

The Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Management of Stress Policy

Effective from: January 2007

Reviewed January 2011

Review March 2012

1. Introduction

- 1.1 It is estimated that 1 in 4 of the UK work force has at some time suffered work-related stress problems and a Health Care Commission study (2009) has found that 20% of NHS staff have suffered from work related stress. The effects of stress can have a profound impact on employees, sometimes with long-term ill health, and healthcare organisations with reduced quality and provision of service. It is therefore advantageous for employers to be controlling stress within the working environment for the protection of their work force and for the benefit of the health care provided by the organisation.
- 1.2 The Trust is committed to protecting the health, safety and welfare of its employees. Workplace stress is recognised as being a health and safety issue. The Trust acknowledges the importance of maintaining and improving the physical and mental well-being of its employees and is committed to implementing measures to encourage a healthy work force identifying and reducing workplace stressors.
- 1.3 This policy will apply to all employees of the Trust, and is intended to complement the Health at Work Policy and is to be implemented in accordance with the Health and Safety Executive Management Standards for Work Related Stress (MSWRS) and the Equal Opportunities Policy.

2. Definition of Stress

- 2.1 The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) define stress as “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.

3. Purpose

- 3.1 The Trust will implement The Health and Safety Executive Standards for the Management of Work Related Stress, which identifies 6 key potential stressors as follows:
- 3.1.1 Demands
Employees indicate that they are able to cope with the demands of their jobs and systems are in place locally to respond to individual concerns.
- Issues include- workload, work patterns, working environment, job design and job demands-V-skills and abilities
- 3.1.2 Control
Staff 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.

Issues include- Pace of work, encouragement to develop of new skills and initiative, consultation over breaks and work patterns

3.1.3 Support

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

Issues include – policies and procedures, managers and colleagues providing support, resources, access to support mechanisms and constructive feedback

3.1.4 Relationships

Employees indicate that they are not subject to unacceptable behaviour. e.g. Bullying at Work. Systems are in place locally to respond to individual concerns.

Issues Include – positive behaviour, information sharing, policies to resolve unacceptable behaviour, reporting procedures and manager involvement

3.1.5 Role

Employees indicate that they understand their role and responsibilities and systems are in place locally to respond to individual concerns.

Issues include – information to understand role and responsibilities, clear defined guidelines, roles are compatible, systems to discuss uncertainties or conflicts.

3.1.6 Change

Employees indicate that the organisation engages frequently when undergoing organisational change and systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns.

Issues Include –providing timely information, consultation with employees, impact on job roles, provision of training and access to support

4. Legislation

4.1 There is no legislation aimed at controlling stress in the work place however: -

Under common law an employer is under a duty of care to provide employees with a safe place to work and to take reasonable steps to ensure this.

4.2 Employers have a general duty under the **Health and Safety at Work Act (1974)** to ensure so far as reasonably practicable, the health of their employees at work which includes taking steps to make sure they do not suffer stress-related illness as a result of their work.

- 4.3 **The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1999)** requires employers to assess health and safety risks, and to introduce prevention and control measures based on their risk assessment findings. Work-related stress is acknowledged as being a potential health and safety risk, and in accordance with the regulations, priority will be given to assessing the causes of work related stress and introducing suitable preventative controls to reduce the risk to employees.

5. Controlling of Stress has Business Benefits

- 5.1 Work-related stress is a major cause of occupational ill health. That means sickness absence, high staff turnover and poor performance in an organisation. Managing stress effectively could help organisations, their employees and their representatives proactively and reactively manage the issue of stress sensibly, and minimize the impact of work related stress within the NHS.

- 5.2 Organisations that deal with work related stress effectively should reap substantial human resource (HR) and financial benefits:

- Improved employee commitment to work
- Improved staff performance and productivity
- Reduced staff turnover and intention to leave
- Improved sickness and absence levels
- Improved recruitment and retention
- Improved quality of service and customer satisfaction
- Improved organisational image and reputation
- Reduced litigation and claims.

6. Moral and Ethical Reasons for Tackling Work Related Stress/Ill Health

- 6.1 There is now convincing evidence that prolonged periods of stress, including work-related have adverse effects on health.

Research provides strong links between stress and:-

- Physical effects such as heart disease, back pain, headaches, gastrointestinal disturbances or various minor illnesses.
- Psychological effects such as depression and anxiety.

7. Employees Responsibilities

- 7.1 Employees have a duty to take care of their own health and safety at work and should familiarise themselves with all relevant Trust policies and information. e.g. the Health at Work Policies.

- 7.2 Be aware of the options available and raise issues of concern with your Line Manager, Safety Representative, Worklife and Wellbeing Centre or Contact Officers as appropriate.
- 7.3 Accept opportunities for counselling when recommended and/or approach the independent counselling services in confidence.
- 7.4 Be aware of Stress Management training provided by the Trust and attend as appropriate.

8. Overall Organisational Duties and Responsibilities

- 8.1 The Trust Board will ensure that managers at all levels are aware of their devolved responsibilities on behalf of the Executive Board as follows: -
- 8.2 Workplace stressors are identified and risk assessments are undertaken to help eliminate stress or control the risks from stress. These risk assessments will be regularly reviewed.
- 8.3 There is consultation with Trade Union Safety Representatives on proposed actions relating to the prevention of workplace stress and change.
- 8.4 Will provide independent confidential counselling for staff affected by stress caused by either work or external factors.
- 8.5 Will provide support and guidance to employees that are experiencing difficulties relating to work related stress.
- 8.6 Will provide training for managers and supervisory staff in good management practices.
- 8.7 Will seek to provide adequate resources to enable managers to implement the HSE Stress Management Standards and the Trusts Improving Working Lives Action Plan.

9. Line Manager Responsibilities

(Clinical Directors, Directorate Managers, Heads of Department)

- 9.1 Conduct and implement recommendations of risk assessments within their jurisdiction (Appendix 3,4,5 & 6). If the manager is not undertaking the risk assessment a named individual within the Directorate/ Department should be identified to carryout the risk assessment process and should be aware of what is required of them and be fully conversant with the outcomes of this policy.
- 9.2 Ensure good communication between management and staff, particularly where there are organisational and procedural changes.
- 9.3 Ensure staff are fully trained to discharge their duties through the appraisal and Personal Development Plan process.
- 9.4 In the event that an employee is displaying signs of stress managers should refer employees as appropriate to Worklife and Wellbeing Centre for guidance and support.

Managers may also wish to contact the Human Resource Dept. where employees are identified as being stressed. An HR officer will then assist them in the completion of an individual stress assessment with the employee. This will help them to identify the individual employees stressors.

9.5 On review of the Risk Assessment where appropriate and identified Managers may provide assistance in some of the key areas below as an example:-

- Staff are provided with meaningful developmental opportunities.
- 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 and raise awareness of the Dignity and Respect at Work Policy.
- Where possible provide additional support to a member of staff who is experiencing stress outside work e.g. bereavement or separation

10. Responsibilities of Work-life and Wellbeing Centre

- 10.1 To provide specialist advice to employees and managers.
- 10.2 To support staff who are off sick with stress and provide advice to them and their managers on a planned return to work.
- 10.3 Refer employees to counselling services and specialist agencies as appropriate as well as the in house training courses to assist them to reduce stress and review work life balance.
- 10.4 Monitor the effectiveness of in house measures to reduce stress in the work place as well as external developments in the field of stress at work and advise to the stress in the Workplace Review group and the Trust Health and Safety Committee.
- 10.5 Inform appropriate managers or forums (in confidence) of any specific concerns that they have relating to the management of stress within the organisation.

11. Responsibilities of Human Resources Department

- 11.1 Provide advice, guidance and support to managers on the management of individual employees who present with work stress related issues.
- 11.2 Provide participation, support and guidance to employees and managers on the completion of individual stress risk assessments to identify the causes of stress (Appendix 3&4)
- 11.3 Support individuals who have been off sick with stress and advise them and their management on a planned return to work.

