

# NHS GREATER GLASGOW AND CLYDE

## Policy on stress in the workplace

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# 1 Introduction

1.1 The NHS in Scotland has a legal duty under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, to ensure the health, safety and welfare of employees. The NHSiS also has a Staff Governance standard that requires NHS employers to ensure that staff are provided with a safe and healthy working environment. The organisation also has a duty to ensure that safe systems of work are in place for staff, which may include workload considerations.

NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde is committed to a healthy workforce by placing value on both physical and mental health. We acknowledge that stress problems have many causes, including in the workplace and the outside world. In NHS GGC, our risk assessments show that factors which may lead to increased stress in our organisation include those related to demands, control, relationships, role, support and change. We also recognise that domestic factors (housing, family problems and bereavement) may also add to levels of stress experienced by our employees.

1.2 NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde is committed to a plan of action which includes:

- action to manage the return to work of those who have experienced mental or physical health problems associated with stress to ensure their wellbeing, and to ensure their skills are not lost;
- increasing knowledge of the causes of stress in the organisation;
- action to tackle stress and helping staff to manage stress; and
- managing health problems associated with stress by:
  - recognising the adverse effects of stress early;
  - managing stress appropriately;
  - providing access to necessary support which may include counselling;
  - providing advice and sources of help.

1.3 This Policy and its procedures have been developed and agreed through our Health and Safety Forum.

1.4 NHS GGC recognises the difference between **pressure and stress**. The definition of stress adopted within this Policy is that used by the Health and Safety Executive. This is defined as ;

***‘The adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures or demands placed upon them.’***

1.5 NHS GGC recognises that some factors that can affect stress of employees relate to chronic factors, whereas others may relate to an acute event. An acute event may be a specific violent or unpleasant incident, including clinical events and dealing with challenging behaviours. Chronic factors may be exposure to stressors over a prolonged period of time and/or on a regular basis.

## 2 Scope

This policy applies to all staff in NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde.

## 3 Policy aims

This policy aims to:

- encourage staff wellbeing within NHS GGC and discourage the stigma attached to stress;
- raise awareness of ill health associated with stress, its causes and associated factors;
- change aspects of the workplace and working arrangements, which have been identified (through risk assessment) as increasing the stress risk;
- educate staff in techniques for coping with pressure and stress;
- provide staff with help if they have mental or physical health problems associated with stress;
- through information and education, encourage everyone to recognise the adverse effects of stress;
- raise awareness of the means of support for staff including Occupational Health, Employee Counselling and colleagues;
- encourage staff to get help at an early stage;
- offer easy access to necessary support, which may include counselling and other professional help;
- as far as possible, via [Attendance Management Policies](#) and [Redeployment Policies](#), guarantee job security, access to sick leave, the retention of status and make sure that there is no blame apportioned to those using the support mechanisms;
- set up procedures for return to, and rehabilitation in work e.g. phased return in conjunction with the employee;
- ensure that these procedures are flexible enough to meet varying needs e.g. [Dignity at Work](#) and [Worklife Balance](#) issues;
- increase awareness, to ensure that the [Employee Counselling Service \(ECS\)](#) is available to all NHS GGC employees;
- ensure that organisational, departmental and individual factors are taken into account when undertaking **stress risk assessments (Appendices)**
- guidance will be provided for managers on undertaking stress risk assessments and a pro-forma will be provided. (See supplementary Guidance document.)
- the principles advocated by the **Health and Safety Executives Management Standards** on Stress, will be adopted to undertake the risk assessment process. (A survey monkey tool will be available to assist this process)

## 4 Responsibilities

4.1 **Directors and Senior managers** are responsible for making sure that:

