

TRUSTWIDE POLICY AND PROCEDURE DOCUMENT

Prevention and Management of Workplace Stressors

Policy Number:	HR13
Scope of this Document:	All Colleagues
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Approving Committee/s:	Executive Committee
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2020– Version 6

Striving for perfect care
and a just culture

TRUSTWIDE POLICY AND PROCEDURE DOCUMENT

Further information about this document:

Document name	Corporate Policy and Procedure on the Prevention and Management of Workplace Stressors HR13
Document summary	<p>The purpose of this policy is to:</p> <p>Provide information and guidance to Trust managers and colleagues on the management of workplace stressors.</p> <p>This policy applies to all Trust colleagues. The Trust has a duty to ensure that all workplace risks are managed appropriately, including the management of work related stress. This policy has been developed in line with guidance from the Health and Safety Executive.</p>
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To be read in conjunction with	<p>HSE Management Standards HR07- Supporting Attendance Policy HR27- Supporting Colleagues with Mental or Physical Disabilities Policy HR37 – Supporting Colleagues Policy HR09 -Support of people who experience abuse, discrimination and violence</p>
This document can be made available in a range of alternative formats including various languages, large print and braille etc	
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SUPPORTING STATEMENTS

this document should be read in conjunction with the following statements:

SAFEGUARDING IS EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS

All Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust employees have a statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and adults, including:

- being alert to the possibility of child / adult abuse and neglect through their observation of abuse, or by professional judgement made as a result of information gathered about the child / adult;
- knowing how to deal with a disclosure or allegation of child /adult abuse;
- undertaking training as appropriate for their role and keeping themselves updated;
- being aware of and following the local policies and procedures they need to follow if they have a child / adult concern;
- ensuring appropriate advice and support is accessed either from managers, *Safeguarding Ambassadors* or the trust's safeguarding team;
- participating in multi-agency working to safeguard the child or adult (if appropriate to your role);
- ensuring contemporaneous records are kept at all times and record keeping is in strict adherence to Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust policy and procedures and professional guidelines. Roles, responsibilities and accountabilities, will differ depending on the post you hold within the organisation;
- ensuring that all staff and their managers discuss and record any safeguarding issues that arise at each supervision session

EQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust recognises that some sections of society experience prejudice and discrimination. The Equality Act 2010 specifically recognises the *protected characteristics* of age, disability, sex, race, religion and belief (or lack thereof), sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity and marital and civil partnership status. The Equality Act also requires regard to socio-economic factors.

The trust is committed to promoting and advancing equality and removing and reducing discrimination and harassment and fostering good relations between people that hold a protected characteristic and those that do not both in the provision of services and in our role as a major employer. The trust believes that all people have the right to be treated with dignity and respect and is committed to the elimination of unfair and unlawful discriminatory practices.

Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust also is aware of its legal duties under the Human Rights Act 1998. Section 6 of the Human Rights Act requires all public authorities to uphold and promote Human Rights in everything they do. It is unlawful for a public authority to perform any act which contravenes the Human Rights Act.

Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust is committed to carrying out its functions and service delivery in line with a Human Rights based approach and the FREDA principles of **F**airness, **R**espect, **E**quality **D**ignity, and **A**utonomy

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1. PURPOSE AND RATIONALE

- 1.1 Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust is committed to ensuring the health, safety and welfare of all its colleagues and other persons who may be affected by the Trust's activities. It therefore places a high value on the physical and mental health and well-being of its colleagues and recognises its responsibility to manage work-related stressors in the same way as any other health and safety risk.
- 1.2 Colleagues are also encouraged to take personal responsibility for themselves at work and support others to do the same. By implementing this policy, it is expected that causes of work-related stress will be more easily identified, as will awareness of accessing appropriate support. This will also assist in the reduction of work-related sickness absence within the Trust.
- 1.3 Stress suffered by individuals is not always occupational in origin, however, the effects of personal stresses may impact significantly on an individual's ability to cope at work.
- 1.4 Working practices affect the level of perceived occupational stress and the key factor which the Trust may influence, in determining whether or not a person copes, is the support they receive whilst at work.

