



workplace
wellbeing
CHARTER



MENTAL HEALTH

Workplace Wellbeing Charter
SUPPORT PACK



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The resources in this pack will help your organisation move towards meeting the Commitment standards in the Mental Health area of the Charter. This pack alone does not guarantee your organisation will be accredited with the Charter, but gives you advice, guidance, templates and information.

We encourage you to use the information to assess your current practices against the Charter standards and update your existing policies and procedures or fill any gaps. Feel free to adopt the policy templates, but ensure you share any new policies or updates with your human resources team. Please share the information, resources and links with your colleagues and make them accessible.

Charter Accreditation

There is no overall level of accreditation, and the award is always the Workplace Wellbeing Charter. The Commitment, Achievement and Excellence levels are for your own benchmarking to recognise good practices and areas for improvement. You do not have to be at the same level for each of the eight areas. Your organisation must provide evidence, supported by staff feedback, to meet at least the Commitment standards in all eight areas and, where applicable, evidence showing you meet Achievement and Excellence.

We do not provide generic resources to meet the Achievement or Excellence standards, but we do deliver bespoke support.

Additional Support

Health@Work can provide bespoke support to help your organisation reach the Commitment standard of the Charter. This could be how to address any gaps, action planning and consultancy and training. Please contact your consultant or Health@Work for more information:

Tel: 0151 236 6608

Email: info@healthatworkcentre.org.uk

MENTAL HEALTH COMMITMENT STANDARDS

Mental health issues are one of the leading causes of absenteeism. During 2020/2021, stress, anxiety or depression caused 50% of all work-related illnesses¹ at an estimated cost of £45 billion to UK employers.²

Our Standards show how mental health are embedded into policies and procedures to reduce stigma, and providing information, training and risk assessments to help create a supportive and productive workplace.

- 1 A recent review of research by Deloitte UK has demonstrated that with investment in workplace mental health and wellbeing, employers could see an average return of £5 for every £1 spent.²
- 2 According to the Labour Force Survey, 17.9 million working days were lost during 2019/2020 due to stress, depression or anxiety and on average, each employee suffering took 21.6 days sick leave.³
- 3 Positive employee physical, emotional and mental health along with working in a supportive workplace is associated with a good quality of life. The University of Oxford demonstrated a link between happier employees and a 13% increase in productivity in a multinational telecommunications company.⁴
- 4 Mind UK stated that 56% of employers feel they would like to do more to improve employee wellbeing but don't feel they have the right training or guidance.⁵

Mental health is defined as “A state of wellbeing in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her society.”

World Health Organisation

Sources:

- 1 .HSE (2021) Work-Related Stress Anxiety or Depression Statistics in Great Britain 2021
- 2.Deloitte (2020) Mental Health and Employers. Refreshing the Case for Investment
- 3.HSE (2021) Working Days Lost in Great Britain 2021
4. Bellett et al (2019) Does Employee Happiness Have an Effect on Productivity?
- 5.MIND (2022) Taking Care of Your Staff. www.mind.org.uk/workplace/mental-health-at-work/taking-care-of-your-staff/

MENTAL HEALTH COMMITMENT STANDARDS

The evidence requirements listed are examples that highlight the type of evidence which meet each standard. This is not an exhaustive list. It is also not the only evidence an assessor will accept. It is expected that evidence provided is applicable to the size of the organisation.

Standard		Evidence Requirements
COMMITMENT	MH1 The organisation encourages a culture of positive mental health and wellbeing.	Examples of evidence provided, could include, but is not limited to organisation shows it destigmatises mental health with interventions such as campaigns, internal programmes, policies, organisational commitments. Evidence that the organisation encourages staff from all levels and positions to openly discuss mental health in the workplace.
	MH2 The organisation implements clear procedures, roles, and responsibilities as a necessary part of mitigating mental wellbeing challenges in the workplace.	Examples of evidence provided, could include, but is not limited to employee handbooks, induction processes or induction slides, nominated Mental health champions, mental health first aiders, and mental health managers. A set of procedures exists outlining the appropriate process for reporting mental health issues in the workplace.
	MH3 The organisation has implemented mental health guidance that follows the principles of the Health and Safety Executives Management Standards for Stress.	Examples of evidence provided, could include, but is not limited to employee contract or staff handbook highlighting legal entitlements regarding work conditions. Excerpts from statements in mental health, stress, or related policies.
	MH4 The organisation ensures that access to mental health support is readily available and accessible.	Examples of evidence provided, could include, but is not limited to Mental health policy, mental health and stress information, and internal or external support services. Examples of access pathways.



MENTAL HEALTH SIGNPOSTING

To learn more about creating a healthy open workplace culture, with strong Mental Health practice and to meet the standards of the Charter, please follow the links below.

Mind is a national charity working to end the stigma associated with mental health conditions. Their website provides information and access to resources to help managers and colleagues speak about mental health.

<https://www.mind.org.uk>

Health and Safety Executive (HSE) provides a range of resources and tools to help organisations address workplace stress. They have developed the six Management Standards along with a range of guidance documents and tools to help organisations assess risk and manage stress in the workplace.