- 11.4 Assist in monitoring the effectiveness of measures to address stress by collating sickness absence statistics. Provide HR participation to the relevant IWL and Stress Working Groups.
- 11.5 Advise on Trust policy, HSE regulations, training requirements as follows: -
- The Management of Stress
 - Health at Work
 - Operational Health and Safety
 - HSE Stress Management Standards
 - Risk Assessor Training
 - Stress Management for Managers/Employees
- 11.6 Provide continuing support to managers and individuals in a changing environment and encourage referral to the Work life and Wellbeing Centre where appropriate.
- 11.7 Provide feedback and information to senior managers and the Trust Board regarding implementation of this policy.
- 11.8 Provide HR participation to the relevant IWL and Stress Working Groups.
- 11.9 Liaise with Staff Groups and Staff Safety Representatives on Stress related issues.

12. Responsibilities of the Health & Safety Department

- 12.1 The Health and Safety Dept will provide stress management training for managers and employees as required.
- 12.2 Train and support managers in implementing environmental stress risk assessments and the HSE Management of Stress Standards. Section 3.1 and (Appendix 5 &6)
- 12.3 Will set up and the maintain an appropriate working group to review stress within the organisation and the implementation of HSE Stress Management Standards
- 12.4 Will provide stress management information, guidance and advise for employees and managers
- 12.5 Inform the Trust Board of any stress related issues through the Director of Quality and Executive Director responsible for Health and Safety. In addition to reporting to the Trust Health and Safety Committee of any changes and developments in the field of stress at work.

13 Contact Officers

- 13.1 The function of Contact Officers is point of contact for all staff if they have interpersonal problems involving colleagues or managers and can be of particular support if they are overburdened due to excessive workload or they feel they are being bullied or harassed in anyway.(Appendix 8 & 9)
- 13.2 Contact Officers are Trust employees who have sufficient experience and knowledge to act as an intermediary between two parties in confidence giving guidance and support as required.

13.3 Contact Officers are not counselors, they are available to act as a point of contact between two individual parties. If counselling is required, refer to Section 14 of this policy

14. Staff Counselling Service

14.1 External Independent Confidential Counselling is available for all trust employees through the following routes:-

- One to one counselling service Call 01670 513863 to arrange an appointment
- Telephone based Employee Assistance Program provides a counselling service through Westfield Call 0800 092 0987 Quote Scheme 71719
- Managers can refer individual employees to the Work-Life and Wellbeing Centre for counselling by the in house Clinical Psychologists

15. Trust Chaplaincy Department

15.1 The Trust Chaplaincy Department is able to provide pastoral support and counselling to all Trust employees regardless of religious denomination.

15.2 All meetings/discussions are treated and will take place in the strictest of confidence. If you wish to speak any member of the chaplaincy you can contact them on the following numbers.

- Freeman Ext. 48129 or Dect 21510
- RVI Ext 24657 or Dect 23702/29274

16 Responsibilities of Safety Representatives

16.1 Must be meaningfully consulted on changes to work practices or work design that could precipitate stress.

16.2 Must be able to consult with members on the issue of stress including conducting any workplace surveys.

16.3 Must be meaningfully involved in the risk assessment process and Trust stress in the workplace groups.

16.4 Should be allowed access to relevant collective and anonymous data from the Human Resources Department.

16.5 Should normally be provided with paid time away from normal duties to attend Trade Union training relating to workplace stress.

16.6 Should conduct joint inspections of the workplace at least every three months to ensure that environmental stressors are properly controlled.

17. Role of the Stress in the Workplace Review Group

The remit of the group (Appendix 7) is to discuss and implement the HSE Stress Management Standards, review Trust Stress related policies and to ensure that

correct compliance and plans are executed and promulgated to deal with work related stress.

The group will consist of representation from: Human Resources, Health and Safety, Risk Management, Improving Working Lives, Worklife and Wellbeing Centre Management and Staff Safety Representation.

- 17.1 Will play an active role in the implementation and dissemination of the HSE Stress Management Standards and relevant policies throughout the Trust at all levels, as well as provide information and guidance to managers and employees.
- 17.2 Will monitor and review the effectiveness of those policies and guidance.
- 17.3 Maintain a forum for concerns and issues of work related stress and report issues and outcomes to the Trust Health and Safety Committee.
- 17.4 Will act as a link and forum for managers to discuss outstanding stress at work risks that require further action and support.
- 17.5 Will evaluate current stress reduction initiatives that are in use within the organisation. Including the role of the contact officers (Appendix 8 & 9)
- 17.6 Develop risk assessment tools to be utilised by managers to assess stress within their Directorate/Dept (See Appendix 3 4,5 &6)
- 17.7 Ensure that there are robust support mechanisms in place to support and guide employees who may consider they are suffering from stress at work and provide relevant staff information.
- 17.8 Review and discuss sickness absence information/ statistics and assist managers to implement strategies to reduce stress related absences relating to work.
- 17.9 Produce, deliver quarterly update report on stress initiatives and developments of the group relating to stress prevention within the organisation to the Trust Health and Safety Committee.
- 17.10 The Group will develop an action plan on stress reduction initiative to be achieved for the coming year, which will be regularly updated and form the core of the groups work.

18. The Trust Health & Safety Committee

- 18.1 Will provide a regular forum for the Stress in Workplace Review Group and receive regular reports and perform a pivotal role in ensuring that policy is implemented.
- 18.2 Will report any serious concerns to the Trust Risk Management Group and Trust Board.
- 18.3 Monitor the efficacy of the policy and other measures to reduce stress and promote workplace health and safety.
- 18.4 The Trust Board will receive regular reports/updates regarding the progress of the HSE Stress Management Standards and related Trust policy

implementation from the Trust Health and Safety Committee and the Stress in the Work Place Review Group.

19. Monitoring

- 19.1 This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis to reflect the ongoing changes within stress management.
- 19.2 Compliance and effectiveness will be monitored by an Annual Report of stress risk assessments which will be reviewed by the Stress at Work Review Group. The Stress at Work Review Group will be accountable to the Trust Health and Safety Committee.
- 19.3 Any major stress related issues and policy changes will be discussed and endorsed through the Trust Health and Safety Committee. The Trust Board will be informed of any major issues through the Executive Director with responsibility for Health and Safety.

Author: Programme Lead - Safety & Risk.

References

Health and Safety At Work Act 1974

Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

Health and Safety Executive (HSE) Tackling Stress. The Management Standard Approach

NHSLA. Risk Management Standards for Acute Trusts.

HSE Working Together to Reduce Stress At Work . A Guide for Employers.

Health and Safety Executive
Stress Management Standards

1. Demand

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.

1.1 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;
- Employees concerns about their work environment are addressed

2. Control

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.

2.1 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;
- Employees are consulted over their work patterns.

3. Support

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.

3.1 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;
- Employees receive regular and constructive feedback.

4. Relationships

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.

4.1 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.

5. Role

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.

5.1 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;
- Systems are in place to enable employees to raise concerns about any uncertainties or conflicts they have in their role and responsibilities.

6. Change

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.

6.1 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

Risk Assessment Process Relating to Work Related Stress

To identify the basis of controlling all risks

Step 1. Identifying the Hazards

These are often referred to, as “Hot Spots” There are some examples given in a Stress Hazards Check List in Appendix 2

Step 2. Decide who may be harmed

There are a number of exercises you can undertake to assist you to identify who may be harmed and suffering from stress. As follows:

- Review of sickness and absence, and causation.
- Observe any Increase in incidents and accidents.
- Increased patient complaints in specific areas.
- Decreased productivity and performance from certain individuals/teams.
- Review of exit Interviews, if staff leave.
- Promote a culture to be open and honest about stress to reduce stigma and improve the reliability of the reasons staff give for absence.
- Set up Team Meetings, Focus Groups and Staff surveys or utilise the information from the Healthcare Commission staff surveys

Step 3. Evaluate the Risk and take Action

You may wish to use the Trust risk matrix to assist you to evaluate your risk. (Appendix 4).

- Managers should work in partnership and consult with employees to discuss difficult issues/problems in the working environment.
- Ensure issues affecting individuals are addressed.
- Feed back results to employees.
- When you have identified your risk factors and your assessment is completed ensure that you record your assessment findings.

Step 4. Record you're Findings

Develop an Action Plan: - Key Points

- Identify the key problems.
- How it was identified – Tool, Method, Focus group, Data.

