

# Managing Psychological Wellbeing at Work Policy (Previously called Stress Management and Wellbeing Policy)

Version number :	4.0
Consultation Groups	All Staff
Approved by (Sponsor Group)	JSC Policy Sub-Committee
Ratified by:	Joint Staff Committee
Date ratified:	October 2021
Name of originator/author:	Diane Aston, Health and Wellbeing Adviser
Executive Director lead :	Tanya Carter
Implementation Date :	October 2021
Last Review Date	October 2021
Next Review date:	October 2022

1

Services	Applicable
Trustwide	X
Mental Health and LD	
Community Health Services	

## Version Control Summary

<b>Version</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Comment</b>
3	March 2011	Diane Aston, Health & Well-Being Advisor	Updated legislation with the HSE Management Standards	
3	December 2013	Diane Aston, Health & Well-Being Advisor	Policy Review	
4	June 2017	Diane Aston, Health and Wellbeing Adviser	Reviewed policy and updated title to appropriate definition of stress	
4	October 2021			Extended

## Contents Page

Section	Title	Page
1	Introduction	4
2	Policy Statement	4
3	Policy Aims	5
4	Scope of the Policy	6
5	Definition of Psychological Wellbeing	6
6	Psychological wellbeing in the workplace	6
7	Roles and Responsibilities	7
8	Risk Assessment	10
9	Training	10
10	Monitoring and Evaluation	11
Appendices	Title	Page
1	Guidance for managers in relation to the care of staff	12
2	Dealing with difficulties at work – an overview for managers	20
3	Help with psychological wellbeing	21
4	Intranet Links for Resources/Templates	23

## 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Trust, as a responsible employer, is committed to providing a safe and healthy work environment for all employees and aims to do this by promoting and protecting the health, safety and wellbeing of its employees in line with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (amended), the Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1999, the Equality Act 2010 and the Working Time Regulations 1998. The Trust believes that the measures set out within this policy will contribute to creating and maintaining a healthy work environment; minimize the potential for psychological ill-health and provide support for those experiencing problems. It must be recognised that this forms only one strand of an overall strategy to promote health in the workplace and this policy must be read in conjunction with related policies such as Grievance Policy and Procedure, Dignity at Work Policy and Procedure, Work Life Balance Policies, Managing Sickness Absence Policy and Procedure, Incident Reporting Policy, Whistle Blowing Policy and the Management of Staff Affected by Change Policy and Procedure.
- 1.2 Work on the whole is good for you – it promotes physical and mental health and well-being, it can be therapeutic and generally the beneficial effects of work contribute to improved health and wellbeing. A working environment that promotes and sustains positive psychological well-being is one that is challenging, stimulating and enriching; within this context feeling a certain level of pressure is a normal aspect of everyday life. The negative reaction to this is what happens when the pressure exceeds an individual's coping abilities which then leads to the pressure turning into stress. Pressure can be positive in that it spurs people to do things; however prolonged exposure to stressors can provoke a chronic condition and have a significant negative impact on the overall physical and psychological well-being of individuals.
- 1.3 Adverse stress reactions have been identified as a contributory factor in a wide range of diseases and conditions, it also leads to poor performance and disengagement from the workplace, with often profound negative effects on service delivery. The Trust recognises that stress in the workplace is a health and safety issue and acknowledges the importance of identifying and reducing workplace stressors. It also recognises that workplace stress can be a major factor in reduced staff performance, commitment and motivation, increased sickness absence, loss of productivity and general absenteeism. The Trust therefore accepts that recognition, management and reduction of stress and promotion of psychological health can have substantial benefits in improving an individual's general health and aims to achieve this through the Stress Management and Wellbeing Policy and related policies as stated above.
- 1.4 The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) views psychological ill-health as the second most commonly reported work-related illness and states that it, along with associated problems, is responsible for an estimated loss of five million working days per annum in Britain. **1 in 5 workers is suffering from stress at any one time**. In addition, the HSE has also stated that current legislation, Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (amended) encompasses the need to manage stress at work.

## 2 POLICY STATEMENT

- 2.1 This policy sets out the Trust's aims and objectives for the management of health and safety in relation to promoting and sustaining well-being and reducing potential for psychological ill-health in the workplace. The intention of the policy is, wherever possible, to ensure that staff members who experience feelings of stress are helped,

whatever the causes of that stress. The Trust therefore makes a commitment to the following:

- To seek to identify all workplace stressors and where stress occurs
- To conduct risk assessments and develop action plans to reduce levels of stress
- To provide sufficient training and supervision for all employees to enable them to avoid stress levels
- To provide relevant training to staff and managers on how to manage, identify and alleviate stress at work
- To consult with Staff Side on all proposed action relating to the prevention of workplace stress
- To provide access to relevant forms of support e.g. Occupational Health, the Trust's Employee Assistance Programme and relevant external agencies for staff affected by stress
- To provide adequate resources and support to enable managers to implement the Trusts Managing Psychological Wellbeing Policy
- To ensure that the Trust meets and maintains its statutory requirements under the relevant legislation and regulations.