[What are the Management Standards? - Stress - HSE](#)

Rethink Mental Illness provides support for those experiencing mental illness. Their aim is to help change attitudes towards mental health and reduce associated stigma. They provide information, advice, resources and links to support services which can be located on their website.

[We are Rethink Mental Illness](#)

The Mental Health Foundation are a charity working towards the reduction of poor mental health for individuals and workplaces. Through research, programmes and support groups have been developed. They also offer a range of information, advice and resources. These resources help to guide organisations to support employee mental health.

[Mental Health Foundation | Good mental health for all](#)



MENTAL HEALTH CHECKLIST

Our Mental Health and Wellbeing policy includes the Health and Safety Executive's six management standards and measures are in place to reduce risk.

Yes ☐ No ☐

Psychological safety has been assessed and focus areas are highlighted as part of our wider wellbeing strategy.

Yes ☐ No ☐

Our recruitment process is robust with realistic job descriptions and person specifications. This ensures competent candidates are appointed to meet the requirements of our roles.

Yes ☐ No ☐

New employees are signposted to mental wellbeing support pathways as part of the onboarding process. Buddy-up partners, daily self-care guidance and resources outside of our EAP/internal programs are available. Local and crisis websites and help/text lines are visible in my workplace.

Yes ☐ No ☐

Employees who are returning from mental health-related leave are supported with reasonable adjustments. Flexible working, adjustments to workload, increased supportive supervision and time out are part of our workplace policies.

Yes ☐ No ☐

Our organisation has an open door and non-judgmental culture to help reduce the stigma associated with mental health.

Yes ☐ No ☐

Platforms exist within the organisation to share personal mental health related stories if colleagues want to.

Yes ☐ No ☐

Managers lead by example, take breaks and set boundaries to ensure a good work life balance and encourage employees to adopt a similar working practice.

Yes ☐ No ☐

Managers schedule regular employee 1-1s with mental health high on the agenda. They are trained to create safe spaces for colleagues to speak up without fear of being marginalised. They develop an action plan of support with a scheduled follow up review.

Yes ☐ No ☐

Managers have been trained to identify physical, psychological and behavioural signs of poor mental health and effectively support employees who are in mental health or suicidal crisis.

Yes ☐ No ☐

MENTAL HEALTH

FIVE WAYS TO WELLBEING

Connect

There is strong evidence that indicates that feeling close to and valued by other people, is a fundamental human need and one that contributes to functioning well in the world. It's clear that social relationships are critical for promoting wellbeing and for acting as a buffer against mental ill health for people of all ages. With this in mind, try to do something different today and make a connection.

- Talk to someone instead of sending an email
- Speak to someone new
- Ask how someone's weekend was and really listen when they tell you
- Put five minutes aside to find out how someone really is
- Give a colleague a lift to work or share the journey home with them.

Be Active

Regular physical activity is associated with lower rates of depression and anxiety across all age groups. Exercise is essential for slowing age-related cognitive decline and for promoting wellbeing. Exercise doesn't need to feel particularly intense for you to feel good. Slower paced activities such as walking can have the benefit of encouraging social interactions as well as providing some level of exercise. Why not get active today? Here are few ideas:

- Take the stairs instead of the lift
- Take a lunchtime walk
- Walk into work, perhaps with a colleague and you can both connect at the same time
- Get off the bus one stop earlier and walk the final part of your commute
- Organise a workplace sporting activity
- Go for a kick about in the local park
- Do some 'easy exercise' like stretching before you go to work
- Walk over to talk a colleague rather than calling or emailing.

Take Notice

Reminding yourself to take notice can strengthen and broaden awareness. Studies have shown that being aware of what is taking place in the present directly enhances your wellbeing and savouring 'the moment' can help to reaffirm your life priorities. Heightened awareness also enhances your self-understanding and allows you to make positive choices based on your own values and motivations. Take some time to enjoy the moment and the environment around you. Here are a few ideas:

- Get a plant for your workplace
- Have a 'clear the clutter' day
- Take notice of your colleague's feelings and behaviours
- Take a different route on your journey to and from work
- Visit a new place for lunch.

Learn

Continued learning through life enhances self-esteem and encourages social interaction and a more active life. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the opportunity to engage in work or educational activities particularly helps to lift older people out of depression. The practice of setting goals which is related to adult learning in particular, has been strongly associated with higher levels of wellbeing. Why not learn something new today? Here are a few more ideas:

- Find out something new about your colleagues
- Sign up for a class
- Read the news or a book
- Listen to a podcast
- Do a crossword or Sudoku
- Research something you are interested in
- Learn a new word.

Give

Participation in social and community life has attracted considerable attention in the field of wellbeing research. Individuals who report a greater interest in helping others are more likely to rate themselves happy. Research into actions for promoting happiness has shown that committing an act of kindness once per week over a six-week period is associated with an increase in wellbeing:

- Offer to make your colleague a cuppa
- Provide a listening ear to a colleague
- Take part in annual charity day as a team and make a small donation
- Thank a colleague either verbally or on a post-it-note and leave it on their desk
- Share the link to an interesting article to your colleagues
- Give someone a smile, it goes a long way!



