# Work Related Stress Guidance

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 places a requirement on employers to identify all hazards, assess significant risks and implement suitable control measures. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) defines Work Related Stress as *'The adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures or demands placed upon them.'*

**Implementation of the Policy on Stress in the Workplace**
Stress Management is an action within the current NHSGGC Health and Safety Strategy. The NHSGGC Health and Safety Strategy sets out provision for a 2 year Stress Policy Implementation Plan to include stress audits. The action plan identifies that training will be provided for managers on the implementation of the stress policy. This also links in with the Healthy Working Lives Mental Health and Well-being Commendation Award and Gold Award Criteria requirement for promoting Mental Health Well-being.

The NHSGGC Policy on Stress in the Workplace uses the HSE Management Standards on Stress approach to help manage work related stress. The process for implementation of the policy can be found in the Guidance for Managers and Staff on the Implementation of the Policy on Stress in the Workplace (2011). Using the Management Standards approach enables managers, staff and staff representatives to work together to determine the causes of stress and identify suitable control measures in order that states to be achieved are realised.

**The Management Standards Approach**
The management standards approach requires managers, employees and representatives to work together to improve six areas of work that can have a negative impact on health if not properly managed. These are: demands, control, support, role, change and relationships. Under each area there are 'standards to be achieved' which organisations should work towards. The approach is aimed at the organisation rather than individual members of staff so that a larger number of employees can benefit from any actions taken.

The Management Standards approach consists of two questionnaires. The first is the Managers' Stress Competency Tool, which should be completed by all departmental and senior managers. The other questionnaire is the Management Standards Indicator Tool which should be completed by all staff within the service.

**The Management Standards Approach Overview**

| Step | Description | Action |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Identify the stress risk factors | Understand the Management Standards and ask staff to participate in survey |
| 2 | Decide who might be harmed and how | Gather data |
| 3 | Evaluate the risks | Explore problems and develop solutions |
| 4 | Record your findings | Develop and implement action plan(s) |
| 5 | Monitor and review | Monitor and review action plan(s) and assess effectiveness |

# Health & Safety Management Manual

Guidance for Managers and Staff on the Implementation of the Policy on Stress in the Workplace (2011) provides information on the Management Standards approach which is summarised in the table below.

**Process for Implementation of Policy on Stress in the Workplace**

| Stage | Action |
|---|---|
| Stage 1- Preparation before you start | Securing management and employee commitment – establish Implementation Group. Reviewing the Policy on stress in the workplace. |
| Stage 2 - Identify the issues | All managers complete the Managers' Stress Competency Tool. Review existing data. Complete the Checklist – Workplace Stress (Section 2 of Guidance for Managers and Staff on the Implementation of the Policy on Stress in the Workplace (2011). Use Management Standards Indicator Tool throughout service. Collate data. Establish Focus Groups. |
| Stage 3 - Evaluate all the data and consider potential solutions | Develop an action plan. Consult with staff. Feed back to staff. |
| Stage 4 –Ensure Implementation Group regularly review implementation of action plan. | Implementation Group to review action plan on six monthly basis |

**Generic Stress Risk Assessment**

Health and Safety Management Manual Holders, who identify stress as a significant hazard, should also carry out a generic stress risk assessment using the generic risk assessment template from the Health and Safety Management Manual.

**5 Steps to risk assessment:**

| Step 1 | Identify the stress risk factors |
|---|---|
| Step 2 | Decide who might be harmed and how |
| Step 3 | Evaluate the risks |
| Step 4 | Record your findings |
| Step 5 | Monitor and review |

Further advice and support on stress for both managers and staff may be sought from Occupational Health or the Employee Counselling Service.

**References:**
The NHSGGC policy on stress in the workplace
http://www.staffnet.ggc.scot.nhs.uk/Info%20Centre/Health%20and%20Safety/Corporate%20Health%20and%20Safety/Documents/Policies/Stress%20Policy.pdf

Guidance for managers and staff on implementation of the Policy on stress in the workplace (2011)
http://www.staffnet.ggc.scot.nhs.uk/Info%20Centre/Health%20and%20Safety/Corporate%20Health%20and%20Safety/Documents/Guidance%20%20Imptn%20of%20Stress%20in%20the%20Workplace%20Jan%202012.pdf

Health and Safety Executive Stress Home Page
http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/index.htm

How to tackle work related stress. A guide for employers on making the Management Standards work. INDG430
http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg430.pdf

5 Steps to risk assessment leaflet INDG163 (rev2) HSE Books 2006
http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg163.pdf

The Healthy Working Lives Award Programme
http://www.healthyworkinglives.com/award/index.aspx