### 3 POLICY AIMS

3.1 The aims of this policy are to assist the Trust and its staff in promoting well-being and tackling psychological wellbeing. The Trust will aim to implement the HSE Management Standards for tackling work-related stress. These are:-

**Demands** – demands of the job e.g. workload, work patterns, work environment

**Control** – how much say and control a person has in the way they do their work

**Support** – encouragement and resources provided by the Trust, management and colleagues

**Relationship** – promoting positive working to avoid conflict, e.g. dealing with unacceptable behaviour

**Role** – people understanding their role within the organisation, resolving conflicting roles

**Change** – how organisational change (of any size) is managed and communicated in the Trust

The Trust will plan to meet these standards through a process of identifying risk through appropriate forms of risk assessment and stress audits, planning interventions derived from the outcome of the risk assessments process by way of local and Trust wide action planning and finally by monitoring and evaluating the effective use of agreed interventions and strategies. Some of these interventions and strategies may include the following:

- Promoting a culture of encouragement, participation and open communication
- Identifying potential areas that contribute to psychological ill-health from the staff survey; carrying out stress audits (either organizationally or in specific

areas); monitoring sickness absence figures, bullying and harassment cases, and retention

- Training managers in how to recognise risk areas, identify potential stress reactions in individuals and the impact of modelling positive management behaviour
- Training and provision of more Harassment Support Advisors
- Enabling staff to be aware of action that will be taken by the Trust to prevent and control potential stress areas at work
- Increasing awareness of the problem of psychological wellbeing at work and the methods available to combat it
- Initiating appropriate action to manage and reduce stress
- Assisting staff in managing stress in others and themselves
- Managing problems which do occur and providing confidential support for those who are experiencing stress through referral to the **relevant** supportive agencies (internal and external).
- Effectively managing the return to work of those who have been absent as a result of psychological ill-health.

#### **4 SCOPE OF THIS POLICY**

- 4.1 This policy applies to all managers and staff employed by the Trust. This includes bank and agency staff

#### **5 DEFINITION OF PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING**

- 5.1 The Trust accepts the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) definition of stress which is:

***“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. Of equal importance is the fact that the reaction can be to **perceived threats** as much as actual ones.

- 5.2 Everyone in principle can experience work related stress, no one is immune. Work related stress exists where people perceive they cannot cope with what is being asked of them at work. As a general rule a reaction occurs where there is a mismatch between work requirements and the individual’s ability to cope. It is important to remember that work-related stress is not an illness, but if it is prolonged, or particularly intense, it can lead to increased problems with ill health, psychological in particular but also physical in some circumstances.

#### **6 PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING IN THE WORKPLACE**

- 6.1 The recognition and management of psychological well-being are integral to the Trust’s responsibilities towards its staff and form an important part of the role of managers. This policy is, therefore, primarily concerned with the negative effects of stressors arising from the factors within the workplace and their impact on psychological health. However it is recognised that stress may be influenced by a variety of factors and that no single cause may necessarily be identified.

- 6.2 The emphasis of this policy is to encourage and assist staff and all those with responsibilities for their management to identify what contributes to positive psychological well-being and promote this but also to identify where this is lacking and how to deal with stress reactions themselves. Nevertheless, there will be times when some staff require professional help and support.
- 6.3 For this reason, the Trust recommends that staff seeking help should normally approach their line manager in the first instance. They may also want to talk to their Trade Union representative.
- 6.4 The Human Resources Department, Occupational Health Service or the Trust's Employee Assistance Programme are also able to provide guidance and assistance, which may include the provision of counselling or medical services where necessary.
- 6.5 Some staff may be reluctant at first to admit that they are experiencing adverse effects as a result of stress. This policy acknowledges that any staff member, at whatever level, can experience stress at work.
- 6.6 The Trust considers that seeking help and support should be seen as a positive approach, to be encouraged and handled without jeopardy, and not to be viewed in any sense as an admission of weakness. In the guidance notes at the end of this policy, managers and staff are given practical advice on how to nurture a climate wherein seeking help and support is encouraged and not penalised in any way.

## **7 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **7.1 Corporate Responsibilities**

- Understand the nature of organisational change and its impact on the well-being of staff.
- Understand what contributes to psychological well-being within the workplace and develop strategies, policies and practices that encourage this.
- Be aware of the causes and effects of harmful stress upon staff and how this may affect the Trust as a whole and initiate an action plan for the prevention and control of harmful stress at work as a means of improving the mental health and well-being and work performance of staff and as part of meeting the Trust's legal responsibilities for Health and Safety and duty of care for employees.
- Be familiar with the HSE Management standards and competencies.
- Ensure that managers have the facilities and resources to prevent and control harmful stress arising from work.
- Be aware of the extent of stress-related illness in the organisation as a whole and how it affects the Trust's achievements and performance.