MENTAL HEALTH:

SUGGESTED GUIDANCE TO INCLUDE IN YOUR POLICY, PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES

1. Introduction

[Company Name] is committed to protecting the health, safety and welfare of our employees and recognises the importance of promoting positive mental health and wellbeing, through a multi-disciplinary approach whilst ensuring that members of employees work in a professional but supportive and caring environment.

This policy and guidance outlines [company name]'s intention regarding Mental Health and Wellbeing, including areas such as stress and harassment. In particular it takes into account the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, the Equality Act 2010 and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) Stress Management Standards and as such must be brought to the attention of all employees.

This policy applies to all employees. Managers are responsible for the implementation of this policy, with [company name] being responsible for providing the necessary resources.

2. Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy Statement

[Company name] recognises that mental health problems and stress can affect anyone regardless of their position and is an organisational issue that we have a responsibility to address. This policy applies equally to all employees and is designed to complement [company name]'s existing policies. [Company name] is responsible for providing the necessary resources to enable Senior Management to implement this policy.

In undertaking its duties with regards to Mental Health and Wellbeing [company name] will aim to:

- Reduce the stigma around mental ill-health
- Positively promote and safeguard the mental health and wellbeing of its employees and prevent stress by promoting a supportive workplace culture based on trust, support and mutual respect, where employees are able to talk openly about their job and their mental health and report difficulties without fear of discrimination or reprisal
- Create an environment that supports and encourages good mental health amongst our employees
- Ensure that managers are equipped to appropriately respond to disclosures which supports [company name] commitment to mental health and wellbeing
- Provide appropriate support for all employees suffering from mental health and associated problems
- Identify workplace stressors through measures such as the organisational employees opinion survey, stress risk assessments and the HSE Stress Management Standards to eliminate or control the risks from stress.
- Educate the employees about the advantages of good mental well-being and its influence over the quality of working and personal life
- Reduce the levels of absence as a result of increased healthy mental wellbeing amongst employees
- Demonstrate that the employees are valued and the work-life balance is respected by the support of good mental health and physical activity initiatives led by the company
- Evolve job design and equipment to remove mental health risks in the workplace wherever possible

- Eliminate from the workplace, things which can have a detrimental effect on our employees' wellbeing.
Examples of these are:
 - Bullying
 - Harassment
 - Discrimination (sexual, religious, political, ethnicity)
 - Victimisation
- Ensure appropriate arrangements are in place for the effective review and revision of this policy statement as necessary on an annual basis
- Provide support for managers to ensure they are dealing appropriately with issues and maintaining their own mental health and wellbeing
- Provide adequate resources to enable managers to implement the organisation's agreed mental health and wellbeing management policy.

3. Legislative Requirements

In terms of The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, employers have a general duty to ensure, as far as reasonably practicable, the health of their employees at work. This includes taking steps to make sure they do not suffer stress related illness as a result of their work.

Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999: The main provisions of these regulations regarding stress are; a duty to assess risk, apply principles of prevention, ensure employee's capability to undertake work tasks and provide suitable training.

The Stress Management Standards: The Management Standards define the characteristics, or culture, of an organisation where the risks from work related stress are being effectively managed and controlled. The Standards cover six key areas of work design that, if not properly managed, are associated with poor health and well-being, lower productivity and increased sickness absence.

The six Management Standards cover the primary sources of stress at work. These are:

- 1. DEMANDS** – this includes issues such as workload, work patterns and the work environment
- 2. CONTROL** – how much say the person has in the way they do their work
- 3. SUPPORT** – this includes the encouragement, sponsorship and resources provided by the organisation, line management and colleagues
- 4. RELATIONSHIPS** – this includes promoting positive working to avoid conflict and dealing with unacceptable behaviour
- 5. ROLE** – whether people understand their role within the organisation and whether the organisation ensures that they do not have conflicting roles
- 6. CHANGE** – how organisational change (large or small) is managed and communicated in the organisation.

The Equality Act 2010 replaces previous legislation (such as the Race Relations Act 1976 and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995) and aims to remove discrimination. Under the Act, a person is disabled if they 'have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'. This policy will relate only to the part that covers disability and in particular mental health and harassment.

4. Review & Monitoring

The monitoring and review arrangements include;

- Carrying out an annual employee survey and monitoring the data on a regular basis and encouraging local action planning as a result of the outcomes to enhance the workplace culture
- Reporting Absence Management statistics and trends on at least a quarterly basis to [company name] Board and Senior Management
- Reporting the use of support and counselling services on at least a twice yearly basis to the [company name] Board

Undertaking regular review and monitoring of this policy at least annually, implementing any agreed changes from this process.