- factors which can lead to stress and ill health, are reduced and/or managed from the work environment, as far as possible;
- an organisational culture is developed where stress is not seen as a sign of weakness or incompetence and where seeking help in managing stress is seen as a sign of strength and good practice;
- suitable training and guidance is provided to managers to equip them to undertake the necessary **risk assessments** in relation to stress in the workplace, and effective control measures are implemented where appropriate. The HSE indicator tool should be used to assist the risk assessment process. This will be delivered through Health and Safety and Occupational Health Services;
- information is provided for staff on:
  - the effects of stress at work;
  - positive coping mechanisms; and
  - general health improving activities within the workplace;
- advice and information is provided for all staff on how to recognise symptoms of stress in themselves and others;
- advice and information is provided for managers on their duty of care to staff;
- a working environment is promoted where staff who feel they are at risk of experiencing the effects of stress can raise the issue in confidence, so that necessary support mechanisms can be put in place;
- suitable support mechanisms for staff experiencing the effects of stress are established; and
- good practice guidelines based on current evidence and knowledge are produced to support the Policy. This will be delivered through the Health and Safety and Occupational Health Services.
- The Incident Management Policy is being applied in terms of incident reporting through the Datix system

#### 4.2 **Line managers** are responsible for:

- involving individual staff and staff teams in seeking solutions;
- encouraging a workplace culture where mental wellbeing and physical wellbeing are regarded as equally important;
- making sure, as far as is reasonably practicable, that the physical work environments for staff are safe and do not expose them to risks that may give rise to stress at work;
- considering the implications for staff of any changes to working practices, ways of working, work location, new policies or procedures, and the need for appropriate support and training;
- making sure that all new staff receive appropriate induction to and training for their job, including reference to support services, for example OHS, HR, Employee Counselling Service;
- providing clear job descriptions (clarifying lines of responsibility based on job description, accountability, and reporting), individual supervision and clear objectives with review;
- resolving work-related issues at individual level and at team level as appropriate,

involving others outside the team as necessary;

- managing absence in accordance with the organisational policy, and linking to other policies as necessary, such as Dignity at Work;
- keeping in touch with any staff who are on prolonged absence and agree with the individual, OHS and HR how to support their return to work;
- regularly reviewing excess hours worked by staff, time back, monitoring absence and staff turnover, and carrying out exit interviews;
- making sure that staff teams take time to review and celebrate positive achievements and likewise reviewing less positive outcomes so that a sense of balance can be achieved; and
- agreeing with staff teams what can be actioned and how to improve things, promoting openness and discussion. This may take place through day to day supervision and /or the appraisal process.
- Encourage staff to complete the HSE indicator tool as part of the risk assessment process.

4.3 The **Human Resources Department** is responsible for:

- making sure that organisational policies and codes of conduct (professional and general) are adhered to;
- facilitating discussions within areas of conflict;
- assisting in monitoring staff conduct, attendance, turnover, etc.;
- advocating clarity of roles and responsibilities, advising on job descriptions and organisational structure; and
- promoting positive cultural change within the workforce.
- Assisting the process of return to work and phased return.

4.4 **Trade Unions/ Professional Organisations** are responsible for:

- encouraging members to speak up as soon as they feel that their working environment is beginning to affect their health;
- using partnership mechanisms, including various committees, and the facilities laid out in the Safety Representatives and Safety Committees (SRSC) Regulations and Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations, to tackle work-related stress;
- investigating potential hazards and complaints from their members, receiving information they need from employers to protect members' health and safety;
- liaising with management to carry out risk assessments, including reviewing absence figures and linking these with other policies that may be available such as Dignity at Work; and
- encouraging members to keep a written record of any problems and to put things in writing to management, so that there is evidence of any problems and that management is aware of them.

4.5 The **Occupational Health Service** is responsible for:

- advising managers and staff on occupational triggers of stress and the risk

assessment process, in liaison with the Health and Safety Service;

- delivering an education/training programme on stress risk assessment/awareness and management, in conjunction with the Health and Safety Service;
- providing support for staff at all levels who may be experiencing stress; and
- reviewing patterns of work-related stress in terms of sickness absence monitoring and self/ management referrals and providing appropriate feedback to the organisation.;
- supporting line managers in applying the Policy where possible.