There is a duty of care owed by the Trust towards colleagues, not to subject them to unnecessary risk, which includes excessive stress created by work pressures.

- 1.5 It is reasonable for an employer to assume, unless otherwise aware, that all colleagues are capable of withstanding reasonable pressure from work. However, once the employee has been identified as suffering from work related stress, the Trust must take the necessary action to mitigate the problem, for that employee.

2. OUTCOME FOCUSED AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 The underlying principles are to provide information and guidance to all colleagues on the identification and management of work-related stress. It is also, to provide a framework for the elimination and/or reduction of workplace stressors.
- 2.2 The Trust recognises that a healthy workforce is an essential factor in providing effective services. To support this, the Trust will promote working practices which have a positive impact on colleagues e.g. Flexible Working, Leave for Family Reasons, Health & Wellbeing initiatives
- 2.3 In applying the policy and procedure, care must be taken to ensure that no employee is discriminated against directly or indirectly. The Equality Act 2010 makes it unlawful for an employer to discriminate against current or prospective colleagues who have, or who have had a disability. The definition under the Act is very broad and many health problems may fall into this category.
- 2.4 The Colleagues Support Service and Trade Union representatives are available to colleagues who wish to discuss issues in confidence. Managers should encourage colleagues to use these services. In addition members of colleagues can approach the Occupational Health Department directly to seek advice on work related health issues.
- 2.5 The Trust is responsible for ensuring that conditions at work exist to promote the good health and well-being of the workforce and to enable colleagues to provide regular attendance.

3. SCOPE

- 3.1 This policy applies to all colleagues employed by Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust, including those acting on Bank, Agency or Volunteers and those who hold Honorary Contracts.
- 3.2 Managers are responsible for implementation of this policy and the Trust is responsible for providing the necessary resources.

4. DEFINITIONS (Glossary of Terms)

- 4.1 The definition adopted by the Trust is the Health and Safety Executive`s (HSE) definition of stress:
- 4.2 *“The adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them.”*
- 4.3 This makes an important distinction between pressure, which can be a positive state if managed correctly, and stress, which can be detrimental to health. It also makes a distinction between the beneficial effects of reasonable pressure and challenge, which can be stimulating and motivating, and work related stress, which is the natural but distressing reaction to demands or ‘pressures’ that the individual perceives they cannot cope with at a given time. Stress, particularly if it is prolonged, represents a risk to both mental and physical health.
- 4.4 In order to assist employers to identify hazards and risks which may cause harm, the HSE has researched and developed a set of Management Standards for Work-Related Stress (MSWRS) which have identified six potential stressors, which if properly managed, can reduce work-related stress (**Appendix A**)

Glossary of Terms	Definition
Demands	Such as workload, work patterns and the work environment
Control	How much say someone has in the way they do their work
Support	The encouragement and resources provided by the organisation, line managers and colleagues
Relationships	Including promoting positive working to avoid conflict and dealing with unacceptable behaviour
Role	Such as role clarity and having conflicting roles
Change	How organisational change is managed and communicated

Further information regarding the HSE’s standards for stress can be accessed at

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/standards/step1/index-htm>

5. DUTIES

5.1 Board of Directors

Under this policy the Board of Directors accepts its obligation to:

- Develop a proactive approach aimed at eradicating unacceptable stress within the organization
- Duty of care to assess risk
- Duty of care to apply principles of prevention
- Duty of care to ensure employee`s capability
- Duty of care to provide training in occupational stress awareness and prevention

5.2 Chief Executive

As the employer, the Trust has overall responsibility for the health, safety and well-being of all patients, colleagues and other persons affected by the activities of the Trust. The Chief Executive is tasked with ensuring that effective measures are put into place to ensure this responsibility is met.

The Chief Executive will secure the effective operation and continued improvement of health and safety management by ensuring systems are in place for the control of policy formulation, development and monitoring of senior manager objectives, risk assessment and the setting and monitoring of performance standards.

The Chief Executive has delegated responsibility for ensuring compliance with this policy to the Executive Director of Workforce.

