

Southeastern safeguards colleagues' mental health during COVID-19 pandemic

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Southeastern is setting out best practice for mental health in the rail industry, with wide-ranging initiatives to create a supportive working environment.

Southeastern is due to launch the railway industry's first ever Mental Health Charter this month, which sets out eight actions that can be taken by organisations to identify mental health hazards, address problems and train supportive managers.

Designed by Southeastern Mental Health Lead, Lee Woolcott-Ellis, the charter can be signed by any organisation associated with, or supporting, the railway industry in the UK.

At Southeastern, the number of colleagues seeking mental health support from first aiders rose by 146 per cent to 444 in 2020. The primary causes for intervention were anxiety, bereavement, loneliness, relationships and a reduction in household finances.

Lee Woolcott-Ellis, said: "The COVID-19 pandemic has been a particularly challenging period for our colleagues who have kept essential services running throughout the year to get our passengers to where

they need to be. We continue to ensure that everyone is supported and to get the message out that help is at hand if and when they need it.”

Owning group Go-Ahead is training Mental Health ‘First Aiders’ at every UK rail and bus business.

Photo credit: Southeastern