

BE A GAME CHANGER

BUSINESS Toolkit

**Let's talk...
about mental health**

 @ NU_foundation  @ NewcastleUnitedFoundation

[#BEAGAMECHANGER](https://twitter.com/NU_foundation)

nufoundation.org.uk/BEAGAMECHANGER



Newcastle
City Council 

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About this Toolkit

This toolkit will:

- Support your organisations commitment to the mental health and wellbeing of your staff and customers.
- Help you to engage people, particularly men, with mental health and wellbeing messages in an innovative and creative way.
- Give you access to insight and advice developed by Newcastle United fans for Newcastle United fans.
- Equip you with cost-effective ideas for engaging with stakeholders.

What will it do?

Using the power of football, this toolkit will provide you with ideas on how to promote positive mental health and wellbeing in your workplace or community venue.

It is well known in the health community that men rarely engage in traditional health services or health campaigns. They often consider themselves to live healthy lives despite exhibiting unhealthy lifestyles. They do, however, engage in sport or football based health campaigns. Examples of these include national campaigns such as Prostate Cancer UK, but also regional campaigns like Newcastle United Foundation's [#BeAGameChanger](#) campaign.

Introducing #BeAGameChanger

#BeAGameChanger is a Newcastle United Foundation campaign which encourages football fans to talk more about mental health and to take a proactive approach in looking after their wellbeing.

'Be a Game Changer', funded by Newcastle City Council and the Premier League PFA Community Fund, aims to raise awareness, and change perception of mental health issues. The campaign encourages fans to take action to look after their mental health, in a similar way they would look after their physical health.

Using the power of the NUFC badge, the campaign has already reached thousands of football fans, particularly men, and engaged them with topics around mental health and wellbeing, which they may have previously overlooked or not felt comfortable talking about.

NUFC fan Les, 31 who has experienced depression said: "This campaign is so important, through the real life stories it has introduced me to people who are just like me. On the outside we look different; but the story is the same. We have had our demons and by sharing we have helped others. I've received the best advice I've ever had by people who have been in the same situation as me"

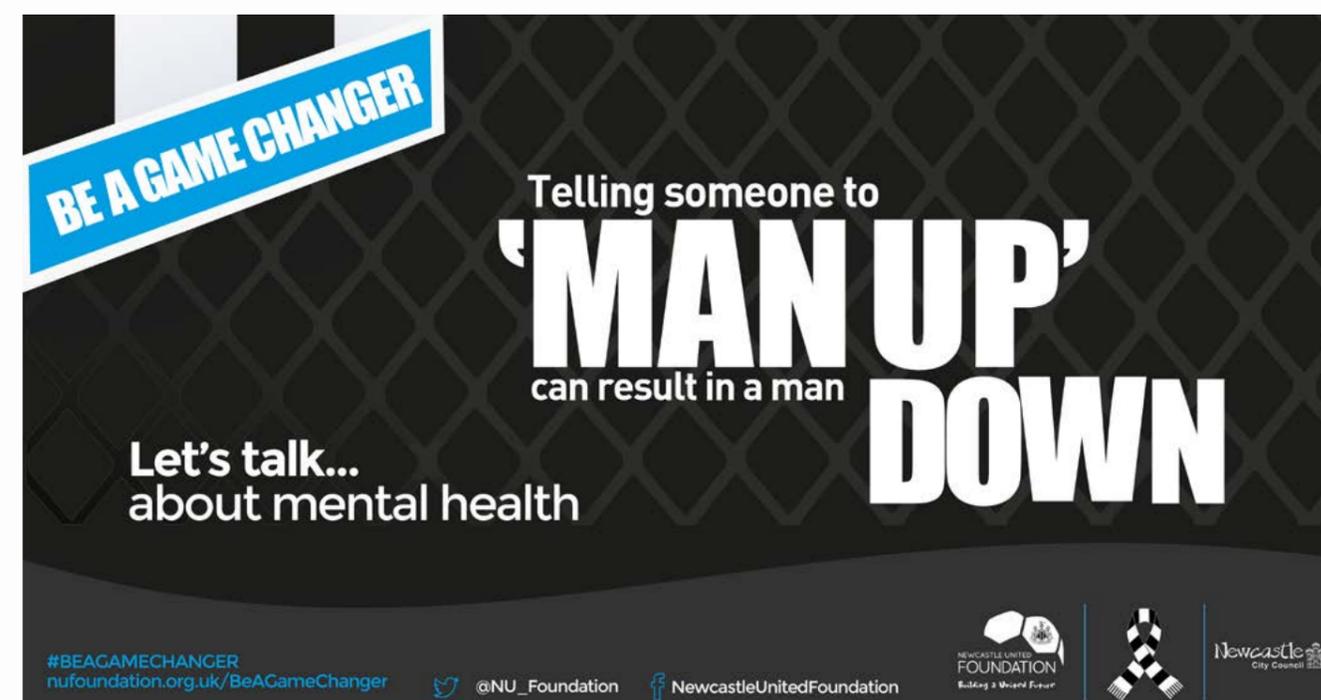
You can read more on Les' story here: nufoundation.org.uk/share-your-stories.