- What is the response to the problems identified.
- How you arrived at the solution.
- Who will be responsible for ensuring that the outcomes of the action plan are followed through and acted upon.
- Include key outcomes and achievable completion dates.
- Actions should be discussed and agreed with employees prior to commencement.
- Ensure that there is a forum to feed back the action plan to employees.
- Set a review date against the action plan and update departmental managers on progress made at regular intervals.
- Ensure that any risks identified become part of the Directorate/Department risk register and major risks are included in the Trust Risk Register.

Step 5. Monitor and Review

Managers or identified persons should put in place effective processes to monitor and review the stress risk assessment.

Suggested Methods: -

Ensure key indicators are identified.

Regular dates for reviewing the documentation and the progress made.

Ensure that there are established routes within the Directorate to report to managers and employees the findings.

Continuing focus groups programme and local forums.

Local audits or staff surveys.

Ensure that serious risks and lack of progress are reported to the Stress at Work Review Group.

STRESS IN THE WORKPLACE ASSESSMENT

This risk assessment is undertaken jointly by the Employee, their Line Manager and Human Resources Officer. The content of this assessment may be used in conjunction with an Occupational Health referral however the contents remain strictly confidential.

Comment boxes are provided for each question, these should be completed if there is anything of relevance that needs to be noted as part of the assessment and the overall outcome.

When all the questions have been completed a suitable action plan should be developed by all participants and a date should be agreed to review the outcomes and progress.

The employee should receive a copy, once completed.

Name of Employee: _____

Directorate/Dept: _____

Name of Line Manager: _____

Job Title: _____

Name of Human Resources Officer: _____

Date: _____

Brief Synopsis of Events:

What has led to this assessment being carried out eg sickness absence, interpersonal relationships

Additional Information:

Has there been previous sickness absence, or work related issues

Demands – The employee is able to deal with the demands of their job and that they are achievable and systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns

The employees responds in the positive or negative in Box 1 - Managers/HR Officer Responds in Box 2 (if required)

Does your job description reflect your role?

Yes

No

Do you think your skills and abilities complement your role?

Have you had an appraisal in the last year?

Is your working environment conducive to the role you are expected to perform? (Space/Hot/Cold/Deep Plan)

Are your working hours and/or shift patterns satisfactory to your role?

Do you have access to a manager/supervisor to discuss any daily/ad hoc issues relating to demands of your role?

Any other comments

Control – The employee indicates that they are able to have a say about the way they do their work and systems are in place locally to respond to individual concerns.

The employees responds accordingly in the positive or negative in Box 1 - Managers/HR Officer Responds in Box 2(if required)

Do you have control over your pace of work?

Yes

No

Are you encouraged to use skills/and your initiative?

Are you encouraged to develop new skills?

Do you have a choice when your breaks are taken?

Are you consulted over changes to your workload and your work patterns?

Support - Employee indicates that they receive adequate information and support from their colleagues and superiors and that systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concern.

The employees responds accordingly in the positive or negative in Box 1 - Managers/HR Officer Responds in Box 2(if required)

Are relevant policies & procedures in place, and are they easily accessible? (Trust wide and local/departmental)

Yes

No

Do your managers/ supervisors provide appropriate management support?

Do your colleagues provide support?

Are you aware of what type of support/training is available in the Trust?

Can you access the resources required to do your job?

Are you given regular and constructive feedback?

Relationships - Employee indicates 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.

The employees responds accordingly in the positive or negative in Box 1 - Managers/HR Officer Responds in Box 2(if required)

		Yes	No
<p>Are you subject to any bullying and harassment?</p> <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>		
<p>Is your Manager is able to: Respond to your individual concerns?</p> <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>		
<p>Promote positive behaviours within your working remit?</p> <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>		
<p>Avoid conflict & unfairness?</p> <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>		
<p>Share relevant information with you?</p> <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>		
<p>Address unacceptable behaviour?</p> <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>		
<p>Encourage staff to report unacceptable behaviour?</p> <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>		

Role - Employee indicates that they understand their role and responsibilities and systems are in place to respond locally to any individual concerns.

The employees responds accordingly in the positive o negative in Box 1 - Managers/HR Officer Responds in Box 2(if required)

The Employee:

Are your requirements compatible with your job role?

Do you fully understand your role & responsibilities?

Are you able to raise concerns, relating to conflicts and uncertainties you have in relation to your role and responsibilities?

Has your role changed since you took up the post?

Do you have an up to date job description?

Has the Trust: (To be completed jointly following discussion)

Ensured that systems are in place to address issues that you may have regarding your role?

Ensured that the requirements it places on the employee are clear?

Yes

No

Change - Employee indicates that the organisation engages them frequently when undergoing an organisational change and systems are in place to respond to individual concerns.

The employees responds accordingly in the positive or negative in Box 1 - Managers/HR Officer Responds in Box 2(if required)

	Yes	No
Has your manager ensured that on behalf of the Trust:		
They provide timely information relating to proposed change <input data-bbox="80 639 862 735" type="text"/> <input data-bbox="925 639 1659 735" type="text"/>		
Adequate discussion takes place with you to influence proposals <input data-bbox="80 831 862 927" type="text"/> <input data-bbox="925 831 1659 927" type="text"/>		
You are made aware of the impact that any changes will have and given training to support and meet those changes <input data-bbox="80 999 862 1094" type="text"/> <input data-bbox="925 999 1659 1094" type="text"/>		
You are made aware of timetables for any changes <input data-bbox="80 1142 862 1238" type="text"/> <input data-bbox="925 1142 1659 1238" type="text"/>		
You have access to relevant support during change periods <input data-bbox="80 1310 862 1406" type="text"/> <input data-bbox="925 1310 1659 1406" type="text"/>		

HEALTH AND PERSONAL – The employee has the opportunity to make comment on any of the specific issues below that they think may be relevant to the outcomes of the assessment that are not related to the working environment.

The employees responds accordingly in the positive or negative in Box 1 - Managers/HR Officer Responds in Box 2 (if required)

Do you have any health issues?

Do you require an Occupational Health Referral?

Do you have any personal issues you would like to discuss?

Do you have any financial issues that are a cause for concern that you would like to discuss?

Do you undertake any additional employment?

Do you have any work life balance issues you would like to discuss?

Is there any further support and guidance that your manager or the Trust can provide you with?

Yes

No

Are there any other additional issues that require inclusion or discussion as part of this assessment?

(Any of the 3 participants can write relevant comments in this section)

Summary

Include Key Issues

Action Plan

Plans to address concerns being taken forward

Review

Period of review

Employee's Signature _____ **Print** _____

Manager's Signature _____ **Print** _____

Human Resources Officer Signature _____ **Print** _____

Date _____

Guidance Notes for Managers

The use and completion of Individual Employee Risk Assessment and the HSE Stress Management Standards

1. Introduction

This guidance has been produced to ensure that managers and Human Resources officers are able to complete the stress questionnaire with an employee and provide the most effective way of supporting and guiding employees through difficult/problematic situations either at work or (if appropriate) in their personnel lives.

On completion of the questionnaire managers, HR officers and the employee are requested to develop an action plan to resolve existing problems and plan suitable outcomes. This plan should be agreed by all parties with regular review dates arranged to monitor progress.

Where individual employees are experiencing particularly difficult and anxious situations managers and HR officers should ensure that the employee is provided with suitable and adequate guidance and support.

2. Guidance

- This assessment should be completed to assist in the resolution of individual employee stress.
- Human Resource Officers and Managers must have specific risk assessment training prior to undertaking completion of this risk assessment document.
- Training will be provided by the Programme Lead - Safety & Risk and the Health and Safety Advisors.
- This risk assessment is undertaken jointly by the Employee, the Line Manager and the Human Resources Officer.
- It should be explained to the employee why this risk assessment is being completed (to identify stressors) and that an action plan will be developed to reduce the identified stressors.
- Should stressors identified be on a personal level and not work related, the employee will be referred onto a suitable support function.
- The content of this assessment may be used in conjunction with an Occupational Health referral, however the contents remain strictly confidential.
- The employee should receive a copy once completed.
- A completed copy should also be placed on the employees Personal File
- Following completion of the assessment an action plan should be developed, this should be discussed with the employee and the action points agreed.