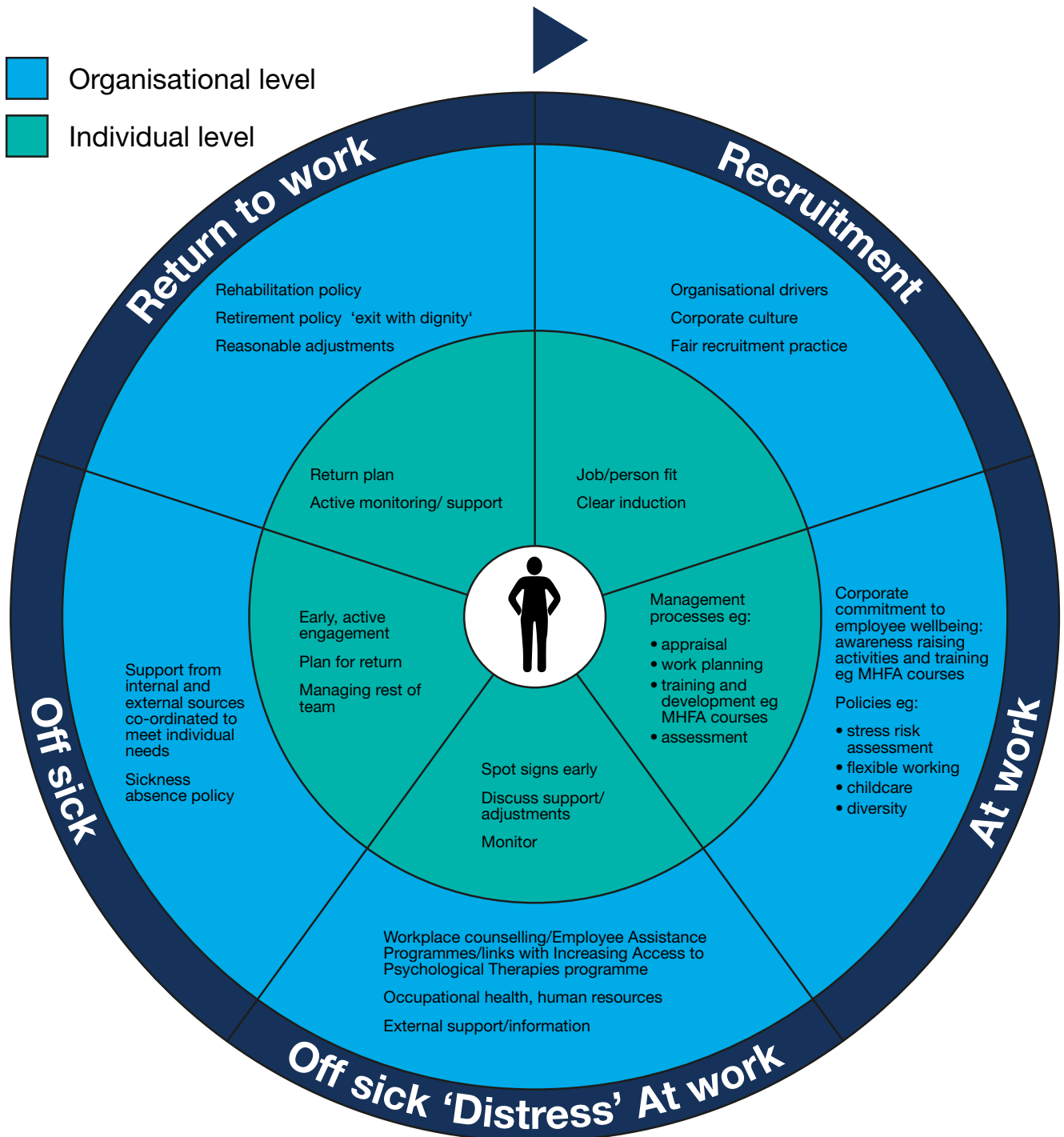
5. Implementation

To successfully implement this policy we will:

- Ensure through our recruitment processes that we ensure that the role fits the person. This will be done through robust and fair recruitment procedures
- Ensure through our recruitment processes that no one is disadvantaged in obtaining employment or progressing in the company on the grounds of their mental health
- Provide employees with a thorough induction training programme that includes the benefits of good mental health awareness
- Provide access to mental health awareness training for employees
- Link to local and national campaigns to promote positive mental health
- Encourage early reporting of any issues in the workplace which may affect employee's mental health
- Encourage early reporting of any existing mental health issues which our employees may be suffering from in order for us to be able to provide confidential support and any workplace adjustments in a timely fashion
- Ensure that employees have opportunities to raise issues through, Appraisals, Performance Review and Development, Keeping in Touch meetings.

A holistic approach to managing an individual

We gratefully acknowledge the work of Heron and Teasdale who have produced this diagram.



MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING PROCEDURE AND GUIDANCE

1. Introduction

The aim of this Procedural Guidance is to outline the benefits of positive mental health and wellbeing, promote a supportive work environment and set out the measures [company name] puts in place for Mental Health and Wellbeing, including prevention, stress management and support for employees.

2. Definitions

2.1 Definitions of Mental Health

Mental health is defined as a state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community.

World Health Organisation (WHO): The positive dimension of mental health is stressed in WHO's definition of health as contained in its constitution: "Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity."

Mental Health: an umbrella term which refers to a continuous spectrum from positive mental health and wellbeing to mental health problems which can be mild to moderate or more serious, severe and enduring

Mental Wellbeing: a term that includes life satisfaction and psychological wellbeing - for example, having a sense of control, purpose in life, a sense of belonging and positive relationships with others

Mental Health problems: a term that refers to symptoms that meet the criteria for clinical diagnosis of mental health problems - for example, depression, anxiety and schizophrenia. However, not everyone has a diagnosis of a mental health problem

Mental health is just as important as good physical health. If you are in good mental health, you can make the most of your potential, cope with life and play a full part in your family, workplace, community and among friends.