The campaign is aiming to shift the way Newcastle United fans think about mental health through a variety of ways:

- Real life stories from fans who have experienced mental health issues
- Sharing top tips on general wellbeing
- Signposting to services for mental health support
- Featuring in local and national media promoting our messages.

nufoundation.org.uk/toon-fans-at-the-heart-of-new-mental-health-campaign.

nufoundation.org.uk/BeAGameChanger.



Why is this campaign important?



1 in 4 of us will experience a **mental health problem** at any time.



Up to 1 in 6 employees are suffering from **depression, anxiety or stress** at any one time, to the point where it is **negatively affecting** their work.



The North East had the **highest** rates of suicide nationally in 2017.



Suicide is the **biggest** killer of **men under 49** and 75% of all suicides are men.

Why is talking about mental health important?

The more we talk about mental health, the more acceptable it becomes and the easier people find it to open up.

When people with mental health problems feel more able to be open and honest about their experiences, it becomes easier for them to seek help when they are feeling unwell. The earlier a person gets help the more likely they are to recover.

In regards to the workplace it is estimated that better mental health support in the workplace can save UK businesses up to £8 billion per year.

How using [#BeAGameChanger](#) can make a difference in your venue.

- Our Newcastle United branded posters give people, particularly men, an easy way to open up a conversation about mental health and wellbeing with campaign messages linking mental health to football.
- The campaign tools educate fans about mental health and inspire proactive action whether that is something as simple as doing more exercise or something more serious as seeking help from a GP for suicidal thoughts.
- Making fans aware of signs and symptoms of poor mental health in themselves or people they know will enable them to seek help sooner rather than later.

What can the Foundation offer?

- Lunchtime education sessions on sleep, stress, anger and healthy lifestyles.
- Complimentary resources such as posters, leaflets and infographics.
- Mental Health First Aid England courses.
- Free exercise sessions in the community.
- 12 week interventions in men's health.
- Access to a Facebook community.
- Useful website information.
- Signposting to recommended mental health services.

How to run your own event

You may simply want a few posters to put up in your workplace or you may want to do a bigger scale awareness raising event. Before you start, you will need to decide on:

- Type of activity
- Date
- Location
- Ambassadors
- Budget & resources
- Promotional channels (e.g. intranet, communal spaces)
- How you will respond if somebody does open up about a mental health problem (e.g. do you have a trained Mental Health First Aider? have you considered implementing policies and procedures around mental health issues?)
- Event evaluation



Type of activity

There are a range of things you can do to raise awareness. Some of our suggestions are:

Digitally

- Using a staff intranet to share [#BeAGameChanger](#) infographics and messages, and signpost to our website or Facebook group.
- Send an email letting everyone know about the campaign. See an example of an email here:

To all staff,

At the beginning of the year, Newcastle United Foundation launched its [#BeAGameChanger](#) campaign which encourages football fans to talk about mental health, in a similar way they would their physical health.

Why is this important?

- One in four of us will experience a mental health problem
- Suicide is the biggest killer of men under 49
- Too many of us are afraid to open up when we need help
- Talking about mental health problems helps reduce the stigma often associated

We should all feel comfortable talking about our health, mental or otherwise, our minds are vitally important and we believe that talking about mental health saves lives.

At [insert organisation], we are proudly showing our support for this fantastic campaign by [include details about what your organisation is specifically doing and signpost them to the key activity you want them to undertake].

We hope you will all join in the conversation.

For more [info click here](#).

www.nufoundation.org.uk/beagamechanger.

Information stall

Choose an area where staff are likely to pass and have a range of resources available to suit everyone. We can supply a range of a range of collateral to promote positive health and wellbeing in your workplace. You can also use it as a place to advertise any in-house or local opportunities that staff can access. Contact Ashley.Lowe@nufc.co.uk for resources.

Health and wellbeing activities

What can you do to make the day interactive?

At the Foundation we can offer:

- NHS Health Checks (BMI, blood pressure, cholesterol and advice on health lifestyles)
- Workshops – stress, sleep, anger, healthy lifestyles
- Exercise tasters such as basic fitness, walking football and stretch classes

When to run an event

You can run an event at any time, however, you may wish to consider tying one in with an existing initiative such as Stress Awareness Month. The NHS has a useful link to a range of health and wellbeing dates to choose from, visit the website [here](#).

However, conversations about mental health can take place at any time – so don't feel restricted to what's in the calendar.

Location

The location of resources is important, you want people to be able to access them in a range of ways; including publicly to enable conversations and quieter areas so people feel confident in picking up the material. Anywhere where people congregate to stand around talking, queuing or waiting is a good idea! We advise the following:

Public Areas	Quieter Areas
Dedicated stall in a reception or office	Toilets
Kitchens - Next to microwaves and kettles	Car Parks, Lifts and stairwells
Water dispensers	Next to printer/photocopier
Canteens	Breakout areas or prayer rooms.

Ambassadors

Who is going to help you with setting up and promoting the event?