- The manager and employee should review the action plan regularly to ensure that progress is being made.
- Managers and the employee should maintain a written record of any changes or updates that are made to the action plan
- Managers and H R Officers should ensure that the employee is aware of the process for completing the form.
- If the employee is anxious or unduly stressed, HR Officers/Managers must ensure that they refer the employee if necessary for support from Occupational Health.
- Further advice and guidance can be obtained from the Programme Lead- Safety & Risk,
Dect. 29147 or Health and Safety Advisors Ext 48997

3. (HSE) Health and Safety Executive Stress Management Standards

3.1 Demands:- Managers need to review workload issues and employee concerns, work patterns and the environment.

3.1.1 The standards is :-

Employees indicate that they are able to deal with the demands of their job and that they are achievable and systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns.

- Employees concerns about the work environment are addressed and work areas are fit for purpose.
- Tasks are based on realistic demands, utilising staff skills and abilities. Skills and abilities are matched to the job demands.
- Job roles are designed to be within the capabilities of employees.
- Work settings have appropriate equipment, space and resources.
- The organisation provides employees with adequate and achievable demands in relation to agreed hours of work.

3.2 Control:- Managers must ensure that employees are able to contribute to organisation of their work.

3.2.1 The standards is :-

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

- Where possible, employees have control over the pace of work.
- Employees are encouraged to use their skills and initiative.
- Where possible opportunities are available to develop new skills which will assist staff to undertake new and challenging pieces of work.
- Employees are consulted over work patterns.
- Employees have a say over when breaks are taken.

3.3 Support :- Includes the encouragement, sponsorship and resources provided by the organisation, line management and colleagues.

3.3.1 The Standard is :-

Employees indicate that they receive adequate information and support from their colleagues and superiors and that systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concern.

- The organisation has policies and procedures to support staff.
- Systems are in place to enable and encourage managers to support their staff.
- Systems are in place to enable and encourage staff to support their colleagues
- Employees know what support is available and how and where to access it.
- Employees know how to access the required resources to do their job.
- Employees receive regular and constructive feedback.

3.4 Relationships :- Includes promoting positive working to avoid conflict and dealing with unacceptable behaviour.

3.4.1 The standard is :-

Employees indicate that they are not subjected to unacceptable behaviours, eg bullying at work; and systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns.

- The organisation promotes positive behaviour at work to avoid conflict and ensure fairness.
- Employees share information relevant to 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 staff to report unacceptable behaviour.

3.5 Role:- Whether people understand their role within the organisation and whether the organisation ensures that the person does not have a conflicting role.

3.5.1 The standards is :-

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

- The organisation ensures that, as far as possible different requirements placed upon employees are compatible.
- The organisation provides information for employees to understand their role and responsibilities.
- The organisation ensure that as far as practical the requirements placed on employees are clear.
- System are in place to enable employees to raise concern about uncertainties or conflicts they have in their role and responsibilities.

3.6 Change:- How the organisational change (large or small) is managed and communicated in the organisation.

Employees indicate that the organisation engages them frequently when undergoing an organisational change and systems are in place to respond to individual concerns.

- The organisation provides employees with timely information to enable them to understand the reasons for proposed changes.
- The organisation ensures adequate employee consultation on change opportunities for employees to influence proposals.
- Employees are aware of the probable impact of any changes in their jobs.
- Employees have access and support during any changes to job practises and roles.

The Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Environmental Stress Risk Assessment

Ward/ Directorate:**Completion of the Documentation** (Also Refer to the Guidance provided with this Assessment relating to Environmental Stress)

- To be completed by a Manager or Risk Assessor as part of the risk assessment process for the Dept/Directorate
Once completed the assessment should be reviewed as often as required and at least annually
- Managers/Assessors should utilise Page 2 as a Hazard Checklist, eg if there is a concern under any of the headings this should be identified with a small explanation provided in the impact section
- There should also be specific consideration and thought given to other are concerns outside of the headings provided, to ensure that all issues have been reviewed.
- Managers/Risk assessors should complete page 3, the section on who may be harmed as a result of the hazard and then complete the section on evaluation of the risk, providing information and any evidence that they have available.
- Managers/Assessors should then complete the Action plan on page 4. Information should be provided on controls and other relevant actions that will reduce the risk within the Directorate. A review date should be entered into the review section and an outline as to how monitoring will take place. Regular review should take place until all outstanding issue have been addressed
- The final section on Page 5 is to be used as an aide memoir as to the overall risk within the Directorate and requires the signatures of the Directorate manager and/or Assessor and the relevant dates of assessment
- All findings must be discussed with the Directorate Manager/ Heads of Depts, and all outstanding issues should be reviewed at a local operational level.
- Manager should ensure that there is a forum/process for Environmental Stress Issues to be discussed by staff at a local level
- Where issues can not be dealt with at local level and may have significant impact on the Directorate/Dept overall service, managers Senior Trust Managers (The Executive Team) must be informed and made aware of such issues and where appropriate the Trust Risk Register should be completed.
- Definition of a Environmental Impact Summary “The potential identified hazards and outcomes of an assessment that may have a possible impact, both - positive or negative- on the working environment, taking into consideration natural, social and economic aspects and outcomes”

Hazard	Impact Summary - Key implications
Lack of Resources / Equipment	
Long Hours of work	
Overtime Required Regularly	
Staff Shortages	
Increase of use of temporary staff	
Pressure from Waiting List Initiatives	
Bed Shortages	
Increase in Clinical Errors	
Increased Sickness Absence	
Lack of Theatre & Time	
Poor Communication	
Environmental Issues / Lack of Space / Storage	
Evidence of Bullying and Harassment	
Decrease in Level of Quality produced by the Department	
Evidence of Pressure due to Time Constraints	
Other	

Record the Effect of Hazard Exposure – Decide Who May Be Harmed (Gather Data)

Evaluate the Risks and Take Action – Explore Problems and Develop Solutions

Record Your Findings - Develop and Implement Action Plans
Ensure that Staff are on Board and that you Communicate your findings and controls with senior managers and members of staff

Monitor and Review Action Plans to Assess Effectiveness. Involve Staff in the process. Ensure that there is a forum to regular discuss the progress and resolution of identified hazards.

Overall Hazards	Total Impact Summary
Main Actions/Controls	Review and Monitor

Signature of Assessor _____ **Date** _____

Review Signature _____

Signature of Directorate Manager _____ **Date** _____

Review Date _____

The Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Environmental Risk Assessment

Guidance and Risk Assessment Process for Managers

1 Introduction

The purpose of this guidance is to assist managers to prepare and undertake their own Directorate/Departmental Stress Risk Assessment. The guidance also provides an overview of up to date information on how stress is demonstrated in the workplace and in the workforce, how to carry-out a risk assessment, the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) position on Stress and the symptoms and causes of Stress.

Further guidance can also be sought from the Trust Health and Safety Advisors, or the Programme Lead for Safety and Risk as well as the Trust Work life and Wellbeing Centre and the HSE Website.

2. Assessment and Process

Step by step approach for managers

Step 1: Look for the hazards

As outlined in the assessment document and the HSE Management Standards (See Section 3)

(Demand, Control, Support, Relationships, Role, Change)

Identify what is most important for your area and identify the extent of the problem.

Be aware of causes and symptoms of stress

Agree when to take action both for individual member's of staff and for groups or teams.

Step 2: Decide who might be affected and how

Pay particular attention to:

- Staff with a previous history of stress-related illness.
- Staff in departments where large changes are being considered.

Step 3: Evaluate the risks and decide whether existing precautions are adequate or more should be done.

- Discuss issues and resolutions with staff involved.
- Complete Risk Assessment Documentation.
- Consider how likely it is that each hazard could cause harm? (May determine whether or not you need to do more or reduce the risk.).
- Is the risk high, medium or low?
- Can you get rid of the hazard altogether, if not how can it be controlled?

Step 4: Record your findings on the assessment document

- Are your risk assessments suitable and sufficient?
- Do you need to develop a proper checklist?
- Have you asked who may be affected?
- Have you dealt with all obvious significant hazards?
- Are the precautions reasonable and the remaining risk low?

- Produce Recovery plan if required.
- Discuss outcomes and changes with staff.

Step 5: Review and revision

- Take measures to control risk.
- Where appropriate involve staff in communications and progress.
- Regularly review the assessments and progress made, revise where necessary.

