

## **MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING POLICY**

### **Introduction**

Mental ill health and stress are associated with many of the leading causes of disease and disability in our society. Promoting and protecting the mental wellbeing of the workforce is important for individuals' physical health, social wellbeing, and productivity. Mental wellbeing in the workplace is relevant to all employees and everyone can contribute to improving mental wellbeing at work.

Addressing workplace mental wellbeing can help strengthen the positive, protective factors of employment, reduce risk factors for mental ill health and improve general health. It can also help promote the employment of people who have experienced mental health problems and support them once they are at work.

Important aspects of mental health and wellbeing includes providing information and raising awareness, management skills to deal with issues around mental health and stress effectively, providing a supportive work environment, help, advice, and support to anyone experiencing a mental health problem or returning to work after a period of absence due to mental health problems.

### **Policy Statement:**

This company is committed to the protection and promotion of the mental health and wellbeing of all staff.

This company shall continuously strive to improve the mental health environment and culture of the organisation by identifying, eliminating, or minimising all harmful processes, procedures and behaviours that may cause psychological harm or illness to its employees.

This company shall continuously strive, as far as is reasonably practicable, to promote mental health throughout the organisation by establishing and maintaining processes that enhance mental health and wellbeing.

### **Scope:**

This policy will comply with Health and Safety legislation and best practice guidelines. This policy will be developed in accordance with existing organisational policies and procedures.

This policy will be owned at all levels of the company, developed, and implemented across all departments, evaluated, and reviewed as appropriate.

**Policy Objectives:**

To develop a supportive culture, address factors that may negatively affect mental wellbeing, and to develop management skills. To provide a workplace culture and working environment which promotes and supports the mental health and wellbeing of all employees.

**Policy Actions:****1. Mental Wellbeing****a) To create a supportive workplace culture, tackle factors which may negatively impact mental health, and ensure managers are competent at identifying and supporting mental health issues.**

- Provide information and raising awareness of mental health issues.
- Promoting policies and actions that support mental wellbeing in the workplace.
- Promote the Five Ways to Wellbeing concept as proposed by the NHS.
- Provide systems that encourage predictable working hours, reasonable workloads, and flexible working practices where appropriate. 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.
- Equipping employees with the skills to support their own mental health.
- Reduce discrimination and stigma by increasing awareness and understanding.
- Complete an employee survey to identify mental health needs. Give employees information on and increase their awareness of mental wellbeing.
- Include information about the mental health policy in the staff induction programme.
- Provide training for designated staff in the early identification, causes and appropriate management of mental health issues such as anxiety, depression, stress and change management.

**b) To provide support and guidance for any member of staff experiencing mental health issues.**

- Check how working conditions and the organisations' policies are affecting mental health.
- Ensure staff members with mental health issues are treated fairly and without judgement.
- Encourage staff members to talk to a mental health first aider, HR, occupational health, a counsellor, or GP.
- If a team member has been on a long-term sickness absence, ensure a gradual return to work with support at each stage.
- Treat all matters relating to staff mental ill health in the strictest confidence and only share information with prior consent from the individual concerned.

**c) To encourage the employment of people who have experienced mental ill health.**

- Demonstrate a positive attitude to employees and job applicants with mental health issues, including having positive statements in recruitment literature.
- Ensure that all staff who are involved in the recruitment process are aware of mental health issues and the Disability Discrimination Act.

- Do not assume that those with a mental health issue will be more susceptible to workplace stress or will necessarily take more time off than other applicants.
- Ensure that all line managers have received mental health first aid training or have the skills to manage mental health in the workplace.

**d) To recognise that workplace stress is a health and safety issue.**

- Identify workplace stress factors/scenarios and carry out risk assessments of the business.
- Provide training in good management practices
- Provide resources to help managers implement the company's mental health and wellbeing policy.
- Equipping managers and leaders with the skills to: Identify and assist those with mental ill health.
- Raising awareness of mental and physical wellbeing across the business.
- Ensure all line managers have information and training about managing mental health in the workplace.