5.3 Executive Director of Workforce

The Executive Director of Workforce has a responsibility to ensure the following:

- policy development, communication and review;
- that information on colleagues health and well-being is communicated to colleagues through the Health & Wellbeing @ Work intranet and web page and also through `Joe`s Blog` - CEO Communications.
- provide data from workforce information reports on sickness absence and turnover, which will indicate where further action may be required;
- create suitable and sufficient support for those colleagues harmed by Work-related stress, through the provision of Colleagues Support services, where appropriate, and ensure that support is also available through the Occupational Health department;
- that policies, which relate to potentially stressful situations in an employee`s working life: e.g. Organisational Change contain information for colleagues about the support that is available
- that all Service Managers, Human Resources Business Partners, Human Resources Advisors and Colleagues are fully aware of the content of this policy and of their responsibilities.

5.4 Senior Managers

Senior Managers will be responsible for

- ensuring that this policy is implemented across their area and that operational managers are meeting their objectives in relation to the elimination and/or reduction of workplace stressors;
- that risk assessments are undertaken if applicable;
- support is given to the implementation of action plans that will assist in removing/reducing work related stress within their divisions.

- any additional risk controls which cannot be immediately implemented are included in the Division Risk Register.

5.5 Line Managers

Line Managers should:

- ensure that they fully understand their role and responsibilities in relation to this policy. If they require further clarity it is their responsibility to seek further help and support from the Health and Safety Advisor, Human Resources, Colleagues Support and Occupational Health.
- ensure good communication between management and colleagues, particularly where there are organisational and procedural changes;
- ensure that colleagues act and promote the values and behaviours in accordance with CARES and colleagues charter; and understand the impact of colleagues not adhering to the CARES values and colleagues charter.
- monitor individual workloads and have regular supervision/catch up/PDP meetings
- ensure colleagues are provided with meaningful development opportunities
- ensure that bullying and harassment are not tolerated within their areas
- be vigilant and offer additional support to colleagues who are experiencing stress outside of work e.g. bereavement
- ensure that colleagues are aware of the service provided by the Trusts Colleagues Support Department during the hours of 8am – 5pm with an out of hours on call service provided by Validium.
- Managers have a legal responsibility to complete a stress risk assessment with colleagues who report that they have symptoms of stress which they perceive are related to their work, using the appropriate documentation (**see Appendix C**). Action must be taken wherever possible to minimise these factors. (Managers should also be aware of home issues which may also impact on work). The Occupational Health Department can assist managers in this.
- ensure that accurate and comprehensive records are kept of all completed stress risk assessments and any subsequent action plans. Colleagues have the right to access their records in line with the Data Protection Act (1998).
- implement and review any recommendations that arise from the risk assessment process
- consider and/or provide opportunities, where appropriate, to offer reasonable adjustments in the workplace, in line with service needs.
- refer colleagues who are reporting symptoms of stress or who are absent with stress immediately to the Occupational Health Department, early intervention can assist in retaining the employee in the workplace or expediting a return to work. Whenever possible the manager should include the completed stress risk assessment.
- ensure that colleagues are clear about their role, responsibilities and expectations.
- Ensure colleagues are fully trained to discharge their duties.

- be aware of other policies that can support modifications/adjustments for example, flexible working policy.
- meet regularly with colleagues to discuss any problems or concerns.
- ensure that colleagues experiencing symptoms of stress are discouraged from working additional hours and monitor holidays to ensure that colleagues are taking their full entitlement.

5.6 Colleagues

Colleagues also have a critical role in the elimination and/or the reduction of workplace stressors. Colleagues therefore need to:

- Raise issues of concern with your Safety Representative, line manager or Occupational Health
- Have an awareness of the signs and symptoms of stress
- Be familiar with this policy and associated policies that help to support colleagues whilst at work
- Be open, honest and respectful of all colleagues (including managers)
- Report to your manager early, any work related/home related issues that are causing concern
- Report to your manager any early signs and/or symptoms of stress
- Report to your manager any early signs and/or symptoms of stress with colleagues
- If required actively participate in the risk assessment process clearly identifying any specific concerns in relation to the management standards (**see appendix A**)
- Attend Occupational Health if referred by their manager, early intervention is key in addressing workplace stressors
- Self refer to Occupational Health and Colleagues Support if unable to speak to your manager directly
- Ensure their own attitude or behaviour doesn't have a negative impact on others
- Request that a stress risk assessment is completed if they are experiencing symptoms of stress which they believe is related to work
- Actively seek solutions to assist in the reduction of any stressors at work for themselves and others.