#### 4.6 **The Employee Counselling Service (ECS)** is responsible for:

- offering help to individuals in assessing the effectiveness of the coping strategies they currently use;
- offering help and ongoing support in identifying and maintaining any changes to current strategies;
- offering help in establishing a tailor-made programme of stress management which extends beyond work;
- being accessed by any individual experiencing problems which affect their ability to function; and
- offering an opportunity to talk in confidence about any problem or difficulty, whether work-related or not. (The service now operates on a 24/7 basis.)

#### 4.7 **The Health and Safety Service** is responsible for:

- ensuring suitable training and guidance is provided to managers to equip them to undertake the necessary localised **risk assessments** in relation to stress in the workplace.
- advising managers on effective control measures which can be implemented where appropriate;
- providing incident data related to stress;
- contributing to relevant training programmes for managers and staff;
- providing general advice on stress in the workplace to managers and staff.
- delivering an education/training programme on stress risk assessment/awareness and management
- working in conjunction with the Occupational Health Service on the above matters

#### 4.8 All **staff** are responsible for:

- talking to their manager in the first instance if there is a problem;
- accessing OHS, ECS, HR or their Trade Union/Professional Organisation;
- supporting their colleagues if they are experiencing work-related stress and encouraging them to talk to their manager, OHS, HR or Trade Union/Professional Organisation;
- seeking appropriate support, which may include counselling from OHS and/or the ECS;
- speaking to their GP if worried about health issues;

- discussing with their manager whether it is possible to alter the job if necessary, to make it less stressful, recognising all team members' needs;
- trying to channel their energy into solving any problems and considering what may help resolve any issues, and discussing this with their manager;
- recognising that stress is not a weakness;
- attending stress management courses if this has been deemed necessary through risk assessment; and
- being actively involved in the risk assessment process.
- Reporting incidents using the Datix system in accordance with the Incident Management Policy
- Participating in the risk assessment process

## 5 Education and training for all staff

To deal positively with stress at the workplace, NHS GGC recognises the importance of:

- the link between home and the workplace;
- identifying particularly vulnerable groups; and
- the effects of prescribed medication on work performance. (see [GGC Alcohol and Substance Policy](#))

These key points will be highlighted in:

- health education for staff;
- induction programmes for new staff (as stress education); (see GGC on-line Induction system)
- the Health and Safety Management Manual for Managers
- specific training for occupational health practitioners; and
- feedback (for dealing with issues with the policy).

## 6 Monitoring and reviewing

The activities which result from the introduction of this policy will be examined and the activities of each component part monitored. This review process will lead to a regular revision of the policy.

As well as the policy itself, the risk-assessment process should be reviewed in light of any changes to work activities.

Regular evaluation of staff turnover, sickness absence and incidents will also contribute to the monitoring and reviewing of the policy. This will be undertaken by a sub-group of the NHS GGC Health and Safety Forum.

## 7 References

- Staff Governance Standard – ‘Provided with an improved and safe working environment. (StaffNet –HR Section)
- Attendance Management Policy (Managing Health at Work) Feb 2008 (StaffNet-HR Section)
- Redeployment Policy
- Relevant Legislation : Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1999
- Health and Safety Executive – [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk) (section on Stress)
- NHS GGC Guidance for managers on implementing the stress policy.
- Alcohol and Substance Policy (StaffNet)
- Attendance Management Policy (StaffNet)
- Worklife Balance Policy (StaffNet)
- Dignity at Work Policy (StaffNet)

## Appendix 1

### PROCESS FOR MANAGERS TO ASSIST IN IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICY ON STRESS IN THE WORKPLACE

<u>Description</u>	<u>Action</u>
Stage 1- Preparation before you start	Securing management and employee commitment – establish implementation group. Reviewing the stress Policy
Stage 2 - Identify the issues	Review existing data Establish Focus Groups Use Indicator Tool
Stage 3 - Evaluate all the data and consider potential solutions	Develop an action plan
Stage 4 -Ensure action plan implemented and Implementation group to be reviewed regularly	Implementation group to review regularly plan on six monthly basis.