## **2. Physical Activity**

**a) To raise awareness of the importance of physical activity for managing stress and maintaining mental wellbeing.**

- Provide opportunities for employees to look after their mental wellbeing, for example through physical activity, stress reducing activities and social events.
- Promoting physical activity across the workplace.
- Providing courses and talks on the ways that physical activity can help staff manage stress and back pain, as well as improving mental alertness and concentration.

**b) To encourage and support staff in making healthier eating choices**

- Supporting a health, balanced diet in the workplace.
- Encouraging staff to drink at least 1 Litre of water a day.

## **3. Support for Employees**

**a) To create a workplace with clear expectations and roles, allowing staff to easily identify their responsibilities and better manage their duties, time, and stress levels at work.**

- 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.
- Creating a culture in the workplace that supports the wellbeing of the employees.
- Offering help, support, and guidance to those with mental health issues.
- Assisting those returning to work after a period of mental ill health.
- Ensure that employees have a clearly defined role within the company and a sense of control over the way their work is organised.
- Ensure that job design is appropriate to the individual, with relevant training, supervision and support provided as required.

- Ensure a physical environment that is supportive of mental health and wellbeing including a sound, ergonomically designed workstation or working situation with appropriate lighting, noise levels, heating, ventilation, and adequate facilities for rest breaks.

**b) To provide support for employees experiencing mental health difficulties.**

- Ensure individuals suffering from mental health problems are treated fairly and consistently.
- Manage return to work for those who have experienced mental health problems and in cases of long-term sickness absence, put in place, where possible, a phased return to work.
- Give non-judgemental and pro-active support to individual staff that experience mental health problems such as counselling, CBT etc.
- Ensure employees are aware of the support that can be offered through occupational health department, Employee Assistance Programme (if applicable) or alternatively their own GP, or a counsellor.
- Make every effort to identify suitable alternative employment, in consultation 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.

**c) To encourage the employment of people who have experienced mental health problems.**

- Show a positive and enabling attitude to employees and job applicants with mental health issues. This includes having positive statements in recruitment literature.
- Establishing agreed recruitment practices.
- Ensure that all staff involved in recruitment and selection are briefed on mental health issues and the Disability Discrimination Act and are trained in appropriate interview skills.
- Making any necessary adjustments to the role/environment.
- Retaining and supporting staff who develop mental ill health where reasonably possible.
- Promote and support opportunities to enhance professional development, identified through the appraisal.

**4. Workplace stress is a Health and Safety issue.**

**a) To recognise that workplace stress is a health and safety issue and implement policies and procedures to address this issue.**

- Adopt the principles of the HSE Stress Management Standards for employees or groups of employees that it is felt may be affected by stress
- Consult with trade union safety representatives on all proposed action relating to the prevention of workplace stress.
- Align with other relevant policies such as physical activity, alcohol, fatigue, and absence management.

**Communication**

All employees will be made aware of the mental wellbeing policy and the resources made available. This policy will be included in the employee handbook and employee information or induction packs. It will also be promoted each year.

All employees will be made aware of their own responsibilities in implementing the policy actions. Including, raising any issues or concerns, and seeking help from a manager, HR, occupational health, or a mental health first aider.

The works forum /Health and Safety Committee will take forward the actions from this policy. Regular updates will be provided to all employees via their line management.

**Review and monitoring**

The individual responsible for Health and Safety will be responsible for reviewing the workplace mental health and wellbeing policy, as well as monitoring its effectiveness.

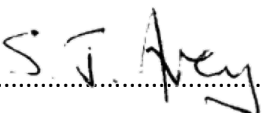
The policies effectiveness can be measured through:

- Feedback from employees participating in any of the mental wellbeing activities.
- A mental health and wellbeing at work risk assessment.
- Staff sickness, presentation, and staff turnover levels.
- Exit interviews
- Use of occupational health services
- Staff complaints or referrals
- Feedback from qualified mental health first aiders.

The mental wellbeing activities will be included in an annual 'health at work audit'.

The policy, status updates and evaluation reports will be circulated to management and be available on request through the workplace health champion.

The human resources department (or an individual as appropriate) will be responsible for reviewing the mental wellbeing policy and for monitoring how effectively the policy meets its aims and objectives. The policy will be reviewed annually from implementation.

Signed:  ..... Date: 29/04/26 .....

Steve Avery  
Director