuring employee wellbeing
- Promoting social inclusion

Falling underneath the ensuring employee wellbeing theme, Community Business have increased their focus on mental health over the last 18 months by partnering with corporate and NGO stakeholders to drive awareness for mental health issues in Asia and push for a greater focus on overall employee wellbeing across the region.

Founded in 2003 and based in Hong Kong with a presence in India and the United Kingdom, Community Business works with companies of all sizes and from diverse industries across Asia, harnessing the power of business to drive social change. For more information, please visit www.communitybusiness.org.

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