5.7 Human Resources

- The Human Resources Department will support Mersey Care colleagues at all levels in the application of this policy and procedure.
- Give guidance to managers on the stress policy
- Monitor the effectiveness of measures to address stress by collating sickness absence statistics
- Advise managers and individuals on training requirements
- Provide continuing support to managers and individuals in a changing environment and encourage referral to Occupational Health and/or Colleagues Support

5.8 Occupational Health & Wellbeing

- will give advice to colleagues and managers on issues relating to health at work. This may include the recommendation of temporary adjustments to role to assist in retention at work and aid possible prevention of stress related absence, assessment of likely return to work dates, any reasonable adjustments that may be made to facilitate a return to work, including phased returns for a member of colleagues and whether or not a member of colleagues is able to return to carry out the duties under their contract of employment.
- may also identify if counselling or any other specialist services are required to facilitate the return to work of an individual employee.
- will provide a copy of the Occupational Health Report to the member of colleagues.

- have a key role in supporting the health and well-being of colleagues, providing impartial medical advice to enable managers to deal fairly and equitably with the supporting of attendance.
- Work with HR colleagues and managers to help monitor the effectiveness of measures to address stress and to identify trends in absence related to stress.

5.9 **Health & Safety Representatives**

- Must be meaningfully consulted on any changes to work practices or work design that could precipitate stress;
- Must be able to consult with colleague members on the issue of stress, including conducting any workplace surveys;
- Must be meaningfully involved in the stress risk assessment process;
- Should be allowed access to collective and anonymous data from Human Resources.
- Should participate in joint health & safety audits of the workplace to ensure that environmental stressors are properly controlled.
- Train and support managers in implementing stress risk assessments
- To inform the organisation of any changes and developments in the field of stress at work
- To work collaboratively with Staff Side and also Occupational Health and Staff Support Services (Health & Wellbeing at Work)

5.10 **Staff Support Service**

- will provide a confidential Counselling Service for colleagues regarding workplace stressor's.
- provide specialist advice and awareness training for colleagues on the signs and symptoms of stress and coping strategies.

5.11 **Head of Learning and Development**

Will facilitate training in occupational stress management for managers and stress awareness for all other colleagues

5.12 **Trade Unions** are responsible for:

- Encouraging members to speak up as soon as they feel that their working environment is beginning to affect their health;
- Using the facilities laid out in the Safe Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations to tackle work-related stress;
- Investigating potential hazards and complaints from their members, receiving information they need from employers to protect members' health and safety;
- Liaising with management to carry out risk assessment, including reviewing absence figures and linking these with other policies that may be available;
- Encouraging members to record and report issues so that managers can take forward

6. **PROCESS**

The next section of the policy describes where colleagues can go to for help and support if they are suffering from stress related symptoms

6.1 Process for enabling colleagues and managers to access information on the management of stress related symptoms

- All colleagues complete Health and Safety training through Corporate Induction and Mandatory training as related to their role.
- Further guidance from the Health and Safety Executive can be accessed via <http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/standards/step1/index.htm>
- Colleagues can discuss their wellbeing with their manager, a trade union representative, Human Resources, Colleagues Support or Occupational Health
- In addition colleagues can self refer to Colleagues Support service which provides counselling and other information about dealing with stress. Contact telephone number: 0151 330 8103.

6.2 Process for identifying Work-related Stressors

This process includes both individual and department level Risk Assessment

The risk assessment process should be followed to enable managers to identify work-related stressors in line with recommendations from the HSE. Managers may use a variety of sources of information to assess the health and well being of their team. The following information should be reviewed as a minimum of 6 months to identify potential stressors in the workplace:

- a) Sickness Absence rates (against KPI's)
- b) Turnover rates (against KPI's)
- c) Individual/team performance issues e.g. high rates of disciplinary & other processes, high rate of complaints/incidents
- d) Department Risk Assessment Tool (**Appendix B**)
- e) Individual Wellbeing Review Tool (**Appendix C**)

(Appendix D) contains further guidance for line managers on the identification and management of stress in the workplace.