3. Flow chart for assessing and controlling the risk of stress

Be familiar with the Stress Management Policy, Stress Management guidelines, attend Stress Management workshop



Brief staff

- Trust Management of Stress in the Workplace Policy
- HSE Management Standards (Section 4)
- What will happen next – Risk assessment



Identify any hazards for work related stress (in consultation with staff). Decide what is most significant and identify the extent of the problem. (Stress Risk Assessment)

How	What to assess
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings with individuals, teams, managers/team leaders • Raise awareness in appraisals, probations, 1to1 meetings • Invite individuals to raise concerns • Send out a stress questionnaire 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor sickness absence (see Occupational Health Policy) • Accidents • Staff turnover • Performance (deadlines not met etc) • Complaints



Action plan – thinking through the management standards (in consultation with staff)

Key points

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who will lead? Who will do what? • What is the expected outcome • Priorities and timescales | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What action is being taken already? • Is there enough being done? • What more needs to be done? |
|---|---|



Progress reports

- To the staff concerned
- To management team(s)
- Possibly to all staff



Monitor and review

- Feedback from staff (e.g. through 1 to 1s, team meetings or ad-hoc meetings)
- Data trends (type of absence, staff turnover, etc)
- Impact of subsequent changes (e.g. to policy, procedure, technology, work organisation)

4. What do we mean by stress? - An Overview

The HSE defines stress as:-

“the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them.”

Stress arises when pressure exceeds a person's ability to cope and is a person's natural reaction to excessive pressure and can be experienced by everybody. When a person is faced with pressure, threat or alarm the body responds with certain physiological changes. When these changes are excessive or continue, their effects become detrimental to health, and may result in ill health or other typical signs and symptoms of stress. (See section 5- Symptoms of stress).

- Stress can result from self-imposed demands as well as external influences or changes.
- Stress is not a disease and does not indicate personal weakness.
- Stress affects people in different ways.
- What triggers stress in one may not cause stress for another.
- Causes vary from experiences at or outside work to personality and lifestyle, or all of these combined.
- Work related problems can be exacerbated by family problems, relationship difficulties, financial worries etc, and these factors may need to be taken into account in understanding reactions to the demands of work.

It is important to convey the message that stress is not a sign of weakness but a normal and natural reaction to the excess pressure.

Managers need to be vigilant, be aware of the signs of too much stress, assess the risk of ill-health arising from stress and find appropriate ways to control it and offer support.

4.1 What are the legal responsibilities?

Due to the complexity of stress it is unlikely that it can be removed entirely but in the event of a claim the managers concerned would be assessed on the action they have taken to minimise the stress, including attendance at training and awareness events, undertaking stress risk assessments and taking all reasonable steps to apply Trust guidelines.

- The Health and Safety at Work Act (1974) requires employers and managers to ensure the psychological and physical health and safety of staff at work, so far as is reasonably practicable.
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1999) require that managers assess the health and safety risks to staff at work.
- If a Stress related illness includes long term absence, anxiety, depression or other chronic condition it may constitute a mental impairment under the Disability Discrimination Act (1995) and reasonable adjustments will be made to support disabled staff.
- The Working Time Regulations (1998) set limits on working excessively long hours without adequate breaks. Legislation against unfair discrimination requires equality of opportunity and prevention of harassment and bullying which could be the cause of stress.

- The purpose of the stress risk assessments is a legal requirement and primarily to identify potential stressors and what action is needed.
- It is likely that in the course of the next few years the HSE Management Standards will become a benchmark against which both the HSE and members of staff can gauge whether the organisation is in breach of its duty of care by failing to take adequate steps to prevent stress in the workplace.

If a member of staff has suffered stress-related illness and absence, there is a need to ensure that the causes of the stress are identified and eliminated or minimised wherever reasonably practicable to prevent any recurrence. Managers need to take appropriate action to prevent personal injury or damage to health which could be predicted or reasonably foreseen.

4.2 Knowing when to take action

4.2.1 Recognising the symptoms of stress

Stress can manifest itself in many ways and can be difficult to recognise. As well as leading to anxiety and depression it can have a significant impact on physical health. Research links stress to heart disease, back pain, headaches, gastrointestinal disturbances and alcohol and drug dependency and needs to be managed before it reaches physical debility

If a member of staff raises concerns about being unable to cope, or about feeling stressed, these must be taken seriously and acted upon. However, the individual may deny they are stressed or not recognise their symptoms or reactions as stress.

Managers and colleagues should be alert to changes in behaviour such as:-

- Worsening relationships with colleagues
- Withdrawal/introversion
- Indecisiveness
- Irritability
- Frequent absence
- Excessive Accidents
- Inability to delegate
- A general deterioration in performance
- Forgetfulness, missed deadlines
- Increased use of tobacco, alcohol or drugs.

4.2.3 At what point is action needed?

Managers are entitled to assume staff can withstand normal pressures of their role. However, they must ensure that staff do not suffer **reasonably foreseeable** physical or psychological injury from work.

If the symptoms point to a potential safety risk, for example where staff work with hazardous equipment or substances or supervise others in high risk areas, it is vital to act swiftly and investigate at the first sign that something might be wrong.

While it is important to tackle individual cases, the overall aim should be prevention by overcoming problems at their source.

4.2.4 The role of the sickness absence procedure

If not tackled quickly, stress can often develop into depression and long-term absence. Early intervention should be carried out in accordance with the Employee Wellbeing Policy and the Stress Management Policy. If a member of staff acquires a disability or medical condition, they should speak to their line manager and/or a Human Resources Officer to discuss reasonable adjustments. The line manager and/or (HR) Officer may seek external expertise.

Several aspects of the sickness and absence procedure are designed to assist with the management of stress, as follows:

- Ensuring that all staff report all sickness, even where they are working from home.
- Managers to ensure accurate reporting of the cause of illness.
- Monitoring sickness absence and noting any frequent or prolonged illness which may indicate stress.
- Referrals to Work-life and wellbeing Centre or the Counselling Service where appropriate
- Return to work meeting to keep in touch with staff, check that they are fit to return and discuss a staged return if advisable. (If the absence has been lengthy, a staged return may have been recommended by the Occupational Health Adviser and the manager would have planned it with the member of staff before the return to work.)
- Sickness review meetings (monthly or quarterly) to ensure member of staff is getting the support needed and is fit for work
- HR Department monitoring to ensure that all cases of stress are recorded and referred to Work-life and wellbeing Centre where appropriate.

5. Assessing and controlling the risk of stress

5.1 The legal requirement

At all levels managers are legally obliged to assess the risk that may cause or exacerbate stress, which could lead to ill health. This involves:-

- Identifying pressures at work that could cause high and sustained levels of stress
- Deciding who might be harmed by these;
- Deciding whether the organisation is doing enough to prevent that harm;
- Recording those findings.
- Identifying controls
- Developing an action plan

Managers are obliged to take reasonable steps to deal with those pressures and review the assessment when they think that it may no longer be valid. They need to ensure that they involve their staff at every stage of the process.

5.2 Consulting staff

The HSE guidance emphasises the importance of involving and consulting with staff at every stage. Managers should first take informal soundings to get some idea of what problems there might be and then look below the surface. For example, disillusionment with work may show up as an increase in overall absenteeism (especially frequent short spells of sickness), lateness, disciplinary problems, staff turnover, reduced output or quality, low morale and increasingly difficult interpersonal relationships.

Meetings, one-to-one meetings, appraisal meetings, return to work meetings following sickness absence or at exit interviews when staff resign. Explore what staff feel are the most challenging or difficult aspects of their role and whether any of these put them

under uncomfortable pressure. It is also important to give assurances that confidentiality will be respected.

The information can be used to identify common and persistent pressures or risks and who might be harmed by them. Building this into the appraisal process can be particularly useful as it is a time when the focus is on roles and work allocations and personal and professional development needs.

Staff are more likely to discuss their individual circumstances and concerns in a confidential setting but there may be common issues, such as the effects of a re-organisation or at times of peak volume which can be discussed openly in team or staff meetings.

Managers must ensure that local policies and protocols reflect working practises and action should be taken to audit policies procedures and systems for the following conclusions:-

- Are the expected outcomes being achieved?
- Do staff feel they are working effectively?
- Do they have sufficient information?
- Do they feel there are changes that could make their work easier or more effective or enjoyable?.