2.2 Mental Health and Work

There is compelling evidence to show a positive link between employment and mental health. People enjoy better mental health when they are in work and for people with mental health problems, work can be therapeutic. A return to work improves mental health as much as the loss of employment worsens it. Some aspects of the work environment can pose a risk to mental health but the overall balance of evidence is not in doubt: work is good for mental health.

Contrary to popular belief, the majority of people with mental health conditions have a job and are almost as likely to be working as anybody else. On average, employers should expect that at any one time, nearly 1 in 4 (Mental Health Foundation) of their workforce is affected by a mental health problem such as depression or anxiety. Only a small proportion of this ill health is directly caused by work or working conditions.

Evidence suggests that the key ingredients of an effective workplace programme are:

- Recognition that work is good for mental health and that people do not need to be symptom free to work successfully.
- Prevention of mental health problems including the provision of mentally healthy working conditions and access for all employees to generalised health promotion and well-being programmes.
- Early identification of emerging problems, with any unexplained change in an employee's productivity at work being seen as a possible warning sign.
- Awareness training for employees to increase their knowledge and understanding of mental health issues.
- Better access to professional help (such as counselling, coaching) which wherever possible enables people to carry on working at the same time as receiving support.
- Effective rehabilitation for those who need to take time off work, including regular contact with employees during periods of absence.

Common to all of these things is that they essentially involve a clear, positive line management role; however the first step is simply a better understanding of mental health issues throughout the organisation.

2.3 Definition of Stress and Work Related Stress

Stress related illness is perhaps the most common way mental health problems may present themselves.

The Health and Safety Executive defines stress as: "the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them".

This makes an important distinction between pressure, which can be a positive state if managed correctly, and stress, which can be detrimental to health, in particular mental health. Life is a challenge and pressure is a natural part of it. Individuals vary in their ability to cope with pressure.

Personal factors are the most common stressors and can impact the situation permanently or temporarily. When stress is intense repeated or continuous, physical or mental ill health can result.

No one is 'immune' to stress and it is not a sign of personal weakness. It is recognised that some levels of pressure can be motivating and challenges that can be responded to effectively may lead to job satisfaction. However this Policy is concerned with the negative effects of stress and can include mental health problems and also physical effects such as heart disease, back pain, gastro-intestinal disturbances, various minor illnesses, psychological effects, anxiety and depression and sleep disturbances.

(This list is not exhaustive or exclusive to stress, you are advised to seek medical advice for further information).

Pressure at work can affect individuals, but it is not unusual for there to be personal factors also impacting on someone's ability to cope at work. [Company name] has a clear responsibility to ensure work factors are addressed appropriately and the risk to individuals is minimised.

3. Procedure

3.1 Prevention

[Company name] shall work towards creating and maintaining a positive culture by:

- Developing and introducing work life balance policies.
- Working towards and maintaining the Workplace Wellbeing Charter.
- Raising awareness of mental health issues, roles and responsibilities through training.
- Demonstrating commitment to this policy by Senior Management initiating uptake of training and supporting and promoting a healthy work life balance for employees.
- Raising awareness through promotional campaigns.
- Enabling employees to raise mental health issues and receive appropriate support by:
 - Raising awareness and uptake of support services through Occupational Health, Health and Safety, Human Resources, ARC, Employee Assistance Programme and Lifeworks.
 - Managers undertaking mental health and wellbeing management training.
 - Utilising the appropriate policies in relation to absence.
- Recognising and valuing the contribution of each individual within the workplace by using the Employees Performance Development and Review (PDR) and appraisal procedures to acknowledge skills.
- Providing a safe and healthy working environment by undertaking an assessment based approach to work related hazards.
- Periodically identify and assess sources and measures of workplace stress where available by:
- Undertaking an employees survey & acting on the results.
- Analysing accident statistics.

3.1 Stress Management

[Company name] shall:

- Provide information on good practice in preventing / managing stress.
- Offer stress management, assessment and prevention training to all employees as appropriate.
- Provide support and advice once an individual need has been identified via Occupational Health, which is a specialist area of medicine concerned with the interaction between people's health and their work, who provide.
- Confidential Occupational Health Advisor or Occupational Health Physician appointments Advice on possible reasonable adjustments.
- Ongoing support, tailored to individual need.

Further information on the Stress Management Standards can be found via the following link:

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/standards/>

3.3 Mental Health and Wellbeing support

It is recommended that all members of employees who have a period of absence as a result of mental health problems or stress are given the opportunity to discuss their issues with managers to establish whether any adjustments can be made to alleviate their symptoms.

If appropriate [company name] will refer the employee to occupational health as early intervention is essential in securing a successful resolution.

4. Accountabilities

4.1 Responsibilities

Both [company name] and its employees share a mutual responsibility to work together in the management of Mental Health and Wellbeing. [Company name] will do all it can to provide, so far as is reasonable and practicable, a safe and healthy working environment. Employees must also take responsibility for their own health and safety, and also for others who may be affected by their acts or lack of due diligence.