6.3 Risk Assessment Process

Identifying Hazards

The HSE Management Standards for Stress (full definition are provided in **(Appendix A)**) identify the hazards within the working environment which may be causal factors in the onset of stress. The standards categorise potential sources of work-related stress into these six standards that all employers should strive to meet. These are:

- Demands
- Control
- Relationships
- Role
- Support
- Change

Non-compliance with any element of the standard(s) is considered to be an indicator of a stressor.

6.4 Wellbeing Review

A Wellbeing Review should be offered as a means of support and can be undertaken at 1-2-1 meetings, Supervision meetings, or as part of the return to work process following a period of sickness absence.

The aim of a well being review is to obtain an initial indication of whether stress is a concern (rather than problem) in the department and line managers should be:

- Discussing health and well being with colleagues at one to one and team meetings with particular focus on work related pressures and colleagues resilience levels to e.g. changes, service demands
- Ensuring colleagues sign posted to the most appropriate support in a timely way
- Seeking from their HR Business Partner/Advisor an analysis of sickness absence reports according to division or department and colleagues group to determine any stressors which are common to specific areas within the Trust.

6.5 Causes or Reasons for Stress

- High levels of sickness absence may indicate a potential problem area; checking the reasons for absence may help identify the cause;
- Poor performance of both individuals and teams can be an indicator of problems that may need further discussion;
- High colleagues turnover could be an indication of high stress levels and managers need to conduct exit interviews to understand why people are leaving;

Where an initial analysis of the data indicates that stress may be a concern, within the department, then a full risk assessment would need to be undertaken by the line manager. **(Appendix B)**. Where stress appears to be limited to an individual the line manger should complete **(Appendix C)**.

6.6 Evaluate the Risk, Recording Findings and Take Action

Following the line managers completion of the risk assessment, the line manager will discuss with the appropriate Manager and their HR Business Partner/ Advisor and agree action to be taken in relation to the severity of the potential risk. Next steps will be to:

- Using the completed Risk Assessment **(Appendix B)**, the line manager will lead the evaluation of risks within their department in order to have a clear understanding of the underlying causes and develop ideas for improvements (controls).
- Rate the risks using the risk register process outlined within the Trusts Risk Management policy.
- Involve relevant colleagues/ STAFF side representatives in discussions about levels of stress e.g. team meetings or via briefing meetings
- Should any department/area be identified as a cause for concern, the potential risk should be escalated to the Service Manager.
- Ensure that any colleagues raising concerns should have feedback as to action proposed following the risk assessment
- Findings and actions taken may be recorded in personal files
- Add risk to the local risk register for their area of responsibility and ensure an associated action plan is developed and implemented.

- Managers to forward risk assessment identifying stress as a risk to the appropriate Senior Manager as soon as completed

Extreme Risks

All risks identified with a score **15 (Extreme)** or above will be escalated to the Executive Director of Workforce and the Head of Quality & Risk who will decide if appropriate to include on the Corporate Risk Register.

6.7 Useful Contact Telephone Numbers

Name	Telephone Number
Occupational Health Department	0151 471 2451
Employee Assistance Programme (via Colleagues Support)	0151 330 8103
Union Office:	
Unison	0151 471-7847 0151 471 2609
RCN	0151 471 2247
POA	0151 471 2393
UNITE: Ian Raven	0151 295-3693
BAOT: Caroline Angell	0151 295-3900
CSP: Carole Griffith :	0151 244-3250
BDA: (Dental) Lisa Allen:	0151 295 3868
BDA: (Dietician) Joanne Hughes	0151 228 3846
COP: Ovie Azanuwha :	07753616889
GMB: Chris Chamley	
Spiritual Care	0151 471 2608
The Samaritans	08457 90 90 90
Relate	0300 100 1234
Alcoholics Anonymous	01904 08888

7. CONSULTATION

7.1 The policy has been developed by the HR Policy Group, which consists of representatives from:

- Occupational Health & Colleagues Support
- Recognised Trade Union Representatives
- Senior Managers
- HR Colleagues

7.2 The policy has also been subjected to consultation with the Trust's Health & Safety Committee.

8. TRAINING AND SUPPORT

- 8.1 Policy to be communicated to colleagues via the management structures within each Division
- 8.2 Training will be arranged, facilitated and delivered by the Education Lead, HR and supported by the Health & Wellbeing @ Work department.