6. Main areas of risk and possible actions to control each of the main risks

The HSE has published a set of **Management Standards for Stress** to provide a framework for gauging stress levels and identifying solutions (see Section 4) They identify six broad areas of risk in the workplace: **demands, control, support, relationships, role and change**.

There is no single best way to tackle work-related stress. What managers need to do will depend on the type of work being done and the cause of the problem. The HSE's Management Standards describes possible solutions to the main areas of risk.

It may sometimes be necessary to think creatively to overcome problems that are generally considered to be unavoidable. For example, if there are insufficient resources to handle workloads, more effective ways of working or new systems may be a better solution than giving some objectives tasks lower priority or dropping them altogether.

It will be important to recognise that all the identified risks cannot be tackled simultaneously and that developing and disseminating an action plan which indicates when things will happen, may in itself help to relieve feelings of stress. The action plan and the situation should be reviewed on a regular basis.

The staff concerned should be involved in identifying the sources of stress and recommending remedies and all staff should be encouraged to participate in staff development activities which can assist in developing new skills needed to manage stress more effectively. Managers will want to consider the effectiveness and quality of induction for new staff. Being new may feel stressful. The induction period is an opportunity to provide information and build confidence and competence. There should be monthly reviews during the probation period to ensure there is no further support needed.

The Trust Stress Management Workshops provided by the Health and Safety Dept provides practical information on Risk assessment, sharing of best practice for managers and dealing with individual employee stress. There are also Stress Awareness training for individual members of staff aimed at raising awareness of stress prevention and coping skills..

7. Handling individual stress cases

The circumstances of each case will differ so there is no single specific, recommended approach. However, the following general principles can be used as a guide. The emphasis should be on supporting the individual, valuing their contribution and maintaining them in employment. If staff raise grievances or concerns that work issues are causing symptoms of stress-related illness, managers need to act promptly to address the issues raised. Further advice should be sought from the H R Department in such cases.

7.1 Overcoming denial

If a member of staff is showing signs of stress, a private meeting should be held to assess whether there is a problem, whether it is significant, and if so to offer support. However, stress is often denied because people do not want to be seen to be unable to cope or they fear their case may not be dealt with sympathetically. It is therefore important to convey the message that stress is not a sign of weakness but a normal and natural reaction to excess pressure, that even normally robust people can succumb to it and that support is available to help them.

Sometimes just knowing that someone understands and cares is enough to relieve some of the pressure and often just talking about problems can also bring relief.

Common worries or misconceptions by staff suffering from stress include:

- Being seen as a failure or unable to cope.
- That they are failing their colleagues or students or you.
- That there is no solution.
- That they are doing a bad job.
- That their job or career may be at risk.
- That their situation does not concern or affect others.
- That they can hide the problem.

An effective management approach needs to reduce their worries and make it clear that the situation is affecting or could affect their health, their work and other people and therefore needs to be resolved.

It is possible that staff may feel stressed because of working relationships within the work area or perhaps there is some difficulty with the manager. If managers suspect this, they might suggest to the member of staff that, despite the difficulty in doing so, it may be productive to clear the air by discussing the issues openly, honestly and with a view to both sides coming to agreement.

The manager could also make staff aware that if they wish to talk to someone in confidence they can contact the Counselling Services available or one of the Trust Contact Officers or the Chaplaincy.

If this does not bear fruit or staff continue to seem uncomfortable or resentful about discussing the situation, the matter the manager should be discussed with the H R Department.

7.2 Investigating the cause

Managers should begin by asking whether anything in particular is causing stress or anxiety. If there do not appear to be work problems, managers should explore whether there is an external cause, for example in the family, although this is a sensitive area and staff may not wish to reveal or discuss their personal circumstances.

7.3 Taking action

If the stress appears to be work-related, managers should seek to agree a way to address the causes and symptoms and put a plan of action in place promptly. Regular meetings with the member of staff are advisable, inviting feedback on how things are going until the problems are resolved.

If there is no significant improvement, or the stress results in a period of sickness, a referral to Occupational Health (OH) may be appropriate. The purpose of the referral is so that the Occupational Health Adviser (OHA) can assess the situation and give helpful advice on how to deal with problem or refer staff to their GP, Trust counselling or external community support agencies as appropriate.

The HR Dept should be informed/involved where there are unresolved problems relating to individual employees stress/sickness and further involvement is required by O H Dept.

7.4 Keeping records

Health problems are often of a personal nature. Staff within HR and the line manager will treat information about the reasons for an employee's sickness absence in the strictest of confidence and will respect individual's right to confidentiality. Any information will stored appropriately (e.g. in locked cabinets, or if computerised, protected by password). A line manager may not pass on information about the nature of an employee's sickness absence to colleagues without his/her consent.

Managers and any HR Officers involved will keep factual records of all cases of stress-related illness, such as dates of discussions and meetings, issues raised, any suggestions by the member of staff that could not be agreed, reason they could not be agreed, actions agreed, dates the situation was reviewed and outcomes.

The HR Department maintains a record of sickness absences based both on the Sickness Absence Return to Work form and doctors' certificates sent through from Departments/Schools. These are kept in order to: calculate sick pay entitlements; notify the employee when their entitlement to Statutory Sick Pay has ended (a legal requirement); for absence monitoring purposes; and in order that the O H Dept has as much information as possible in the case of employee referrals.

If the HR Dept is involved directly in an employee stress related case they will also maintain and produce accurate notes on any discussions that have taken place with the employees and there manager, in accordance with the Sickness Absence Policy

7.5 Return to work after stress-related illness

If someone has been absent because of stress-related illness, when they return they will usually need support and careful integration back into their role. In some cases the stress-related illness may constitute a disability for which there is a legal responsibility to make adjustments.

Whether or not it is a case of disability, following a period of absence a phased return, or changed duties may be advisable and should be arranged in consultation with the O H Dept. and H R Dept.

The type of adjustment will depend on the circumstances but possibilities include:

- A period of reduced hours
- Ensuring no overtime and that full breaks and holidays are taken
- Reduced workload or removal from hazardous work

- Re-allocation of some responsibilities
- Reorganisation of the work of the area/team
- Flexible working measures such as home working, flexible or changed hours
- Redeployment to another role for a period
- Prioritising their work
- Reduced level of responsibility
- Time off to attend counselling

7.6 Further information

The Training and Development and Health and Safety Departments provide training and awareness sessions for staff and managers on identifying and managing stress.

The Trust Intranet Site contains policies and guidelines linked to the following headings which are relevant to prevention and control of stress:

- Employee Wellbeing Policy
- Staff Appraisal Policy
- Grievance Policy/Procedure
- Appraisals Policy Medical
- Equality & Diversity Policy
- Management of Stress Policy
- Flexible Working Arrangements Policy
- Dignity and Respect Policy
- Recruitment and Selection Policies
- Disability Persons Policy
- Working Time Directive Policy
- Alcohol, Drugs and other Substances in the Workplace Policy
- Employees who are Victims of Domestic Violence policy

8. HSE Management Standards

(Reference:-Managing the causes of work-related stress. A step-by-step approach using the management standards. HSE Books. HSG218)

Below is a brief summary of the HSE Management Standards they were developed by the HSE in 2007 and became law in 2009. As an organisation we are required to carry out a risk assessment and put in place a suitable action plan to comply with these standards.

The possible outcomes section to each standard is intended as a general guide to assessing and addressing the risk of stress. They are examples only and do not constitute an exhaustive list. Solutions for local work areas should be developed and agreed by managers/team leaders and staff together. There is no single best way to tackle work-related stress. What you do will depend on the cause of the problem, available resources and workplace circumstances.

All the identified risks cannot be tackled at once. Starting with smaller problems which can be resolved quickly can help to reduce overall stress levels and make it easier to tackle larger problems over time.

8.1 Demands

Includes issues like workload, work patterns, and the work environment

8.1.2 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.

8.1.3 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;
- Peoples 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.

8.1.4 Possible Outcomes

- Organise work so that there are enough staff to cover it and workloads are balanced.
- Review work progress and change timescales and priorities when necessary.
- Where possible cover absence and fill vacancies without delay.
- Match work demands and levels of intensity to people's skills and abilities. Check carefully during staff recruitment or restructuring.
- If more than one person allocates work to an individual, ensure they co-ordinate requirements.
- Streamline procedures, removing duplication and aspects that do not add significant value.
- Limit routine, boring or unpopular roles as far as reasonably practicable. If possible, allocate it on a shared or rota basis, increasing the variety of responsibilities and opportunities to undertake more challenging roles.
- Talk with staff regularly about the challenges they face and put in place appropriate support mechanisms.
- Control safety hazards and have processes for raising and addressing concerns quickly.
- Enable flexible working, including working from home, where possible.

