**<INSERT ORGANISATION NAME> MENTAL HEALTH DISCUSSION OPENERS CHECKLIST**

| **MENTAL HEALTH DISCUSSION OPENERS CHECKLIST** | |
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| Take the steps below to ensure you approach the subject in a sensitive and appropriate manner. Tick of each point after completion. | |
| **Action** | **Done** |
| Avoid interruptions – switch off phones and ensure colleagues can’t walk in and interrupt. |  |
| Make sure you’ve allowed enough time to talk. |  |
| Ask simple, open questions (e.g. How are you feeling? I noticed that you seem a bit upset – is everything OK? Do you know where to get support to help you?) |  |
| Ask the employee how you can help. |  |
| Avoid judgemental or patronising responses. |  |
| Speak calmly. |  |
| Maintain good eye contact. |  |
| Listen actively and carefully. |  |
| Show empathy and understanding. |  |
| Let the person share as much or little as they want – be prepared for some silences and be patient. |  |
| Avoid making assumptions or being prescriptive. |  |
| Make a plan, put this in writing and follow up regularly. |  |

Adapted from *People manager’s guide to mental health (CIPD and Mind) and Listen up – let’s talk about mental health* (Business in the Community).