9. MONITORING

9.1

10. Equality and Human Rights Analysis

System for the Monitoring of Compliance	
<p>Monitoring of compliance with this policy will be undertaken annually by the Executive Director of Workforce. Monitoring will include:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of the annual colleagues survey which includes questions about stress. • Review of the Trust's Colleagues Survey Action Plan • The Trust's Health & Safety Committee will review any policy issues • The Executive Director of Workforce will ensure that information on colleagues health and well-being is communicated to colleagues, through the Colleagues Engagement Group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data from workforce information reports on sickness absence, turnover and those who report stress using the protected characteristics, will be provided which will indicate where further action may be required • Appropriate risk assessments & the management of work related stress is undertaken

<p>Title: Corporate Policy Prevention and Management of Workplace Stressors</p>
<p>Area covered: Trust Wide Non Clinical Policy</p>

What are the intended outcomes of this work?

This is a review of the assessment that was undertaken in 2013.

The following were identified within the 2013 action plan.

1. Ensure that HR and colleagues support road shows are delivered for colleagues in the Trust (Trust wide).

Evidence:

- HR, OH and Colleagues Support have delivered information and questionnaires and stress dots about stress levels on regular colleagues events and workshops.
- NHS Colleagues Survey

2. Promoting how stress might be experienced for colleagues who are carers and from protected groups.

Evidence:

- Work is beginning to look at these issues.

Who will be affected?

Colleagues

Evidence**What evidence have you considered?**

The policy and the last equality impact assessment.

Disability (including learning disability): See cross cutting.

Sex: See cross cutting.

Race: See cross cutting.

Age: See cross cutting.

Gender reassignment (including transgender): See cross cutting.

Sexual orientation: See cross cutting.

Religion or belief: See cross cutting.

Pregnancy and maternity: See cross cutting.

Carers: See cross cutting.

Other identified groups: See cross cutting.

Cross Cutting

The protected characteristics and the Equality Act 2010 are highlighted within the policy.

Human Rights	Is there an impact? How this right could be protected?
Right to life (Article 2)	Human Rights Based approach supported
Right of freedom from inhuman and degrading treatment (Article 3)	Human Rights Based approach supported
Right to liberty (Article 5)	Human Rights Based approach supported
Right to a fair trial (Article 6)	Human Rights Based approach supported
Right to private and family life (Article 8)	Human Rights Based approach supported
Right of freedom of religion or belief (Article 9)	Human Rights Based approach supported
Right to freedom of expression Note: this does not include insulting language such as racism (Article 10)	Human Rights Based approach supported
Right freedom from discrimination (Article 14)	Human Rights Based approach supported

Engagement and Involvement

HR and Colleagues Support to continue stress awareness at HR colleagues events.

Summary of Analysis

Promote good relations between groups

N/A

What is the overall impact? Intended to be positive

--

Action planning for improvement
--

Work around Colleagues who experience stress and who are carers needs to be developed.
--

For the record: This review

TBC

Date assessment completed:

Name of responsible Director: Executive Director of Workforce.

Date assessment was signed: TBC
--

Action plan template

This part of the template is to help you develop your action plan. You might want to change the categories in the first column to reflect the actions needed for your policy.

Category	Actions	Target date	Person responsible and their area of responsibility
Monitoring	See 9.1		
Engagement	See 9.1		
Increasing accessibility	This policy and impact assessment to be displayed on the Trust website See 11		

11. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

11. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN	Issues identified / Action to be taken
<p>Co-ordination of implementation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will the implementation plan be co-ordinated and by whom? <p><i>Clear co-ordination is essential to monitor and sustain progress against the implementation plan and resolve any further issues that may arise.</i></p>	<p>The implementation plan will be co-ordinated by the Executive Director of Workforce.</p> <p>The plan will include distribution of the policy in accordance with the guidance in Policy and Procedure for the Development, Ratification, Distribution and Reviewing Policies and Procedures.</p>
<p>Engaging colleagues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is affected directly or indirectly by the policy? • Are the most influential colleagues involved in the implementation? <p><i>Engaging colleagues and developing strong working relationships will provide a solid foundation for changes to be made.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All colleagues employed by Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust.