### **7.2 Managers Responsibility**

- Be familiar with the HSE Management standards and competencies
- Undertake a risk assessment using the HSE Management Standard Stress Risk Assessment (**Appendix 5**) where staff are giving indications of stress related issues.
- Conduct and implement recommendations of risk assessments within their jurisdiction.

- demonstrate and model behaviour conducive to positive working relationships
- Participate in local or Trust wide action plans for preventing and controlling work-related stress.
- Ensure good communication between management and staff, particularly where there are organisational and procedural changes.
- Ensure staff are fully trained to undertake their duties
- Ensure staff are provided with meaningful development opportunities.
- Monitor workloads to ensure staff are not overloaded.
- Monitor working hours and overtime to ensure that staff are not overworking.
- Monitor holidays to ensure that staff are taking their full entitlement.
- Ensure that bullying and harassment is not tolerated within their jurisdiction
- Be vigilant and offer additional support to a member of staff who is experiencing stress outside work e.g. bereavement or separation.
- Attending training as requested in good management practice and health and safety.
- Undertake regular appraisals and one-to-one discussions about work and exploring whether staff are experiencing excessive pressure.
- Monitor staff for impact of work stress through individual effects (e.g. sickness absence, lateness) and via work performance
- To recognise and offer support to staff exhibiting signs of stress.
- Encourage staff to make use of the Trust's work/life balance policies
- Take effective action to prevent and control stress at work or, where this cannot be achieved at departmental level, bring this to the attention of senior management to take forward
- Offer any assistance to staff (e.g. training, counselling) which may help them to cope more effectively with unavoidable stress within their jobs

### **7.3 Employee Responsibilities**

Stress can cause changes in those experiencing it. If stress at work is identified early, action can be taken before it becomes a problem. The H&SE(Appendix1) provide details of how stress can have an adverse affect on an individual's mental health (feeling anxious, mood changes, depression), their physical appearance (sweating, reddening, blushing) and how they feel (increased blood pressure, hypertension).

It is important for individuals to look at how they are feeling and try to identify any potential issues as early as possible. The onus is on the employee to seek support in terms of managing their stress. You may wish to seek help from the following:

- Your line manager
- Your local trade union representative
- Trust's staff counselling service (EAP)
- GP

### **7.4 Human Resources Responsibilities**

- Give guidance to managers on the psychological wellbeing policy.
- Help monitor the effectiveness of measures to address stress by collating sickness absence statistics.

- Actively carry out individual psychological wellbeing risk assessments ( e.g. in some cases where there is a conflict of interest with managers)
- Provide continuing support to managers and individuals and encourage referral to occupational health or the Employee Assistance Programme as appropriate.
- Promote health and well-being within the workplace
- Provide advice and guidance on conducting a risk assessment and the development of action plans
- Sign post staff or managers to the relevant mediation services where appropriate.

## **7.5 Occupational Health Responsibilities**

- Assist with identifying illnesses in staff caused by adverse stress reactions at work.
- Alert managers to situations where staff appear to be suffering from the effects of harmful stress at work.
- Refer to workplace counsellors as required.
- Provide confidential consultation support to staff with stress-related problems.
- Provide specialist advice to managers and staff on the effects of stress and the medical aspects of this.
- Support staff who have been off sick with stress and advise them and their managers on rehabilitation, work adjustments and planned return to work.
- Advise managers where there is a need for a staff member to be restricted from any aspect of work which has been causing harmful stress

## **7.6 Staff Side Responsibilities**

- Encourage and support staff in dealing with stress
- Maybe required to occasionally be involved in risk assessment and action planning along with line managers and members of the IWL Committee where necessary
- Identify potential risks for members
- Participate in training where appropriate
- Staffside will provide a representative for the IWL Committee

## **7.7 Improving Working Lives Committee Responsibilities**

- IWL representatives will provide support and guidance to managers, introducing changes to working practices on work design in order to identify sources of stress.
- Actively carry out departmental stress and well-being risk assessments.
- Actively support the distribution and implementation of the anonymous stress and well-being risk assessment questionnaire.
- Co-ordinate the implementation of action points resulting from the survey when appropriate.
- Give guidance and support to managers in setting up action plans following the stress and well-being risk assessments
- Monitor results of questionnaire of the application of this policy by discussing issues at committee meetings.
- Co-ordinate action being taken to implement the Trust's Stress Management and Well-Being Policy.