8.2 Control

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

8.2.1 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.

8.2.3 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.

8.2.4 Possible Outcomes

- Allow staff to have a say in the planning of their work and work environment and ensure they understand how their role fits into the wider scene.
- Develop skill in delegating effectively and encourage the use of initiative.
- Induct and train staff carefully and comprehensively, including when roles change or new technology is introduced.
- As far as reasonably practicable enable flexible working to promote a healthy work-life balance.
- Encourage staff to work with you to tackle the problem of stress at work.
- Encourage staff to attend workshops on time management and assertiveness.

8.3 Support

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

8.3.1 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.

8.3.2 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.

8.3.4 Possible Outcomes

- Meet with staff regularly to see how things are going. Acknowledge work well done and give support when things go wrong. Encourage them to raise concerns.
- Support staff suffering from personal difficulties.
- Use induction and training to enable staff to undertake their roles effectively, to understand the context of their roles, to know about university and school/departmental policies and procedures and to achieve their aspirations.
- Encourage a healthy work-life balance and ensure staff take adequate rest breaks and holidays.
- Inform staff about the support and information available in the university to help with work-related or home-related issues.

8.4 Relationships

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

8.4.1 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.

8.4.2 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.

8.4.3 Possible Outcomes

- Let staff know when they do well and that they are valued.

- Ensure all staff treat each other with respect and courtesy. Deal quickly with unacceptable behaviour according to the university's policy and guidelines regarding harassment and bullying.
- Develop self-awareness in yourself and your staff.
- Ensure teams are cohesive with an effective leader. Involve them in problem-solving together. Consider team building discussions or training.

8.5 Role

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

8.5.1 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.

8.5.2 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.

8.5.3 Possible Outcomes

- During recruitment, describe roles accurately and unambiguously. Include potential pressures or challenges. Investigate candidate's suitability and expectations thoroughly during the selection process.
- Ensure thorough induction, including a clear picture of the scope, context, responsibilities of the role and related policies and procedures.
- Ensure staff understand clearly what is expected of them by you, their colleagues, and others such as students or partner organisations. Encourage them to let you know if they are unsure about who should be doing what.
- Talk to staff regularly and openly about their roles particularly where they have gone through a period of change and/or if they sometimes work at home.

8.6 Change

How organisational change is managed and communicated in the organisation

8.6.1 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.

8.6.2 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;

8.6.3 Possible Outcomes

- Be aware of the risk of pressure and anxiety associated with change, even when the change is welcome, and take action to minimise it.
- If staff are promoted or given a new role, ensure a comprehensive, careful induction.
- Where possible, involve staff in the planning. If that is not feasible, inform them of the plans and timetable for action including how they will participate and be informed. Describe the aims and benefits of changes and what effect it will have on their roles.
- During change, hold regular briefing, question and answer sessions. Have an open door policy, giving staff the opportunity to ask questions before, during and after the change takes place.
- When reorganising work, consult staff and ensure there will be no conflict or ambiguity of roles.
- Avoid long delays in carrying out change as staff may be anxious. If delay is unavoidable explain the reason for it and the revised timescale. Throughout the delay be vigilant for signs of stress.
- Communicate new developments quickly in order to quash rumours.
- Consult staff about their needs for information or training and ensure they are met.
- Use induction and training to enable staff to undertake their roles effectively, to understand the context of their roles, to know about university and school/departmental policies and procedures and to achieve their aspirations.
- Encourage a healthy work-life balance and ensure staff take adequate rest breaks and holidays.
- Inform staff about the support and information available in the university to help with work-related or home-related issues.
- Allow time to become accustomed to change, invite regular feedback and make adjustments if necessary.
- Provide assistance if any staff are to be made redundant, for example at the end of a fixed-term contract, supporting them in their search for alternative work, including information on job opportunities and absence to attend job interviews.
- If change involves new work relationships, arrange for the staff concerned to develop new plans, procedures, and protocols together. If the new relationship is with a team outside the department, work shadowing and focus groups can develop mutual understanding. Teambuilding sessions and social activities can also strengthen relationships.
- After initiating any changes, revise the stress risk assessment.

9. Symptoms of Stress

There are immediate and longer-term responses to excessive pressure. The acute reactions are related to arousal and involve feelings of anxiety, a racing pulse, flushing, sweating, a dry mouth and trembling. If the pressure continues for a longer period, the reactions can include headaches, inability to sleep, skin conditions, and depression. Long-term pressure can lead to physical and psychological illness or may make existing medical conditions, such as heart disease, worse. Managers cannot be expected to diagnose whether staff are suffering from stress, anxiety or depression.

However, they should notice changes in behaviour and consider requesting referral to the occupational health adviser or encouraging staff to consult their GP. It is equally important not to over-react to small behavioural change. The situation should be monitored and a meeting held with the member of staff if it continues.

Some of the observable signs that suggest there may be a stress problem are listed below:

Work performance

- Poor concentration/absent-minded
- Uncharacteristic errors
- Loss of enthusiasm or commitment
- Indecision/procrastination
- Confused
- Memory lapses
- Increased time at work
- Noticeable decline in performance
- Failing to take annual leave
- Accidents
- Disputes, grievances, complaints

Other Behaviours

- Out of character behaviour
- Difficulty in relaxing and/or sleeping
- Low self esteem
- Depression
- Anxiety or panic attacks
- Increased alcohol consumption
- Increased smoking
- Lack of interest in appearance/hygiene
- Accidents at home or work
- Changes in eating patterns
- Increased or Decreased appetite

Emotional Behaviour

- Crying
- Aggression, bullying or criticising others
- Over-reaction to problems
- Fixation e.g. repeating arguments, refusing to listen, insisting on own solutions
- Sudden mood changes
- Irritability /moodiness
- Shouting, temper outbursts
- Loss of sense of humour

Withdrawal

- High levels of absenteeism
- High staff turnover
- Reluctance to give or offer support
- Arriving late and leaving early
- Extended lunches
- Evasiveness, reduced social contact

Relationships

- Criticism of others
- Lack of cooperation
- Marital or family problems
- Poor relations with colleagues

Physical Behaviour

- Palpitations
- Dry mouth, butterflies
- Restlessness
- Tiredness, lethargy
- Nervous, stumbling speech
- Sweating
- Skin problems
- Muscle tension
- Upset stomach/flatulence/diarrhoea
- Headaches, colds
- Hand tremor
- Rapid weight gain, loss
- Constantly feeling hot or cold for no reason

10. Causes of Stress

Stress can be caused by a wide range of factors. Difficulties outside work may make reaction to a work related problem more acute and vice versa. Stress is cumulative so that a small event, following a series of major stressful events, may tip the balance. It is important to be able to assess the potential of harm from an accumulation of work and life events and to look for ways to reduce and manage them. The table below lists a number of factors that may cause stress.