4.2 Specific Responsibilities – Manager

- Early action can prevent employees becoming more unwell. Where you have concerns about an employee, ask if they would be comfortable discussing their situation with you or if preferable with a senior manager, HR or another manager. As part of the discussion, be aware of the support mechanisms available to both yourself and the employee and take into consideration good practice in preventing / managing stress.
- Where appropriate, an individual assessment should be conducted in consultation with the employee, Occupational Health and HR to ensure that reasonable adjustments within the role, workplace and working hours are considered.
- Where a employee has had a period of absence as a result of their mental health problems or stress, ensure they are referred to Occupational Health. Early intervention is essential in securing a successful resolution. Any manager can request a referral to Occupational Health through, if it is deemed appropriate assistance for the individual.
- Ensure good communication between management and employees, particularly where there are organisational and procedural changes and involve employees at an individual level and team level in seeking solutions to resolve work related issues.
- Promote a culture which has a positive attitude to mental health and wellbeing, where employees can approach managers when they are feeling stressed without fear of blame or reprisals.
- Ensure that bullying and harassment is not tolerated within their area of responsibility and control.
- Support employees with mental health problems who may be affected by stress who are either at work or returning to work and where appropriate.
- Be vigilant and offer additional support to a member of employees who are experiencing stress outside work, for example, bereavement or separation.
- Ensure all employees receive appropriate induction and training for their job, including reference to support services.
- Ensure employees are provided with meaningful developmental opportunities.
- Attend training as requested in good management practice and health and safety.
- Monitor workloads, working hours and overtime to ensure that employees are not overloaded.
- Monitor holidays to ensure that employees take their full entitlement.

4.3 Specific Responsibilities – Occupational Health Staff

- Support employees who have been absent from work with mental health problems or stress related illness and advise them and their manager on a planned return to work, including potential reasonable adjustments.
- Provide a structured rehabilitation plan.
- Support employees who are at work who may be experiencing mental health problems or stress related illness.
- Refer to the Employee Assistance Programme or specialist agencies if appropriate.
- Provide specialist advice and awareness training on mental health and wellbeing.
- Support managers in implementing stress risk assessments.
- Inform [company name] Executive Board of any changes and developments in the field of stress at work.
- Monitor and review the effectiveness of measures to reduce mental health problems and stress through, for example, Occupational Health statistics and trends, use of support and counselling services.

4.4 Specific Responsibilities – Human Resources

HR Company Managers/HR Advisers role is to provide support to managers and employees and take appropriate action to:

- Offer help and guidance to managers on the mental health and wellbeing policy.
- Provide continuing support to managers and employees in a changing environment and encourage referral to Occupational Health and the Employee Assistance programme where appropriate.
- Inform senior managers when employees are not dealt with appropriately by line and/or departmental managers with regards to mental health problems or stress.
- Monitor and review the effectiveness of measures to reduce mental health problems and stress through, for example, sickness absence statistics, staff turnover, early retirement due to ill-health.
- Advise managers and individuals on training requirements.
- Ensure that employees are aware of this policy, through induction training, and the actions they must take if they believe they are experiencing stress at work.

4.5 Specific Responsibilities – Office Manager

Office Managers role is to:

- Ensure that employees are aware of this policy through induction training, and the actions they must take if they believe they are experiencing stress at work.
- Provide continuing support to managers and in a changing environment and encourage referral to Occupational Health and the Employee Assistance programme where appropriate.
- Monitor and review the effectiveness of measures to reduce mental health problems and stress through for example, sickness absence statistics, employees turnover, early retirement due to ill-health.

4.6 Specific responsibilities – Organisational Development

- Provide access to training courses for mental health and wellbeing.
- Facilitate the organisational employee opinion surveys.

4.7 Specific responsibilities – Employees

- Raise any concerns about work pressures, work life balance and any external pressures that affect health at work, with the appropriate manager. (If you are not comfortable raising this with your manager, you may contact another Manager or Board Member you feel comfortable with.
- All members of employees have a responsibility to contribute to a supportive work environment by:
 - Being respectful and considerate of others.
 - Listening to the problems or concerns of others and providing practical support as appropriate.
 - Being positively appreciative of people and their efforts.
 - Being ready to offer help to colleagues, where appropriate, for example, their behaviour, mood or performance may indicate or suggest something is wrong.
 - Respecting confidentiality.
 - Participating in goal setting and positive management of workload.
 - Avoiding overloading colleagues with extra work or responsibility.
- Employees who have a period of absence due to mental health or stress related issues, should remain in close contact with their manager to enable them to work together on a structured rehabilitation plan for their return to work.