## Appendix 2

### Risk Assessment and Risk Management

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 There is no specific legislation in the UK on controlling stress at work. **The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974** places a general duty on employers to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of their employees. Under the **Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1999** employers are obliged to assess the nature and scale of risks to health in their workplace (Reg. 3), apply the principles of prevention (Reg. 4) and to ensure employees' capability and provide training (Reg. 13).
- 1.2 There is pressure in most jobs. Some pressures can, in fact, be a good thing. The challenges at work can keep us motivated and are key to job satisfaction. Excessive work pressure and the stress to which it can lead can be harmful to individuals and the employer.
- 1.3 Stress is the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed on them.
- 1.4 Stress can cause:
  - Physical effects**, such as raised heart rate, increased sweating, headache, dizziness, blurred vision, muscle aches, skin rashes and a lowering of resistance to infection;
  - Behavioural effects**, such a tendency to drink more alcohol and smoke more, overeating and overuse of medication/drugs;
  - Emotional effects**, such as increased anxiety and irritability, difficulty sleeping, poor concentration, low mood and mood swings, fear, anger, hopelessness and an inability to deal calmly with everyday tasks and situations.

**Prolonged stress can lead to physical and mental illness.**
- 1.5 Work-related stress is not an illness, but ill health resulting from stress at work must be treated in the same way as ill health due to other physical causes present in the workplace. This means that employers do have a legal duty to take reasonable care to ensure that health is not placed at risk through excessive and sustained levels of stress, arising for example from the way work is organised, the way people deal with each other at their work, or from the day-to-day demands placed on their workforce.
- 1.6 Risk assessment and risk management are essentially part of the health and safety responsibilities of managers.
- 1.7 Information from risk assessment will be of use to Health and Safety Management Manual holders. Senior management have an important role to play as practical organisational issues must be addressed by them.

- 1.8 Further information is available in the HSE publications 'Tackling Work-related Stress' (ISBN 0-7176-2050-6) and *Real Solutions, Real People* (ISBN 0 7176 2767 5), and on the HSE website: [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk). Guidance has also been produced by trade unions and professional associations and by the European Community (*Stress at work: causes, effects and prevention. A guide for small and medium sized enterprises: ISBN 92-826-8594-2*).

## **2. RISK ASSESSMENT**

- 2.1 The process of risk assessment as described in the Management Regulations has six key components:
1. Identification of hazards;
  2. Identify who might be harmed and how;
  3. Evaluate the risk from the identified hazards;
  4. Formally record the risk assessment;
  5. Implement further action to reduce risks;
  6. Review and revise the assessment at regular intervals.
- 2.2 Steps (1) through (6) are recurring and describe a cycle of activities, which ensure the continuous improvement of occupational health and safety in relation to hazards in the workplace. Further information on risk assessment is available on the HSE website.
- 2.3 There is no single way of preventing harmful levels of work-related stress. Managers at all levels require to consider the factors noted in the following sections and consider these within the context of the 'culture' of the Partnership or Division, and working practices.

## **3. MEASUREMENT OF STRESS**

- 3.1 The measurement of stress should include self-reporting measures which focus on the workers' perceptions of the demands on them, their ability to cope with such demands, their needs and the extent to which they are fulfilled by work, the control they have over their work and the support they receive in relation to their work.
- 3.2 Self-reports are only part of the information that should be analysed. Other evidence should be sought including:
- a) an audit of the work environment including both its physical and psychosocial aspects, e.g. quarterly inspections are a requirement of the Health and Safety Management Manual; and
  - b) evidence of poor housekeeping, incident rates and causes, sickness absence rates and causes, and observations of how effectively work is performed.
- 3.3 Line managers should note specific hazards such as noise and also recognise the perceived risk relating to dealing with violent patients and with those who may carry blood-borne viruses.

