
Wellbeing Policy

The aim of this policy is to create a workplace environment that promotes the mental wellbeing of all employees and supports wider strategies such as health and safety and HR.

Wellbeing is about people's experience of their quality of life, including their working life. We know that 'good work' is good for health and wellbeing and among other things, this is work that's healthy, safe, supportive and accommodates people's needs.

As large parts of employees' lives are spent at work, we can and should play an important role in helping them achieve better quality working lives and the occupational safety and health community can help support improved wellbeing at work.

Objectives:

To tackle workplace factors that may negatively affect mental wellbeing, and to develop management skills to promote mental wellbeing and manage mental health problems effectively.

As an employer we aim to create and promote a workplace environment that supports and promotes the mental wellbeing of all employees. We acknowledge that certain working conditions and practices can negatively affect employees' mental wellbeing, including aspects of work organisation and management, and environmental and social conditions that have the potential for psychological as well as physical harm.

Policy actions:

- Give employees information on and increase their awareness of mental wellbeing.
- Provide opportunities for employees to look after their mental wellbeing, for example through physical activity, stress-buster activities and social events.
- Offer employees flexible working arrangements that promote their mental wellbeing.
- Give all staff the opportunity to influence how they do their jobs, scope for varying their working conditions as far as possible, and opportunities to develop and fully utilise their skills.
- Set employees realistic targets that do not require them to work unreasonable hours.
- Ensure all staff have clearly defined job descriptions, objectives and responsibilities and provide them with good management support, appropriate training and adequate resources to do their job.
- Manage conflict effectively and ensure the workplace is free from bullying and harassment, discrimination and racism.
- Establish good two-way communication to ensure staff involvement, particularly during periods of organisational change.

As an employer we aim to create and promote a culture where employees are able to talk openly about their job and mental health problems and to report difficulties without fear of discrimination

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or reprisal. We aim to develop a culture based on trust, support and mutual respect within the workplace.

Policy actions:

- Give non-judgemental and proactive support to individual staff who experience mental health problems.
- Deal sympathetically with staff suffering from mental health problems due to circumstances outside the workplace, and who consequently find it difficult to do their jobs properly.
- Give new employees a comprehensive induction programme providing an understanding of the organisation, the established policies and procedures, and the role they are expected to carry out.

We will also provide support and assistance for employees experiencing mental health difficulties.

Policy actions:

- Ensure individuals suffering from mental health problems are treated fairly and consistently and are not made to feel guilty about their problems.
- Encourage staff to consult the occupational health department (if there is one), their own GP, or a counsellor of their choice.
- Investigate the contribution of working conditions and other organisational factors to mental ill health and remedy this where possible.
- In cases of long-term sickness absence, put in place, where possible, a graduated return to work.
- Make every effort to identify suitable alternative employment, in full discussion with the employee, where a return to the same job is not possible due to identified risks or other factors.
- Treat all matters relating to individual employees and their mental health problems in the strictest confidence and share on a 'need to know' basis only with consent from the individual concerned.

We recognise that workplace stress is a health and safety issue and acknowledge the importance of identifying and reducing workplace stressors.

Policy actions:

- Identify all workplace stressors and conduct risk assessments to eliminate stress or control the risks from stress. These risk assessments will be regularly reviewed.
- Provide training in good management practices, including those related to health and safety and stress management.
- Provide confidential counselling for staff affected by stress caused by either work or external factors.
- Provide adequate resources to enable managers to implement the organisation's agreed workplace mental wellbeing policy.

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Responsibilities:

Everyone has a responsibility to contribute to making the workplace mental wellbeing policy effective. Managers have a responsibility to:

- Monitor the workplace, identify hazards and risks and take steps to eliminate or reduce these as far as is reasonably practicable.
- Ensure good communication between management and staff, particularly where there are organisational and procedural changes.
- Assist and support employees who are known to have mental health problems or are experiencing stress outside work – for example due to bereavement or separation.
- Ensure staff are provided with the resources and training required to carry out their job.
- Monitor workloads to ensure that people are not overloaded.
- Monitor working hours and overtime to ensure that staff are not overworking and monitor holidays to ensure that staff are taking their full entitlement.
- Ensure staff are provided with meaningful developmental opportunities.
- In addition, senior management will ensure that staff performing a management or supervisory function have sufficient competence to discharge that function in a manner consistent with the maintenance of mental health in the workplace.

Human Resources staff have a responsibility to:

- Organise training and awareness courses on workplace mental wellbeing in conjunction with suitable experts.
- Provide advice and support to employees and managers in relation to this policy.
- Monitor and report on levels of sickness absence which relate to mental health problems including stress-related illness (in conjunction with the occupational health service and departmental managers).

Employees have a responsibility to:

- Raise issues of concern and seek help from their safety representative, line manager, or human resources
- Accept opportunities for counselling when recommended.
- Refer individuals to workplace counsellors or specialist agencies as required.
- Monitor and review the effectiveness of measures to promote mental wellbeing.

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Indicators to measure effectiveness of this policy include:

- working hours and patterns
- accidents at work
- staff complaints
- staff sickness levels
- staff turnover
- use of occupational health or counselling services
- employee surveys
- early retirement through ill health
- exit interviews.

The policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure that it remains relevant.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Graham Pulsford', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Graham Pulsford
Managing Director

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