Work-related stressors:

- Management style: own or managers
- Responsibility-for people and things
- Unreasonable deadlines
- Too many managers.
- Conflicting priorities
- Continual changes in work organisation
- Poorly managed change
- Poor delegation
- Poor communication and consultation
- Unclear reporting lines
- Uncertainty about role
- Inadequate staff/resources
- Under or over promotion
- Under use of skills
- Insufficient induction and/or training
- Poor setting of objectives
- Frequent interruption
- Long or irregular hours
- Insufficient breaks
- Job insecurity
- Low pay or low status
- Lone working
- Too much boring work
- Travel
- Little or no autonomy
- New technology or equipment

Unhelpful personal behaviours and poor coping strategies

- Worry about appearance, weight, social identity
- Misuse of alcohol, drugs
- Doing things for others you don't want to do
- Feeling you are missing out on things you want out of life
- Not knowing what you want out of life
- Putting things off
- Running away from difficult situations
- Insensitivity to others
- Expecting too much of self/others
- Poor time management
- Taking a stand and inability to compromise
- Lack of exercise
- Not making time for relaxation and hobbies

Other solutions and sources of support and guidance

- Seek help from your manager and/or colleagues and friends.
- Be aware of the various internal and external support and counselling services that are available.
- Consider referral to Occupational Health for health and welfare support.
- Contact the Health and Safety Dept or the Programme Lead –Safety and Risk for guidance
- Consider running a departmental Focus Group with the assistance of the in house clinical psychologists
- Contact the Human Resources Department for assistance on work related issue for guidance

**Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
Stress at Work Review Group**

Terms of Reference

Introduction

The propose of this document is to propose the terms of reference and composition of the Stress at Work Review Group

Terms of Reference

The remit of the Stress at Work Review Group is to discuss The Health and Safety Executive Stress Management Standards relating to Work related Stress and review Trust policies and strategic issues and to ensure that correct compliance and plans are executed and promulgated to deal with Work related Stress as follows:

- a) Evaluate the Trusts compliance to the HSE Stress Management Standards.
- b) Maintain a Forum for concerns and issues of Work related Stress and report issues and outcomes to the Trust Health and Safety Committee.
- c) Produce, deliver and audit a staff stress questionnaire to evaluate the amount of stress at local level and utilise and review the Health Care Commission Annual Survey and put in place effective stress reduction strategies as appropriate
- d) Evaluate current stress reduction initiatives that are in use within the organisation.
- e) Prioritise key Stress at Work issue's for development and action.
- f) Develop risk assessment tools to be utilised at all levels across the organisation to assist in identifying and reducing stress at work.
- g) Ensure that there are robust support mechanisms in place to support and guide employees who may consider they are suffering from stress at work.
- h) Review and discuss sickness/absence policy/procedures to identifying stress at work and develop ways to provide support to managers and employees.

Members of the Group:

Diane Palmer	Director of Quality and Effectiveness (Chair)
Dru Parnaby	Programme Lead - Safety & Risk
Christine Holland	Senior Human Resource Manager
Julie Anderson	Head of Staff Engagement, HR
Ray Fagg	Occupational Health Nurse Manager
Karen Giles	Head of Education and Development
Nigel Goodfellow	Head of Chaplaincy
Joan Easton	Staff Representative
John Wear	Staff Representative

Frequency of meetings:

At least 3 times per year.

Quorum:

At least 4 members of the group.

The Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Contact Officer Role Description/Guidelines

1. Introduction

The purpose of this document is to clearly describe the role of Contact Officers within the Trust. It is important that Contact Officers themselves and those who may utilise them have a clear understanding of their remit to help ensure that their effectiveness is maximised.

2. Main Features of the Role

- Contact Officers may be approached by members of staff who believe that they are being bullied or harassed by another member of staff at work.
- The Contact Officer will arrange to meet with the member of staff to gain an understanding of precisely what the claim is, the alleged behaviour and the identification of the individuals accused of such behaviour. A record of the meeting will be made by the Contact Officer and agreed with the member of staff who has met with them.
- The Contact Officer will arrange to meet with the individual(s) accused of bullying or harassment. Contact will be made initially by telephone and in confidence. A meeting will be arranged at a mutually convenient date, time and venue and will usually take place shortly after the telephone conversation to help minimise any anxiety on the part of the individual(s) accused of bullying or harassment.
- The Contact Officer will relay details of the allegation of bullying or harassment to the individual(s) identified including the identity of the employee making the allegation.
- It should be stressed by the Contact Officer that the employee making the allegation is seeking to resolve the matter in confidence and without recourse to formal proceedings. However, the right to pursue a claim of bullying or harassment by means of the Trust's Dignity at Work Policy is not waived by the use of a Contact Officer.
- The individual(s) accused of bullying or harassment will be given an opportunity to respond directly to the Contact Officer.
- The Contact Officer will feedback the response of the individual(s) accused of bullying or harassment to the employee who made the allegation.
- At this stage the Contact Officer will normally cease to be involved and it is for the two parties to decide how they proceed from thereon.
- The Contact Officer should make clear that he/she will play no part in any subsequent formal proceedings.

3. Guidance

- Contact Officers must not seek to investigate claims or counter-claims nor to make judgements about the merits or otherwise of the allegations made nor the responses to them.
- Contact Officers are not making allegations by undertaking their role, they are merely relaying information in confidence and raising awareness of concerns expressed by an employee.
- Contact Officers should not provide a counselling service for staff nor should they offer advice other than, if requested, to raise awareness of the existence of formal procedures and other means of support e.g. Occupational Health, Counselling Service.
- Should a Contact Officer become aware of information which he or she believes to be of such significance that it must be reported elsewhere or wish to obtain support and advice they may:
 - (i) Contact the Occupational Health Services or Chaplaincy for advice/support.

Refer to the Trust's Whistleblowing Policy.

- Reasonable time at work will be provided to enable Contact Officers to undertake this role. Should there be conflicting time demands between Contact Officer duties and their contractual duties the Contact Officer should refer an employee to the list of published names as an alternative.

4. Implementation

- The names and telephone numbers of Contact Officers will be widely publicised by the Trust.
- Contact Officers will receive listening skills training.
- Progress in respect of implementation will be assessed at six monthly intervals by the Trust without breach of confidentiality.

1st October 2007



Contact Officers

Name Details	Hospital Site	Contact
Geraldine Haddow - Dental Nurse	FH	31085
Amanda Hill - Senior Sister.	FH	48371
Sharon Barnes – Theatre Manager.	FH	48371
Doreen Reynolds - Sister, Ward 52	RVI	25652
Suzanne Medows - Practice Placement Facilitator	RVI	39414
Christine Powell - Snr. Research Orthoptist	RVI	24040
Diane Barstow - Paediatric Liaison Nurse	RVI	25209
David Martin - Biomedical Scientist.	RVI	24166
Ros Pinkett -Biomedical Scientist	CFL	92418774
Catherine Prem- Genetic Counsellor	CFL	92418731
Kevin Hayes-Superintendent Radiographer	RVI	39290
Lorna Robson - Dental Nurse	DH/RVI	25110
Jonathan Forty - Consultant Cardio Surgeon	FH	37487/48440
Irene Bithel - Staff Nurse	FH	Trust E mail
Stephen Lord - Foundation Programme Tutor	FH	48295
Gillian Vance - Foundation Programme Tutor	FH	23746
Ifti Haq - Foundation Programme Tutor	FH	29755
Jon Hanson - Foundation Programme Tutor	FH	29992

THE NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE HOSPITALS NHS FOUNDATION TRUST
IMPACT ASSESSMENT – SCREENING FORM A

This form must be completed and attached to any procedural document when submitted to the appropriate committee for consideration and approval.

Policy Title:	Stress Management Policy	Policy Author:	Dru Parnaby
		Yes/No?	You must provide evidence to support your response:
1.	Does the policy/guidance affect one group less or more favourably than another on the basis of the following: (* denotes protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010)	No	This guideline is equally applicable to all with no discrimination between age, gender, race or sexual orientation.
	• Race *	No	
	• Ethnic origins (including gypsies and travellers)	No	
	• Nationality	No	
	• Gender *	No	
	• Culture	No	
	• Religion or belief *	No	
	• Sexual orientation including lesbian, gay and bisexual people *	No	
	• Age *	No	
	• Disability – learning difficulties, physical disability, sensory impairment and mental health problems *	No	
	• Gender reassignment *	No	
	• Marriage and civil partnership *	No	
2.	Is there any evidence that some groups are affected differently?	No	
3.	If you have identified potential discrimination which can include associative discrimination i.e. direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic, are any exceptions valid, legal and/or justifiable?	No	
4(a).	Is the impact of the policy/guidance likely to be negative? <i>(If “yes”, please answer sections 4(b) to 4(d)).</i>	No	
4(b).	If so can the impact be avoided?	No	
4(c).	What alternatives are there to achieving the policy/guidance without the impact?	No	
4(d).	Can we reduce the impact by taking different action?	No	

Comments:	Action Plan due (or Not Applicable):
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Name and Designation of Person responsible for completion of this form: Dru Parnaby

Date: 02nd February 2011

Names & Designations of those involved in the impact assessment screening process: Health and Safety Manager

(If any reader of this procedural document identifies a potential discriminatory impact that has not been identified on this form, please refer to the Policy Author identified above, together with any suggestions for the actions required to avoid/reduce this impact.)