3.4 HSE has categorised aspects of work. These are listed in the following table:

<b>Stressful Characteristics of Work</b>	
<b>Work Characteristics</b>	<b>Conditions Defining Hazard (Demands, Control &amp; Support)</b>
<b>Culture</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Poor task environment &amp; lack of definition of objectives</li> <li>Poor problem solving environment</li> <li>Poor development environment</li> <li>Poor communication</li> <li>Non-supportive culture</li> </ul>
<b>Demands</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work overload</li> <li>Capability and capacity of the individual</li> <li>Work underload</li> <li>Physical environment</li> <li>Psychological environment</li> </ul>
<b>Control</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low participation in decision making</li> <li>Lack of control over work</li> <li>Little decision making in work</li> </ul>
<b>Relationships at Work</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Social or physical isolation</li> <li>Poor relationships with superiors</li> <li>Interpersonal conflict and violence</li> <li>Lack of social support</li> </ul>
<b>Change</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Restructuring</li> <li>Introduction of new technology</li> <li>Introduction of new ways of working</li> </ul>
<b>Role</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Role ambiguity and/or role conflict</li> <li>Role insufficiency</li> <li>High responsibility for people (including patients)</li> </ul>
<b>Support and training</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Insufficient training</li> <li>Lack of skills/competence</li> <li>Lack of support</li> </ul>
<b>Home/Work Interface</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conflicting demands of home and work</li> <li>Low social or practical support at home</li> <li>Dual career problems</li> </ul>

- 3.5 Psychosocial characteristics are included in the risk assessment. As stress is closely related to control, it is important to involve employees in the assessment from the very beginning. Employees have expertise on their own work situation and work organisation. Recognising this will be of benefit to the workers and the organisation. Managers may meet staff in Focus Groups to discuss work pressures and identify solutions where necessary.
- Meetings can be repeated at intervals to monitor the effectiveness of any changes. HSE have produced guidance – *How to Organise and Run Focus Groups* – which can be accessed on their website.
- 3.6 Information on sickness absence, ill-health retiral, backlogs in taking days off, changes in productivity and accidents/incidents can be analysed for an organisation and each Partnership, Directorate or Department. This should identify areas where action is required.
- 3.7 If risk assessment indicates problems exist, a questionnaire, the HSE Indicator Tool for Work Related Stress (Appendix 4) can be distributed to all staff in a department for completion. The questionnaires should be completed every 3 years, or earlier if there are indications that there is deterioration in any of the indicators.
- 3.8 The data collected from such questionnaires should be analysed and the results made available quickly and clearly. The confidentiality of responses to questionnaires on health complaints/stress at work must be ensured.
- 3.9 Findings from the risk assessments, through use of the HSE management standards tool, should be recorded and an action plan developed and displayed.

#### **4. RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 4.1 The Health and Safety Executive in liaison with industry has developed a number of Management Standards which can be found in Appendix 2. It is important that employers, including the NHS, attempt to achieve these standards by demonstrating adequate risk assessment and control measures.

#### **5 PSYCHOSOCIAL FACTORS**

- 5.1 HSE has also suggested a number of ways of reducing stress in an organisation. These can be classed under similar headings to those in the Table at section 3.4. and can be found at Appendix 3.
- 5.2 Reference to the list in Appendix 3, and the results of analysis of administrative data, checklists and questionnaires will identify areas where good practice exists and also areas for improvement.

- 5.3 The organisation should ensure that the problem is understood and taken seriously; that excessive stress is not seen as a personal problem but an issue which managers, staff and the organisation as a whole are committed to addressing. Managers will receive training on the organisational aspects of stress as part of their continuing training programme.
- 5.4 There may still be occasions when staff are, or likely to be, affected by pressure or stress. Training on stress awareness and management courses can benefit the individual. Training is one aspect of the control cycle.
- 5.5 Where problems have developed, line managers should provide support and, where necessary, refer the person on for further help. The NHS has a contract with the Employee Counselling Service, Savoy Tower, 77 Renfrew Street, GLASGOW G2 3VZ, Telephone/ Fax 0141 332 9833, Freephone 0800 435 768, to provide support to staff who can attend voluntarily or as result of a management referral. The Occupational Health Service and Human Resources Department can facilitate such help. In addition, professional organisations (BMA, RCN) and trade unions have counselling services for members.

## APPENDIX 3

### HSE MANAGEMENT STANDARDS –ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

#### Demands

Includes issues like 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; and
- Systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns.