## 8 RISK ASSESSMENT

- 8.1 The Health & Safety Executive (HSE) expects every employer to conduct risk assessments for health and safety hazards, including work related stress. The HSE recommends a five-step approach to risk assessment:
- **Identify the hazards** – Look at how the HSE Management Standards (listed below) apply in the context of the workplace. These will help to measure the performance in managing work related stress and provide simple statements about good management practices to assist in this area.
  - **decide who might be harmed and how** - Identify the problem areas using existing data (Sickness absence data, turnover e.t.c) and other tools and surveys
  - **evaluate the risk and take action** – Link problems to solutions, gather staff feedback, communicate results and provide feedback to staff
  - **record your findings** – record the findings of your assessment and develop an action plan
  - **monitor and review** – monitor your action plan and evaluate the effectiveness of the interventions and strategies that have been implemented
- 8.2 The Trust commits to engaging in a thorough risk assessment process which will be conducted on an annual basis and in line with the HSE five step approach to risk assessment. The results of the risk assessment will be discussed with the Head of Service/Service Directors and appropriate action plans will be developed as a result of this. Consultation on actions will be discussed with staff and their representatives prior to the final action plan being agreed.
- 8.3 A risk assessment survey will be rolled out to a random number of staff on an annual basis, in line with the HSE Management requirements in order to assess levels of stress at work. Distribution, evaluation, monitoring results and action plans of this survey will be the responsibility of the Improving Working Lives Committee.
- 8.4 There may be instances when individual employee risk assessments may need to be undertaken where it is obvious through sickness absence management processes that an employee may be suffering from stress or a stress related illness or where an employee approaches a manager to inform them that they think they may be experiencing stress. Such instances will require the line manager of the employee to conduct an individual risk assessment using the standard Trust risk assessment tools.
- 8.5 The Trust also aims to undertake an annual Trust Wide risk assessment based on findings and actions resulting from local audit individual risk assessments, the Trust Wide Staff Survey results, Trust Wide Sickness Absence and Turnover statistics and any other forms of relevant Trust Wide data. The objective of the Trust Wide risk assessment will be to address larger organisational issues and re current trends resulting from the risk assessments.

## 9 TRAINING

- 9.1 Training in managing psychological wellbeing, including risk assessment and action planning, will be offered to all managers

- 9.2 Guidance on dealing with reactions to stress and self-help will be provided to all staff with an emphasis on solutions
- 9.3 Training will be offered to relevant HR staff in order to support managers and staff in the application of this policy.

## **10 MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

10.1 Monitoring and evaluation are essential to any effective policy of managing psychological wellbeing. They provide feedback, which is critical to the maintenance and development of strategies and procedures to control stress in the workplace.

10.2 For this reason the Trust will carry out annual evidenced based stress audits both on the individual risk assessment process and the annual trust wide stress audit Directorate's action plans. The key objectives of which are as follows:

- to ensure that the requirements and standards set out in the policy are being met
- To monitor actions against trust wide and individual action plans to ensure progress is being made
- To evaluate the effectiveness of solutions by gathering feedback from staff and their representatives on whether they feel the solutions are having the desired effects.
- To collect Trust Wide/Departmental data on areas such as Sickness Absence, Employee Turnover, Exit Interviews etc and to compare against similar data from previous years to establish the effectiveness of the psychological wellbeing processes.
- To ensure that a continuous process of risk assessment, action planning and review and monitoring and evaluation is conducted.

10.3 The annual monitoring and evaluation process will be initiated by a nominated Senior Human Resources Manager and the HR Advisor overseeing Health and Wellbeing with the support of the Improving Working Lives Committee members but may also involve line managers and staff throughout some stages of this process. The outcome of these audits will be reported to the workforce committee bi-annually who will have the responsibility to address non-compliance.

10.4 The Policy will be monitored and reviewed on a regular basis to identify trends, the need for training and areas where change or improvements to policies or procedures may be needed.

### **11.0 Equality Impact Assessment**

It is considered that implementation of the HSE Stress Management Standards will have a positive impact for all Trust employees as the Trust is currently working towards a strategy to identify areas of stress and assist and support staff in dealing with stress in the workplace. The Trust is also aware that some groups may feel isolated so a full Equality impact Assessment is underway.

## APPENDIX 1

### GUIDANCE FOR MANAGERS IN RELATION TO THE CARE OF STAFF

The information contained in the Guidance for Managers should be read in conjunction with the Managing Psychological Wellbeing Policy. This Guidance is intended to assist managers in fulfilling their workplace responsibilities.

#### **Recognising Signs of Stress in the individual**

Unlike other health hazards in the workplace, stress may not be easy to detect. Managers may see it as an inevitable problem due to circumstances beyond their control. This in turn may be a source of stress to the manager (e.g. role conflict). Likewise employees may also believe that the problem is beyond their or their manager's control or may think that it is a failure to cope on their part. Either may lead to a breakdown in the communications vital to the support and maintenance of good teamwork.

