

The Wellbeing Facilitator for Film and TV



The EVIDENCE

“The cost to business of poor mental health is well evidenced, as is the return on investment associated with early intervention on workplace mental health. In an industry driven by talent, the finding that vast swathes of the existing workforce – particularly the diverse talent the industry is working so hard to attract – are considering leaving because of poor mental health is a serious and pressing concern.” (The Looking Glass Report: Film and TV Charity; London, February 2020)

In February 2020, The Film and TV Charity published ‘The Looking Glass’, a report highlighting the results of a survey of the mental health and wellbeing of over 9000 workers in the UK Film and TV sector.

The evidence was stark:

- 87% of workers had suffered mental ill health
- 55% of workers in the industry had considered taking their own lives (as opposed to 20% in the general UK population.)

The industry had identified a serious mental health crisis in its workers which set medics alone were not equipped or trained to deal with. **Then COVID-19 hit.** Due to COVID-19 the prevalence of mental health issues has increased by 8.1% (Public Health England) with 80% of people with an existing condition reporting a fall in wellbeing due to the pandemic. Urgent and decisive action is required to address the worsening mental health crisis in the Film and TV industry.

The SOLUTION, The WELLBEING FACILITATOR (WBF)

6ft From CIC have developed and instigated a new role called the Wellbeing Facilitator. A WBF is a third party, highly trained presence on set whose role is to stem and reverse the tide of mental ill health. The role is entirely separate from the COVID Compliance Officer and has a unique dual purpose:

- 1) **Advise producers and heads of department on how to prevent stress and mental health issues and meet their legal duty of care to the crew and cast**
- 2) **Robustly support all crew and cast with their own mental health and wellbeing on set.**

6ft From CIC train and mentor WBF’s to support the production to maintain best employment practice, drive high performance levels, de-escalate challenging situations and advise on mental health risk. The result? The sustainable and ethical delivery of outstanding creative content.

The role has been successfully deployed on productions such as His Dark Materials, The Lost Girls and Small Axe and is due to be used on ‘Pretty Red Dress’, BFI, ‘This Way Up’, C4 and an NBC Universal UK production.

The WBF will:

- Create a production specific Mental Health (MH) and Wellbeing Policy
- Produce Stress/MH Risk Assessments (i.e. work environment, content, contributors)
- Develop positive prevention MH initiatives for Production
- Create Personal Wellbeing Plans where applicable
- Liaise with Unit/Set Medic on mental health and wellbeing issues
- Signpost to appropriate support organisations
- Have access to a peer network of support and advice
- Offer a broad range of evidence based non-clinical interventions*covering resilience, stress, mindfulness, optimal performance and distress reduction.

*It must be stressed that a WBF does not diagnose issues nor are they either a counsellor or a therapist and there is a strict boundary between clinical interventions and the role of the WBF.

NEXT STEPS

Contact mattl@6ftfrom.org or visit www.6ftfrom.org to discuss hiring a WBF or to request training