What should be happening / states to be achieved:

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

#### Control

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

The standard is that:

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

What should be happening / states to be achieved:

- Where possible, employees have control over their pace 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; and
- Employees are consulted over their work patterns.

#### Support

Includes the 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 their colleagues and superiors; and
- Systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns.

What should be happening / 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 the required resources to do their job; and
- Employees receive 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 behaviours, e.g. bullying at work; and
- Systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns.

What should be happening / 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; and
- 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 ensures that the person does not have conflicting roles.

The standard is that:

- Employees indicate that they understand their role and responsibilities; and
- Systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns.

What should be happening / states to be achieved:

- The organisation ensures that, as far as possible, the different requirements it places upon employees are compatible;
- The organisation provides information to enable employees to understand their role and responsibilities;

- The organisation ensures that, as far as possible, the requirements it places upon employees are clear; and
- 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 or small) is managed and communicated in the organisation.

The standard is that:

- Employees indicate that the organisation engages them frequently when undergoing an organisational change; and
- Systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns.

What should be happening / states to be achieved:

- The organisation provides employees with timely information to enable them to understand the reasons 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 jobs;
- Employees are aware of timetables for changes;
- Employees have access to relevant support during changes.

## APPENDIX 4

### PSYCHOSOCIAL FACTORS – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

#### Culture

- ◆ Communicate regularly with your staff, particularly those working remotely and/or from home, and be open and honest about what is happening at work and how this may affect them;
- ◆ Adopt partnership approaches in the workplace to encourage staff to work with you to tackle work-related stress or any emerging business problems. Encourage people to talk to you at an early stage about work-related stress, mental health issues, and their concerns about work. Create an environment where these issues do not carry stigma;
- ◆ Try to involve your staff in the planning process so that they understand how their work 'fits in';
- ◆ Offer internal support. This could be practical things, like coaching, or it could be emotional support, e.g. when personal crises such as illness and bereavement, financial worries etc affect your staff.

#### Demands

- ◆ Ensure there are sufficient resources to do the work allocated;
  - if there are insufficient resources, seek guidance from management about priorities;
  - support your staff by helping them prioritise, or renegotiate deadlines;
  - cover workloads during staff absences;
- ◆ If people are underloaded, think about giving them more responsibility, but make sure they have been adequately trained;
- ◆ Strike a balance between ensuring that employees are interested and busy, but not underloaded, overloaded, or confused about the job;
- ◆ Train staff so they are able to do their jobs;
- ◆ Encourage staff to talk to you at an early stage if they feel they cannot cope
- ◆ Talk to your team regularly about what needs to be done, because this can;
  - Help you understand the challenges the team are currently facing and any pressures they are under;
  - Find ways of sharing out the work sensibly and agreeing the way forward with the team;
  - Gain team cohesion and commitment to the work you have planned – if the whole team is aware of what needs to be done and by when, they are likely to be more responsive to you. Allocating more work to a stretched team without explanation is not helpful;
  - Ensure shift work systems are agreed with staff and that the shifts are fair in terms of workload;

- Gain understanding and commitment to unplanned tight deadlines and any exceptional need for long hours;
- Help you manage any unexpected absences or losses to the team – everyone knows the key stages of the project and what each other's role is;
- ◆ Lead by example;
- ◆ Have a suitable and sufficient risk assessment to control the physical hazards and risks;
- ◆ Assess the risk of physical violence and verbal abuse and take appropriate steps to deal with it.

## **Control**

- ◆ Give more control to staff by enabling them to plan their own work, make decisions about how that work should be completed and how problems should be tackled;
- ◆ Enrich jobs by ensuring that staff are able to use various skills to get tasks completed, and that staff can understand how their work fits in with the wider aims of the organisation;
- ◆ Only monitor employees' output if this is essential. Regular meetings with staff could be arranged to see how things are going. At these meetings managers could provide advice and support where necessary, and ensure that staff are coping;
- ◆ A supportive environment is crucial. Staff need to know that managers will support them, even if things go wrong or if they find that they are unable to cope with added pressures.