GOOD PRACTICE IN PREVENTING/ MANAGING WORKPLACE STRESS

Demands

Good Practice in preventing / managing workplace stress (by risk factor)	Possible Solutions/Control Measures	Existing Measures Available within [company name]
• Ensure that there are sufficient resources (people with the appropriate skills, and equipment) to do the work allocated • Support your employees by helping them to prioritise or renegotiate deadlines • Cover workloads during employee absences • Adjust working patterns to cope with peaks (the arrangements need to be fair and agreed with employees) • If employees are under loaded, think about giving them more responsibility, but make sure that they have been adequately trained first • If there is an incessant flow of paperwork and e-mails, this needs to be addressed by management at all levels • Train employees appropriately so that they are able to do their jobs • Ensure that the work environment is appropriately designed and laid out to ensure that employees are able to do their jobs efficiently and without causing harm to themselves or others • Ensure Health and Safety Policy in place, and that the risks to the health and safety of employees are identified and controlled • Encourage employees to take their annual leave entitlement and their meal breaks	Workload - Weekly team meetings - Monthly meetings with individuals - Personal work plans - Work patterns to cope with peaks and employee absences - Allow regular breaks, especially when the work is complex or emotionally demanding - Provide realistic deadlines - Sufficient resources (time, equipment, etc). (Strike a balance between ensuring that employees are interested and busy, but not under loaded, overloaded, or confused about the job) - Training (formal/informal) to help employees prioritise, or information on how they can seek help if they have conflicting priorities - Design jobs that provide stimulation and opportunities for workers to use their skills. - Provide sufficient challenge/pressure to keep employees motivated and interested in their work - Competency - Personal development/training plans Working patterns - Working hours agreed with employees - Changes to start and end times to help employees to cope with pressures external to the organisation (e.g. child care, poor commuting routes, etc) - System to notify employees of unplanned tight deadlines and any exceptional need to work long hours - Encourage employees to talk to you at an early stage if they feel as though they cannot cope Physical environment and violence - Risk assessments for physical hazards and risks, including physical violence and verbal abuse, are up-to-date. - Training to help employees deal with and defuse difficult situations (e.g. difficult phone calls, aggressive members of the public).	• Performance Development Scheme (PDS) • Staff Opinion Survey-Action Plan • Stress Management Training

Control

Good Practice in preventing/ managing workplace stress (by risk factor)	Possible Solutions/Control Measures	Existing Measures Available within [company name]
- Consult employees on decisions that affect their jobs - Give more control to employees by enabling them to plan their own work, and to make decisions about how the work should be completed and how problems should be tackled - Introduce flexibility in work schedules, where possible, to enable staff to cope with domestic commitments - Make allowances for cultural or faith considerations (e.g. provision of a quiet space or prayer room) - Enrich jobs by ensuring that employees are able to use a variety of skills - Allocate responsibility to teams to take projects forward - Talk about the way that decisions are made within the organisation/ team. Is there scope for more team/ individual involvement? - Only monitor employee output where this is essential - Where necessary, introduce task variety and/or job rotation to minimise boredom and staleness	- Systems that enable employees to have a say over the way their work is organised and undertaken, (e.g. through project meetings, one-to-ones, performance reviews, etc.) - Hold regular discussion forums during the planning stage of projects to talk about the anticipated output and methods of working. Provide opportunities for discussion and input - Allocate responsibility to teams to take projects forward (e.g. Agree objectives, roles, timescales etc) - Talk about the way decisions are made - is there scope for more involvement? - Talk about the skills employees have and if they believe they are able to use these to good effect. How else would they like to use their skills? - Allow employees control over the pace of their work - Allow and encourage employees to participate in decision-making - Empower employees to make decisions about the way they work	- Performance Development Scheme (PDS) [company name] induction process - Harassment policy - Complaints resolution policy

Support

- Encourage employees to share their concerns at an early stage, through the line management and alternative routes - Conduct regular performance reviews and one-to-one sessions to discuss individual work plans - Give support and encouragement to employees, even when things go wrong - Value diversity – don't discriminate against employees on grounds of race, gender, sexuality or disability, or for other irrelevant reasons - Seek examples of how the team would like to receive, or has received, effective support from managers or colleagues. - Develop positive leadership by listening to your employees and taking on board their suggestions and concerns - Talk about ways in which support can be provided if a an employee is experiencing problems outside work - Disseminate information on other areas of support - Provide appropriate training to enable managers and employees to do their jobs - Promote support at all levels, including peer support	- Hold regular one-to-ones to talk about any emerging issues or pressures. - Include 'work-related stress/emerging pressures' as a standing item for performance reviews. - Seek examples of how employees would like to, or have, received good support from managers or colleagues - can these be adopted across the organisation - Ask how employees would like to access managerial support 'open door' policies, agreed times when managers are able to discuss emerging pressures, etc. - Introduce flexibility in work schedules (where possible) to enable staff to cope with domestic commitments. - Develop training arrangements and refresher sessions to ensure training and competencies are up-to-date and appropriate for the core functions of employees' jobs. - Talk about ways the organisation could provide support if someone is experiencing problems outside work. - Offer training in basic counselling skills/access to counsellors. - Ensure that employees receive sufficient training to undertake the core functions of their job. - Provide constructive, supportive advice at annual appraisal. - Provide flexibility in work schedules, where possible. - Allow phased return to work after long-term sickness absence. - Hold regular liaison/team meetings. - Provide opportunities for career development. - Deal sensitively with employees experiencing problems outside work.	- Mental health and Wellbeing Policy - Stress awareness training. - Occupational Health - Harassment Policy - Return to work interview process. - Local flexible working policies - Stress Management Training
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Relationships