<p>Involving service users and carers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there a need to provide information to service users and carers regarding this policy? • Are there service users, carers, representatives or local organisations who could contribute to the implementation? <p><i>Involving service users and carers will ensure that any actions taken are in the best interest of services users and carers and that they are better informed about their care.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no need to provide service users and carer`s with a copy of the procedure. However, it is available if requested. • Service users and carer`s will be involved in reviewing the procedure.
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<p>Communicating</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the key messages to communicate to the different stakeholders? • How will these messages be communicated? <p><i>Effective communication will ensure that all those affected by the policy are kept informed thus smoothing the way for any changes. Promoting achievements can also provide encouragement to those involved.</i></p>	<p>Key messages are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how all colleagues identify the causes of stress in the workplace and empower them to reduce and manage the issues • to provide guidance to ensure a consistent approach to the prevention and management of workplace stressors • details of the process to be followed • the responsibilities of managers in managing stress in the workplace <p>The responsibilities of colleagues to ensure they have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an awareness of the signs and symptoms of stress • be familiar with this policy and associated policies that help to support colleagues whilst at work • be open, honest and respectful of all colleagues (including managers) <p>The policy will be publicised via</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Trust website, the Colleagues Engagement Group, the Human Resources Department and Line Managers
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<p>Training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the training needs related to this policy? • Are people available with the skills to deliver the training? <p><i>All stakeholders need time to reflect on what the policy means to their current practice and key groups may need specific training to be able to deliver the policy.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training needs will be identified for managers and STAFF side representatives who will have a key role to play in implementing the procedure. • Will facilitate training in occupational stress management for managers and stress awareness for all other colleagues • The training will be delivered in-house by the H.R. Team in conjunction with members of STAFF side.
<p>Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have the financial impacts of any changes been established? • Is it possible to set up processes to re-invest any savings? • Are other resources required to enable the implementation of the policy e.g. increased colleaguesing, new documentation? <p><i>Identification of resource impacts is essential at the start of the process to ensure action can be taken to address issues which may arise at a later stage.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no additional financial implications arising from the implementation of this procedure.

<p>Securing and sustaining change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have the likely barriers to change and realistic ways to overcome them been identified? • Who needs to change and how do you plan to approach them? • Have arrangements been made with service managers to enable colleagues to attend briefing and training sessions? • Are arrangements in place to ensure the induction of new colleagues reflects the policy? <p><i>Initial barriers to implementation need to be addressed as well as those that may affect the on-going success of the policy</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration of potential barriers was discussed during the development of the procedure. • Managers and SIDE representatives will be released to attend training sessions.
<p>Evaluating</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the main changes in practice that should be seen from the policy? • How might these changes be evaluated? • How will lessons learnt from the implementation of this policy be fed back into the organisation? <p><i>Evaluating and demonstrating the benefits of new policy is essential to promote the achievements of those involved and justifying changes that have been made.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An understanding of how to manage workplace stress • The policy will provide consistency of approach across all services within the Trust
<p>Other considerations</p>	

ADDITIONAL APPENDICES

APPENDIX A - The HSE Management Standards for Work-related Stress

Reproduced from the HSE Website: www.hse.gov.uk/stress/standards

The HSE has issued a set of Management Standards for Stress that categorise potential sources of work-related stress into 6 standards that all employers should strive to meet. A description of the standards can be found below.