## **Relationships**

- ◆ Work in partnership with staff to ensure that bullying and harassment never emerge as an issue. One way of doing this is by having procedures in place, such as disciplinary and grievance procedures, to deal with instances of unacceptable behaviour;
- ◆ In consultation with staff and trade unions, draw up effective policies to reduce or eliminate harassment and bullying;
- ◆ Communicate the policies and make it clear that senior management fully supports them;
- ◆ Communicate the consequences of breaching the policies;
- ◆ Create a culture where members of the team trust each other and can be themselves while they are at work;
- ◆ Encourage your staff to recognise the individual contributions of other team members and the benefits of the whole team pulling together.

## **Change**

- ◆ Explain what the organisation wants to achieve and why it is essential that the change takes place – 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;
- ◆ Communicate new developments quickly to avoid the spread of rumours in the organisation. If the organisation is planning a major change your staff are likely to be discussing job security, whether they will need to relocate, and whether their terms and conditions will change;
  - Face-to-face communication is generally best so that people have the opportunity to ask questions and say what they feel, but any means, e.g. paper or electronic, would be helpful;
  - Have an 'open door' policy where staff can talk to you about their concerns or any suggestions they have for improving the way the change is managed;
- ◆ Give staff the opportunity to comment and ask questions before, during, and after the change;
- ◆ Involve staff in discussions about how jobs might be developed and changed and in generating ways of solving problems;
- ◆ Supporting your staff is crucial during a change;
- ◆ After the change, think about revising work objectives to avoid role conflict and role ambiguity which can cause work-related stress;
- ◆ Revise your risk assessment to see if any changes, e.g. a decrease in staff numbers, have resulted in increased risks to staff. Remember that social changes (e.g. if staff are now working with a completely different group of people) may have more of an impact on the individual than technological or geographical changes.

## **Role**

- ◆ Make sure your staff have a clearly defined role, e.g. through a personal work plan which enables them to understand exactly what their roles and responsibilities are;
- ◆ Encourage your staff to talk to you at an early stage if they are not clear about priorities or the nature of the task to be undertaken;
- ◆ Talk to all your staff regularly to make sure that they are completely clear about the current job, what it entails, what you expect of them and what they can expect from you;
- ◆ Make sure that new members of staff receive a comprehensive induction to your organisation;
- ◆ If your organisation has gone through change, check with members of your team to make sure they understand their new roles and are comfortable with them.

## **Support and Training**

- ◆ Give support and encouragement to staff, even when things go wrong;

- ◆ Listen to your staff and agree a course of action for tackling any problems – it is important for staff to feel that the contribution they make at work is valued;
- ◆ Involve your staff – they need to ‘do their bit’ to identify problems and work towards agreed solutions;
- ◆ Encourage staff to share their concerns about work-related stress at an early stage;
- ◆ Provide your staff with suitable and sufficient training to do their jobs;
- ◆ Give new staff a proper induction into the department and organisation;
- ◆ Take into account that people’s skills and the way they approach the work will differ;
- ◆ Value diversity – don’t discriminate against people on grounds of race, sex or disability, or other irrelevant reasons;
- ◆ Encourage a healthy ‘work-life balance’;
- ◆ Encourage staff to take their annual leave entitlement and their meal breaks.

## APPENDIX 5

### HSE indicator Tool for Work Related Stress

	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
1 I am clear what is expected of me at work	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
2 I can decide when to take a break	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
3 Different groups at work demand things from me that are hard to combine	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
4 I know how to go about getting my job done	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
5 I am subject to personal harassment in the form of unkind words or behaviour	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
6 I have unachievable deadlines	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
7 If work gets difficult my colleagues will help me	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
8 I am given supportive feedback on the work I do	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
9 I have to work very intensively	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
10 I have a say in my own work speed	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
11 I am clear what my duties and responsibilities are	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
12 I have to neglect some tasks because I have too much to do	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1

