

Mental Health in the Workplace

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The **Portuguese Alliance for the Promotion of Mental Health in the Workplace (ASM)** is a private non-profit institution founded on October 28, 2022. **ASM was established** based on the recognition of the central role that mental health plays in each person's life, the long-identified challenges to ensure the right to mental health, and also the opportunity resulting from the exposure that the topic had during the COVID-19 pandemic, which unprecedentedly demonstrated the numerous vulnerabilities we face in this area, and how mental health issues impact all dimensions of society, demanding the long-demanded multisectoral intervention, in which workplaces play a decisive role. **ASM seeks** to contribute as an aggregating and driving system, promoting dialogue and cooperation among different stakeholders, aligned with national and international commitments, to implement the necessary measures to promote mental health and prevent mental illness in the workplace. On the one hand, it is essential to ensure the conditions for the safe treatment of mental health and illness, free from fear, stigma, or risk of discrimination. It is also crucial to continuously work towards adopting working conditions where each person can develop their potential, be supported in their vulnerabilities, and have access to early intervention at the first signs of risk when they become ill and return to work after an absence due to illness. On the other hand, promoting mental health in the workplace should also align with the principles of the International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which includes people with mental health problems, regarding the right to work on equal terms with others. The attainment of these goals is only possible with a strong commitment from civil society (**ASM already counts more than 30 organisations** representing different sectors of activity, foundations, academia, and municipalities), academia (**ASM's Scientific Council** includes researchers from other parts of the country), in close cooperation with the agencies that have crucial roles in translating commitments into concrete actions. Therefore, **ASM's Advisory Council** includes representation from the Authority for Working Conditions (ACT), with whom a collaboration protocol has already been established; the Commission for Equality in the Workplace and Employment (CITE); the National Occupational Health Program (DGS / PNSO); the Specialty College of Occupational Medicine of the Order of Physicians; the Portuguese Society of Psychiatry and Mental Health; the Directorate-General for Administration and Public Employment and the Directorate-General for Education. Therefore, **ASM is becoming the communal space** that [did not yet] exist and will contribute to taking the necessary steps together to promote mental health further and prevent mental illness in the workplace.

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