In order to reach as many people as you can it will be useful to have ambassadors who can spread the word. If you have signed the Time to Change pledge or are part of the Better Health at Work Awards, it is likely you already have Wellbeing Ambassadors in your workplace so utilising these people is a good idea.

Ambassadors can help to start conversations, put up posters, share out leaflets or hand out business cards and ideally will be a range of people from different job roles. In our experience, those with a passion for mental health awareness who also express empathy for others in the workplace are the ideal individuals. We would recommend having any volunteers or ambassadors trained up as Mental Health First Aiders which provides them with the tools to recognise mental ill health and know how to respond on a first aid basis.

If you don't have any Ambassadors just ask staff for their help – you will likely be surprised with how many people would like to help support the cause.



Budget

Do you have budget for extra resources?

At the Foundation we provide the following Complimentary resources:

- A3 posters with a variety of mental health and wellbeing messages, please contact Ashley.Lowe@nufc.co.uk for more information.
- Business cards with campaign info on them. Our research shows men are more likely to pick up and keep a business card.
- Leaflets promoting our free programmes including walking football, mental health football, run clubs, 12th Man, health checks
- Access to real life stories from NUFC fans who have experienced poor mental health.
- Digital graphics
- Access to our [#BeAGameChanger](#) online community [Facebook group](#)

Chargeable resources include:

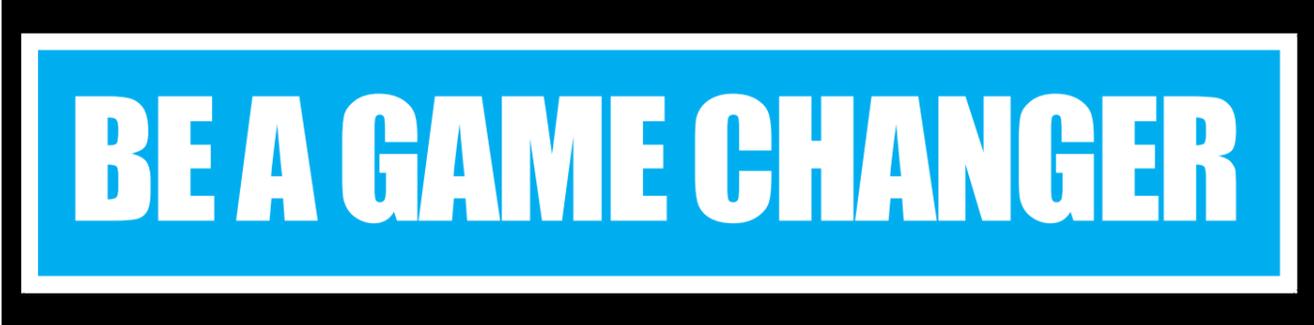
- Stress Footballs
- T-shirts
- Mental Health First Aid courses
- Lunchtime education sessions on sleep, stress, nutrition, exercise, anger management.

Talking about mental health issues and problems

It's important to be prepared for people opening up about their mental health concerns, in this case [Time to Change](#) recommends:

- Having a quiet area where people can go if they're feeling overwhelmed
- Your ambassadors should have access to a list of services to refer too. You can find some on our website [here](#)
- Encourage your ambassadors to take breaks and discuss any concerns around their own mental wellbeing with the group. You should have a designated co-ordinator that they can talk to on the day
- In the unlikely event that somebody experiences extreme distress, have the contact details of your local mental health crisis team available at your event

If you do not feel confident with being able to handle such a scenario we would recommend having staff trained up as Mental Health First Aiders – find more info [here](#).



BE A GAME CHANGER

Evaluating your event

A good evaluation will help you measure the impact of your event and build on your success, making future events even more successful. It can help you raise the profile of your organisation and your work after the event and may help you get support for future events.

If you would like an evaluation form, please contact Ashley.Lowe@nufc.co.uk.

It's a good idea to offer signposting to support organisations to anyone who may attend your event, handing out our [#BeAGameChanger](#) business cards and advising people to visit the website.

You can find a link to the recommended services here:

nufoundation.org.uk/where-to-find-mental-health-support.



FAQs

Who is Newcastle United Foundation?

- Newcastle United Foundation is an independent registered charity supported by Newcastle United Football Club. We exist to take the club into the local community. Quite simply, we use the local passion for football to make a difference and help people achieve their goals, on the pitch, in the classroom or in life.

Is [#BeAGameChanger](#) only for male football fans?

- No. Although our campaign has been shaped using insight and experiences from men who've opened up to us because of the power of the NUFC badge, the tools are designed to be used by all adults.

Is involvement with [#BeAGameChanger](#) expensive?

- We have a range of Complimentary resources available as part of the campaign and can also provide tailored packages based on your available budget.

How long does [#BeAGameChanger](#) last for?

- Your involvement in the campaign can last for as long or as little as you can manage. A single successful event can make a long-term difference to your staff and organisation.

We'd like to help in a bigger way...

- Amazing! First of all showing your support online using our hashtag [#BeAGameChanger](#) is incredibly helpful. For all other enquiries please contact Ashley.Lowe@nufc.co.uk for more information or visit our website nufoundation.org.uk.



Newcastle United Foundation

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