	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
13	<input type="checkbox"/>				
	1	2	3	4	5
I am clear about the goals and objectives for my department					
	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
14	<input type="checkbox"/>				
	5	4	3	2	1
There is friction or anger between colleagues					
	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
15	<input type="checkbox"/>				
	1	2	3	4	5
I have a choice in deciding how I do my work					
	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
16	<input type="checkbox"/>				
	5	4	3	2	1
I am unable to take sufficient breaks					
	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
17	<input type="checkbox"/>				
	1	2	3	4	5
I understand how my work fits into the overall aim of the organisation					
	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
18	<input type="checkbox"/>				
	5	4	3	2	1
I am pressured to work long hours					
	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
19	<input type="checkbox"/>				
	1	2	3	4	5
I have a choice in deciding what I do at work					
	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
20	<input type="checkbox"/>				
	5	4	3	2	1
I have to work very fast					
	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
21	<input type="checkbox"/>				
	5	4	3	2	1
I am subject to bullying at work					
	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
22	<input type="checkbox"/>				
	5	4	3	2	1
I have unrealistic time pressures					
	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
23	<input type="checkbox"/>				
	1	2	3	4	5
I can rely on my line manager to help me out with a work problem					
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
24	<input type="checkbox"/>				
	1	2	3	4	5
I get help and support I need from colleagues					
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
25	<input type="checkbox"/>				
	1	2	3	4	5
I have some say over the way I work					

26 I have sufficient opportunities to question managers about change at work	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Strongly Disagree</td> <td>Disagree</td> <td>Neutral</td> <td>Agree</td> <td>Strongly Agree</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> 1</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> 2</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> 3</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> 4</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> 5</td> </tr> </table>	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree							
<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5							
27 I receive the respect at work I deserve from my colleagues	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Strongly Disagree</td> <td>Disagree</td> <td>Neutral</td> <td>Agree</td> <td>Strongly Agree</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> 1</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> 2</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> 3</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> 4</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> 5</td> </tr> </table>	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree							
<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5							
28 Staff are always consulted about change at work	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Strongly Disagree</td> <td>Disagree</td> <td>Neutral</td> <td>Agree</td> <td>Strongly Agree</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> 1</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> 2</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> 3</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> 4</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> 5</td> </tr> </table>	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree							
<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5							
29 I can talk to my line manager about something that has upset or annoyed me about work	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Strongly Disagree</td> <td>Disagree</td> <td>Neutral</td> <td>Agree</td> <td>Strongly Agree</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> 1</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> 2</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> 3</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> 4</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> 5</td> </tr> </table>	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree							
<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5							
30 My working time can be flexible	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Strongly Disagree</td> <td>Disagree</td> <td>Neutral</td> <td>Agree</td> <td>Strongly Agree</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> 1</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> 2</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> 3</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> 4</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> 5</td> </tr> </table>	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree							
<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5							
31 My colleagues are willing to listen to my work-related problems	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Strongly Disagree</td> <td>Disagree</td> <td>Neutral</td> <td>Agree</td> <td>Strongly Agree</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> 1</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> 2</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> 3</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> 4</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> 5</td> </tr> </table>	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree							
<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5							
32 When changes are made at work, I am clear how they will work out in practice	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Strongly Disagree</td> <td>Disagree</td> <td>Neutral</td> <td>Agree</td> <td>Strongly Agree</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> 1</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> 2</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> 3</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> 4</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> 5</td> </tr> </table>	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree							
<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5							
33 I am supported through emotionally demanding work	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Strongly Disagree</td> <td>Disagree</td> <td>Neutral</td> <td>Agree</td> <td>Strongly Agree</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> 1</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> 2</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> 3</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> 4</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> 5</td> </tr> </table>	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree							
<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5							
34 Relationships at work are strained	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Disagree</td> <td>Disagree</td> <td>Neutral</td> <td>Agree</td> <td>Agree</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> 5</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> 4</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> 3</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> 2</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> 1</td> </tr> </table>	Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Agree	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Agree							
<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1							
35 My line manager encourages me at work	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Strongly Disagree</td> <td>Disagree</td> <td>Neutral</td> <td>Agree</td> <td>Strongly Agree</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> 1</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> 2</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> 3</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> 4</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> 5</td> </tr> </table>	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree							
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