While each individual's response to stressors is unique, some common symptoms are discernible

<b>Physical</b>	<b>Mental/thinking</b>
Headaches	Poor concentration
Indigestion/Heartburn	Unable to listen to other people
Lack of appetite or over eating	Memory Lapses
Muscle tensions, aches and pains	Confusion or disorientation
Nausea, vomiting	Difficulty with making decisions
Dizziness	Poor planning and task execution
Palpitations	Negative, unhelpful thoughts patterns
Sleep loss	Irrational beliefs
Fatigue	Thinking errors
<b>Emotional</b>	<b>Behavioural</b>
Irritability	Increased smoking
Becoming angry with others too easily	Increased use of alcohol or drugs
Depressed, Tearful	Appetite changes
Frightened	Restlessness, fidgeting
Worried, anxious – panic attacks	Absence
Impatient	Lack of motivation and commitment
Mood swings	Increased aggression
	More prone to accidents
	Avoiding contact with others
	Loss of sense of humour

If stress is experienced over long periods other signs may develop. These include, for example, high blood pressure, heart disease, ulcers, chronic anxiety, and long-term depression.

#### **Recognising Signs of Stress in the Workplace**

Be aware of these possible signs:

- an increase in overall sickness absence – especially frequent short absences

- poor work performance – less output, lower quality of work, poor decision making, poor timekeeping, increased occurrence of accidents
- relationships at work – poor relationships with colleagues and patients
- staff attitude and behaviour – poor timekeeping, loss of motivation or commitment, working long hours but with decreasing effectiveness

Some of these signs may also be symptoms of other problems, including psychiatric illness, alcohol or drug misuse (any one of which may also be related to stress).

### **Possible Sources of Stress in the Workplace**

When trying to determine possible signs of stress in the workplace it is useful to use the HSE's six Management Standards, these are listed below citing possible signs of stress and the 'states to be achieved' which defines a desirable set of conditions for organisations to work towards.

## **Demands**

- Workload, work patterns and the work environment

### ***The standard is that:***

- Employees indicate that they are able to cope with the demands of their jobs;
- Systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns

### ***States to be achieved:***

- The organisation provides employees with adequate achievable demands in relations to agreed hours of work
- Peoples skills and abilities are matched to job demands
- Jobs are designed to be within the capabilities of employees
- Employees concerns about their work environment are addressed

## **Control**

- How much say a person has in the way they do their work

### ***The standard is that:***

- Employees indicate that they are able to have a say in the way they do their work
- Systems are in place locally to respond to individual concerns

### ***States to be achieved:***

- Where possible employees have control over their place of work
- Employees are encouraged to use their skills and initiative to do their work
- Where possible employees are encouraged to develop new skills to help them undertake new and challenging pieces of work
- The organisation encourages employees to develop their skills
- Employees have a say over when breaks can be taken
- Employees are consulted over their work patterns

## Support

- Includes, encouragement, sponsorship, and resources provided by the organisation, line management and colleagues

### ***The standard is that:***

- Employees indicate that they receive adequate information and support from colleagues and their superiors
- Systems are in place locally to respond to individual concerns

### ***States to be achieved:***

- The organisation has policies and procedures to adequately support employees
- Systems are in place to enable and encourage managers to support their staff
- Systems are in place to enable and encourage employees to support their colleagues
- Employees know what support is available and how and when to access it
- Employees know how to access required resources to be able to do their jobs
- Employees have regular and constructive feedback

## Relationships

- Includes promoting positive working to avoid conflict and dealing with unacceptable behaviour

### ***The standard is that:***

- Employees indicate that they are not subjected to unacceptable behaviour e.g. bullying at work
- Systems are in place locally to respond to individual concerns

### ***States to be achieved:***

- The organisation promotes positive behaviours at work to avoid conflict and ensure fairness
- Employees share information relevant to their work
- The organisation has agreed policies and procedures to prevent or resolve unacceptable behaviour
- Systems are in place to enable and encourage managers to deal with unacceptable behaviour
- Systems are in place to enable and encourage employees to report unacceptable behaviour

## Role

- Whether people understand their role within the organisation and whether the organisation ensure that the person does not have conflicting roles

### ***The standard is that:***

- Employees indicated that they understand their role and responsibilities
- Systems are in place locally to respond to individual concerns

**States to be achieved:**

- The organisation ensure that as far as possible the different requirements is places on employees are compatible
- The organisation provides information to employees to understand their roles and responsibilities
- The organisation ensure that as far as is possible the requirements is place upon employees is clear
- Systems are in place to enable employees to raise concerns about any uncertainties or conflicts they have in their role and responsibilities

**Change**

- How organisational change (large and small) is managed and communicated to staff

**The standard is that:**

- Employees indicate that the organisation engages them frequently when undergoing organisational change
- Systems are in place to respond to individual concerns

**States to be achieved:**

- The organisation provides employees with timely information to enable them to understand the reason for proposed changes
- The organisation ensures adequate employee consultation on changes and provides opportunities for employees to influence proposals
- Employees are aware of the probable impact of any changes to their jobs. If necessary employees are given training to support any changes in their job
- Employees are aware of timetables for changes
- Employees have access to relevant support during changes

**The Manager's Role in Staff Care**

All employees can contribute significantly to maintaining a positive workplace culture. This is especially true of those in a managerial role who can display a leadership style which encourages their colleagues to discuss feeling of stress without the stigma of this being interpreted as a sign of weakness or failure.

