Public attitudes to mental illness 2013–2014

2 million people have improved attitudes towards people with mental illness

Public attitudes towards people with mental health problems have improved significantly with the biggest annual improvement in the last decade taking place in 2013.

Since Time to Change started in 2007

6.4% improvement in attitudes

Since phase two started in 2011

4.8% improvement in attitudes

And in the last year (2012–2013)

2.8% improvement in attitudes

That’s the biggest annual shift we’ve ever seen!

We are moving in the right direction...

In 2009 questions were added to the survey to ask people about their intended behaviour and since then we have seen a marked increase in the proportion of people who say they would be willing to continue a relationship with, work with, live nearby to and live with someone with a mental health problem:

- 7% rise in willingness to work with someone with a mental health problem (69% to 76%).
- 6% rise in willingness to continue a relationship with a friend with a mental health problem (82% to 88%).
- 5% rise in willingness to live nearby to someone with a mental health problem (72% to 77%).
- 5% rise in willingness to live with someone with a mental health problem (57% to 62%).

We are moving in the right direction...

- 62% of people agreed that people with a mental illness are far less of a danger than most people suppose.
- 79% believe that people with a mental illness have for too long been the subject of ridicule. 75% agreed in 2008.
- Only 13% of people now think that anyone with a history of mental health problems should be excluded from public office. Down from 21% in 2008.
- 74% of people think that people with a mental illness should be given the same rights to a job as anyone else. 83% in 2013.
- Only 15% of people think women who were once patients in a mental hospital can be trusted as babysitters. 10% in 2013.
- 6% rise in willingness to continue a relationship with a friend with a mental health problem (82% to 88%).
- 6% rise in willingness to live nearby to someone with a mental health problem (72% to 77%).
- 5% rise in willingness to live with someone with a mental health problem (57% to 62%).
- Only 28% of people in 2013 agree that women who were once patients in a mental hospital can be trusted as babysitters.
- Nearly one in 10 adults (7%) in England think people with mental health problems shouldn’t have the same rights to a job as anyone else.
- Nearly half of people (49%) said they would feel uncomfortable talking to an employer about their mental health.

As long as these attitudes still exist, we have work to do. Join us at www.time-to-change.org.uk