Good Practice in preventing/ managing workplace stress (by risk factor)	Possible Solutions/Control Measures	Existing Measures Available within [company name]
• Create a culture in which employees trust each other and feel that they are fairly treated • Encourage your employees to recognise the contributions of other employees and the benefits of the whole team working together • Extend and improve the 'people skills' of supervisors and managers so that they can convey a supportive attitude and handle staff problems with greater ease • Select or build teams that have the right blend of expertise and experience • In consultation with employees and their representatives, draw up effective policies, including procedures to reduce or eliminate discrimination, harassment and bullying • Agree and implement a confidential reporting system to enable the reporting of unacceptable behaviours • Agree and implement procedures to prevent or quickly resolve conflict at work. Then communicate these to employees. • Provide training to help employees to deal with and diffuse situations • Identify ways to celebrate success (e.g. informal lunches/wash-up meetings at the end of projects)	- Develop a written policy for dealing with unacceptable behaviour at work - communicate this to employees - Agree and implement procedures to prevent, or quickly resolve, conflict at work - communicate this to staff - Agree and implement a confidential reporting system to enable the reporting of unacceptable behaviour - Agree and implement a grievance and disciplinary procedure for dealing with unacceptable behaviour - circulate and/or display these - Select or build teams which have the right blend of expertise and experience for new projects - Provide training to help employees deal with and defuse difficult situations - Encourage good communication and provide appropriate training to aid skill development (e.g. listening skills, confidence building, etc) - Discuss how employees work together and how they can build positive relationships - Identify ways to celebrate success (e.g. informal lunches/wash-up meetings at the end of a project), - Provide opportunities for social interactions among employees - Provide support for employees who work in isolation - Create a culture where employees trust and encourage each other - Agree which behaviours are unacceptable and ensure that employees are aware of these	• [company name] employee induction process. • Performance Development Scheme (PDS) • Harassment Policy • Complaints Resolution Policy • Stress Management Training

Role

• Make sure that your employees have a clearly defined role (e.g. through a personal work plan which enables them to understand exactly what their roles and responsibilities are) • Agree specific standards of performance for jobs and individual tasks, and review them periodically • Hold team meetings to enable team members to clarify their role and discuss any possible role conflict • Ensure that employees understand how their work is related to the wider aims of the organisation • Hold regular one-to-one meetings to ensure that employees are clear about their role and know what is planned for the coming months • Make sure that employees receive a comprehensive induction • If there has been a period of change, check with employees to make sure that they understand their new roles and are comfortable with them • Encourage employees to talk to you at an early stage if they are not clear about priorities or the nature of the task to be undertaken	- Hold team meetings to enable employees to clarify their role and to discuss any possible role conflict. - Display team/department targets and objectives to help clarify unit and individual role. - Agree specific standards of performance for jobs and individual tasks and review periodically. - Introduce personal work plans which are aligned to the outputs of the unit. - Introduce or revise job descriptions to help ensure that the core functions and priorities of the post are clear. - Hold regular one-to-one meetings to ensure that individuals are clear about their role and know what is planned for the coming months. - Develop suitable induction arrangements for new staff - make sure all members of the team understand the role and responsibilities of the new recruit. - Provide a clear job description. - Define work structures clearly, so that all employees know who is doing what, and why. - Give all new employees a thorough induction to your organisation. - Define work objectives (e.g. through a personal work plan). - Avoid competing demands, such as situations where it is difficult to meet the needs of the company and the customer	• [company name] employee induction process. • Performance Development Scheme (PDS) • Equality and Diversity Policy • Recruitment, Selection and Appointment Policy
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Change

Good Practice in preventing/ managing workplace stress (by risk factor)	Possible Solutions/Control Measures	Existing Measures Available within [company name]
• If there is a planned change, explain what the change is trying to achieve and why it is essential. Explain the timetable for action and what the first steps are going to be. Talk about what the change will mean in terms of day-to-day activity, and discuss whether there are any new training needs • Face-to-face communication is generally preferable, so that people have the opportunity to ask questions and express their feelings • Have an open door policy whereby employees can talk to you about their concerns or any suggestions that they have for improving the way in which the change is managed • Involve employees in discussions about how jobs might be developed and changed, and in generating ways of solving problems • Ensure that support is provided for employees who are affected by change • After the change, think about revising work objectives to avoid role conflict and role ambiguity • Revise risk assessments and action plans to see whether any changes (e.g. a decrease in employees) have resulted in increased hazards to staff	- Ensure all employees are aware of why the change is happening - agree a system for doing this - Define and explain the key steps of the change. Ensure employee consultation and support is a key element of the programme - Establish a system to communicate new developments quickly - Agree methods of communication (e.g. meetings, notice boards, letters, e-mail, feedback forums, etc) and frequency (weekly, monthly, etc) - Ensure that employees are aware of the impact of the change on their jobs. - Provide a system to enable employees to comment and ask questions before, during and after the change. - Have an 'Open door' policy to help employees who want to talk to their managers about their concerns. - Involve employees in discussions about how jobs might be developed and changed. - Review unit and individual work plans after the change to ensure unit and individual objectives are clear. - Explain what the organisation wants to achieve and why it is essential that the change(s) takes place. - Consult with employees at an early stage, and throughout the change process. Involve your staff in the planning process.	• [company name] employee induction process. • Performance Development Scheme (PDS)



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