The following points, all drawn from the policy, are offered to managers as actions with which they can make a significant impact on stress reduction amongst the Trust's staff. Note that these should not be seen as additional duties and responsibilities for managers but should, instead, be part of the normal system of clinical and management supervision and staff development review.-.

- Seeking advice from Human Resources (an HR Manager/Advisor) or from the Occupational Health Service when you are unsure how to deal with a problem
- Setting out clear roles and responsibilities for your staff which they understand and which they can work to

- Identifying jobs where stress has been or is a problem and seeing what can be done to reduce the risk of stress to post holders
- Regular reviewing of known work pressures such as excessive workload, tight deadlines, staffing levels, and the need for staff development
- Allowing flexible work schedules when this is reasonably practicable
- Meeting all staff reporting directly to you on a planned or regular basis. Make time to listen to, and discuss, their concerns
- When your staff are absent, finding out why in a sensitive and appropriate manner. Contact and offer support to staff on longer term absences
- Ensuring that all new staff in your section/department receives a planned induction programme which fully prepares them for their work in the Trust. You should also allow time for your staff to attend corporate induction events including safety training
- If staff are promoted, or their job changes, ensuring they are given advice, support and any necessary training to help them adjust to the new situation
- Identifying the training and development needs of your staff. Monitor your own progress in meeting these needs
- Ensuring that staff are treated fairly and consistently. Do not tolerate harassment or bullying. Refer to the Trust's Harassment & Bullying Policy for further guidance
- Clear communication is essential to explain, share and achieve objectives. It also helps to minimise staff uncertainty and stress at times of change. Discuss issues with your staff and provide regular and accurate information on matters which will affect them and their work.
- Confidentiality should be maintained at all times when staff have disclosed matters to you which are not work-related and have no bearing on their capacity as members of staff.

The HSE has identified the following competencies and behaviours for managers to prevent and reduce stress at work:-

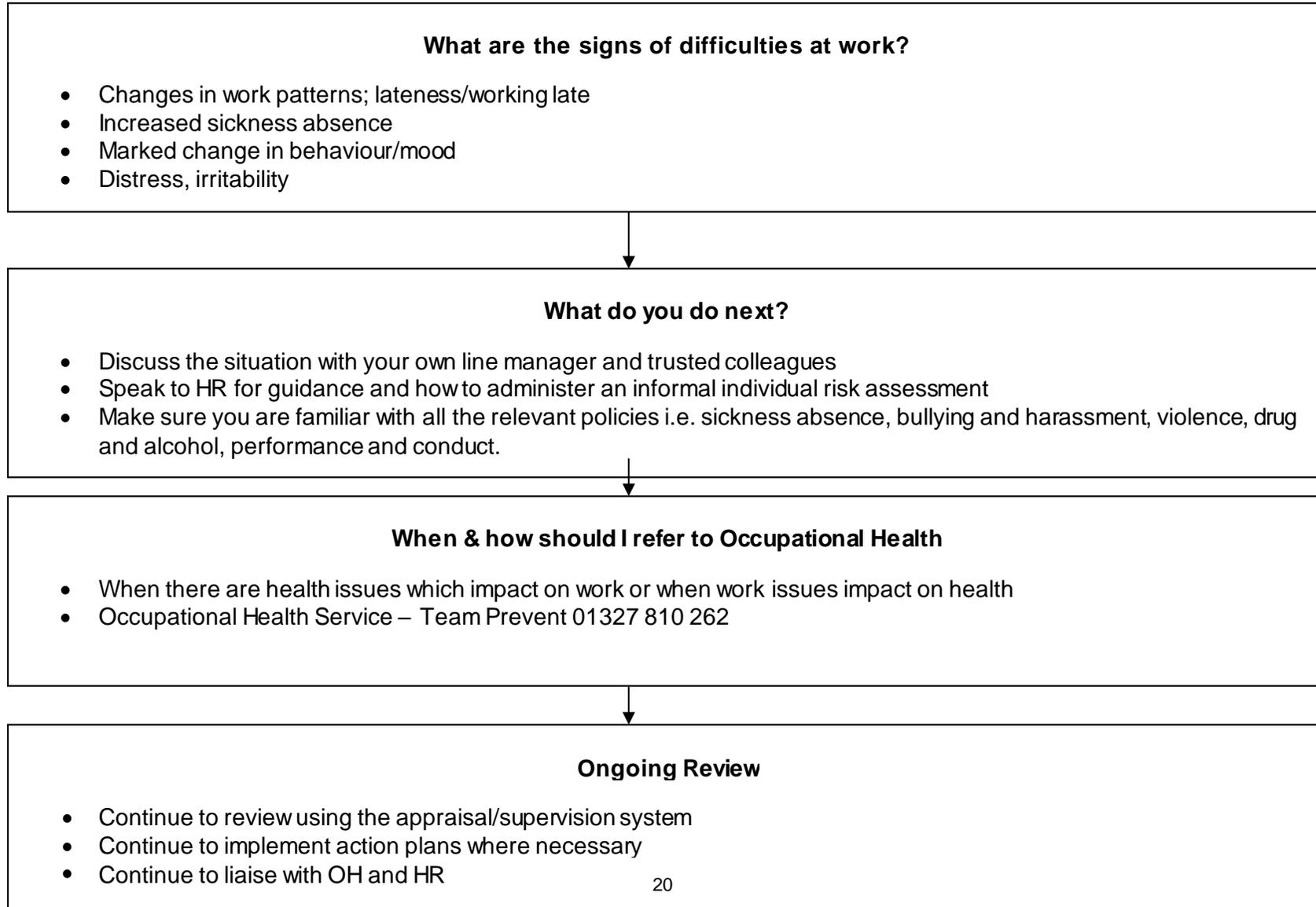
Management Standard	Competency	Examples of positive behaviour	Examples of negative behaviour
<b>Demands</b>	Managing workloads and resources	Bringing in additional resource Aware of team members' ability Refusing to take on additional work when team is under pressure	Delegating work unequally to team Creating unrealistic deadlines Showing lack of awareness of how much pressure team are under Asking for tasks without checking workload first
	Dealing with work problems	Following through problems on behalf of employees Developing action plans Breaking problems down into parts Dealing rationally with problems	Listening to but not resolving problems Being indecisive Not taking problems seriously Assuming problems will sort themselves out
	Process planning & organisation	Reviewing processes to see if work can be improved Asking themselves 'could this be done better' Prioritising future workloads Working proactively	Not using consistent processes Sticking too rigidly to rules and procedures Panicking about deadlines rather than planning
<b>Control</b>	Empowerment	Trusting employees to do their work Giving employees responsibility Steering employees in a direction rather than imposing direction	Managing under a microscope Extending so much authority employees feel a lack of direction Imposing 'my way is the only way'
	Participative approach	Provides opportunity to air views Provides regular team meetings Prepared to listen to employees Knows when to consult employees and when to make a decision	Not listening when the employee asks for help Presenting a final solution Making decisions without consultation
	Development	Encourages staff to go on training courses Provides mentoring and coaching Regularly reviews development Helps employees to develop in role	Refuses requests for training Not providing upward mobility in job Not allowing employees to use their new training
<b>Support</b>	Accessible/visible	Communicating that employees can talk to them at any time Having an open door policy Making time to talk to employees	Being constantly in meetings Saying 'don't bother me now' Not attending lunches or social events
	Health & Safety	Making sure everyone is safe Structuring risk assessments Ensuring all health and safety requirements are met.	Not taking health & safety seriously Questioning the capability of an employee who has raised a safety issue
	Feedback	Praising good work Acknowledging employees' efforts Operating a no-blame culture & passing positive feedback about team to senior management	Not giving credit for hitting deadlines Seeing feedback as only one way Giving feedback that employees are wrong just because their way of working is different
	Individual consideration	Regular 1:1s Flexible when employees need time off Provides information on additional sources of support Regularly asks 'how are you?'	Assuming everyone is OK Badgering employees to tell them what is wrong Not giving enough notice of shift change No consideration of work-life balance
<b>Relationships</b>	Managing conflict	Listening objectively to both sides of the conflict Supporting and investigating incidents of abuse Dealing with conflict head on Following up on conflicts after resolution	Not addressing bullying Trying to keep the peace rather than sort out problems Taking sides Not taking employee complaints seriously
	Expressing and managing own emotions	Having a positive approach Acting calmly when under pressure	Passing on stress to employees Acting aggressively

		Walking away when feeling unable to control own emotions Apologising for poor behaviour	Losing temper with employees Being unpredictable in mood
	Acting with integrity	Keeps employee issues private and confidential Admits mistakes Treats all employees with same importance	Speaks about employees behind their backs Makes promises the doesn't deliver Makes personal issues public
	Friendly style	Willing to have a laugh and a joke Socialises with team Brings in food and drinks for team Regularly has informal chats with employees	Criticises people in front of colleagues Pulls team up from talking/laughing during work hours Uses harsh tone of voice when asking for things
<b>Role &amp; Change</b>	Communication	Keeps team informed of what is happening in the organisation Communicates clear goals and objectives Explains exactly what is required	Keeps people in the dark Holds meetings behind closed doors Doesn't provide timely communication on organisational change

These competencies are the basis of good management practice

## APPENDIX 2

### Dealing with difficulties at work – An overview for Managers



## APPENDIX 3

# HELP WITH PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING

You are not alone if you feel very or extremely stressed. In the country as a whole, as many as one in five people could be feeling the same way. In the workplace, the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1999) require you as an employee to tell your employer about any shortcomings in their health and safety arrangements. This is particularly important when tackling work-related stress it requires a partnership between you, your manager, and your employer: a partnership based on honesty and trust, where you all say what you feel.

### **Self Help**

You can help yourself to manage and prevent the build-up of stress. Below are some ideas which could help you to cope better:

#### **At Work**

- if you are under stress, acknowledge this and try to identify the sources Try to channel your energies into solving the problem rather than just worrying about it
- if the problem is work-related, discuss it with others, including your manager and trade union representative, when this is appropriate
- be more assertive
- manage your time effectively – identify what is important and prioritise your work
- create and maintain a support network of colleagues and friends
- seek confidential support if you feel the need
- speak to your GP if you are worried about your health
- take advantage of training opportunities to extend your knowledge and skills
- take a proper break from work during lunch or other mealtimes
- delegate work when this is possible
- praise and reward yourself and others – even a brief ‘thank you’ or ‘well done’ can often achieve positive results
- support your colleagues if they are experiencing work related stress and encourage them to speak to their manager and Trade Union representative

#### **Take Care of Yourself**

- eat sensibly, get enough rest and avoid the harmful effects of alcohol, tobacco or drugs

- Exercise: take regular exercise such as walking, swimming, cycling etc.
- Lifestyle: make time for yourself. Enjoy leisure activities and interests outside of work and try to learn relaxation techniques
- Talking: talking things through with friends and relatives can help. If problems become too great, arrange to see a counsellor
- Time to think – give yourself thinking time each day. This helps to manage time and priorities

### **What to do after a stress-related illness**

If you have been off work with a stress related illness, talk about it with your manager when you return. Say how you feel, explain what led to the event and what you would like to see happen. Take a TU representative or a work colleague with you if you do not feel you can do this on your own.

### **Other Sources of Help**

Most of us get informal help from our families, friends and colleagues. Sometimes, though, we may need to talk to someone who is outside the situation. If you are feeling under stress, do not wait for the problem to build up: talk to someone straight away. You have a number of different options:

- If a work or home problem is affecting your work, discuss it with your manager or your supervisor. Your manager will then know about the situation and treat the matter in confidence whenever possible. Occasions when this may not be possible include when your personal safety or that of other employees is at risk or when your manager may be acting in contravention of the law by treating a matter confidentially.
- If you do not wish to talk to your manager, you can contact Human Resources, Occupational Health directly or contact the Employee Assistance Programme. Either service, with your consent, may refer you for short-term counselling if this appears necessary.
- If you have been affected by a particularly stressful situation, or have had to deal with violent or distressing events, either within your work, or outside of the workplace, you can contact your manager, the Employee Assistance Programme, Human Resources or Occupational Health. It is often very beneficial to talk something through soon after an incident.
- If you are experiencing harassment or bullying within the workplace, you can either take up the matter directly with your manager or contact one of the Trust's Harassment Support Advisors confidentially. They will provide advice and support to any staff who believe they are being harassed or bullied. See also the Trust's Dignity at Work Policy & Procedure.
- If you are a trade union member your union may be able to provide support and advice.

## APPENDIX 4

### Intranet links for Resources/Templates

- **Appendix 5 - HSE Management Standards Indicator tool** - This tool allows you to complete an on-line risk assessment to determine individual working conditions, which will then enable you to monitor future improvements and actions where necessary, please click on below link:

[http://elftintranet/sites/common/Private/Contentobject\\_View.aspx?id=30706](http://elftintranet/sites/common/Private/Contentobject_View.aspx?id=30706)

- **Appendix 6 – Risk Assessment Action Plan** - Once you have completed the on-line risk assessment tool, please click on below Risk assessment action plan tool:

[http://elftintranet/sites/common/Private/Contentobject\\_View.aspx?id=30704](http://elftintranet/sites/common/Private/Contentobject_View.aspx?id=30704)

- **Appendix 8 – Return to Work Questionnaire** - When employees return from sick leave due to stress related illnesses a return to work questionnaire should be completed to identify whether the levels of stress have fallen under any of the six Management standards. please click below link:

[http://elftintranet/sites/common/Private/Contentobject\\_View.aspx?id=30705](http://elftintranet/sites/common/Private/Contentobject_View.aspx?id=30705)