1. DEMANDS

Includes issues such as workload, work patterns and the working environment

The standard is that:

- Colleagues indicate that they are able to cope with the demands of their jobs
- Systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns

What should be happening /states to be achieved:

- The organisation provides colleagues 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 colleagues; and
- Employee's concerns about their work environment are addressed

2. CONTROL

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

The standard is that:

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

What should be happening/states to be achieved:

- Where possible, colleagues have control over their pace of work
- Colleagues are encouraged to use their skills and initiative to do their work
- Where possible, colleagues are encouraged to develop new skills to help them undertake new and challenging pieces of work.
- The organisation encourages colleagues to develop new skills
- Colleagues have a say over when breaks can be taken; and
- Colleagues are consulted over their work patterns

3. ROLE

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

The standard is that:

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

What should be happening/states to be achieved:

- The organisation ensures that, as far as possible, the different requirements it places on colleagues are compatible;
- The organisation provides information to enable colleagues to understand their role and responsibilities
- The organisation ensures that, as far as possible, the requirements it places upon colleagues are clear and;
- Systems are in place to enable colleagues to raise concerns about any uncertainties or conflicts they have in their role and responsibilities

4. CHANGE

How organisational change (large or small) is managed and communicated in the organisation

The standard is that:

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

What should be happening/states to be achieved:

- The organisation provides colleagues 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 colleagues to influence proposals
- Colleagues are aware of the probable impact of any changes to their jobs. If necessary, colleagues are given training to support any changes in their jobs.
- Colleagues are aware of timetables for changes and;
- Colleagues have access to relevant support during changes

5. SUPPORT

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

The standard is that:

- Colleagues indicate that they receive adequate information and support from their colleagues and superiors; and
- Systems are in place locally to respond to individual concerns

What should be happening/states to be achieved:

- The organisation has policies and procedures to adequately support colleagues
- Systems are in place to enable and encourage managers to support their colleagues
- Systems are in place to enable and encourage colleagues to support their colleagues
- Colleagues know what support is available and how and when to access it

6. RELATIONSHIPS

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

The standard is that:

- Colleagues indicate they are not subject to unacceptable behaviours, e.g. bullying at work; and
- Systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns

What should be happening/states to be achieved:

- The organisation promotes positive behaviours at work to avoid conflict and ensure fairness
- Colleagues 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 colleagues to report unacceptable behaviour

Reference <http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/>

APPENDIX B - Guidance Notes: for Managers and Colleagues Regarding Identification and Management of Work Related Stress.

Introduction

Research has shown that a positive, satisfied and psychologically healthy workforce will produce economic benefits to the organisation through improved attendance, motivation and commitment.

Risk assessment should establish the facts relating to foreseeability, severity, costs that could be incurred and practicability of prevention of stress. This would then allow managers to take action where there is a reasonably foreseeable risk of harm to health as a result of work related stress.

Action(s) that are necessary should include: -

- i. Job descriptions should accurately reflect inherent levels of pressure to enable the potential employee to consider carefully whether s/he can cope with the demands.
- ii. Consistently promote the values and behaviours expected of all Trust colleagues regardless of role, ensuring that CARES and the colleagues charter are adhered too at all times.
- iii. Allocate time to local induction and answer any questions.
- iv. The promoting of a healthy, happy workforce to improve the quality and effectiveness of patient care.
- v. Recognising the demands made of colleagues can be multiple varied and prolonged, particularly as the organisation is constantly subject to pressures, constraints and change.
- vi. All colleagues need to be aware of stress, particularly its harmful effects.
- vii. Recognising that colleagues's psychological fitness for work may be affected by job demands and also issues outside of work (e.g. financial problems, relationship breakdown, divorce, bereavement, carer`s responsibilities)
- viii. A collective pro-active approach to reducing occupational stress is essential.

The HSE identifies six contributing factors that increase the risk of colleagues developing work related stress: -

- i. Job demand – i.e. workload & exposure to physical & psychological hazards.
- ii. Control - how much influence an individual has over their own work
- iii. Relationships - including issues such as bullying & harassment.
- iv. Change – how it is managed and communicated.
- v. Role – the individual's understanding & expectations of their role.
- vi. Support: Colleagues indicate that they receive adequate information and support from their colleagues and superiors.

Stress Risk Assessment

Risk assessment is a management responsibility under the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999, consequently managers have responsibility to:

- i. Take stress seriously and be aware of the early signs in colleagues and team members.
- ii. Implement any identified risk reduction measures.
- iii. Encourage referral (and self-referral), to the Health & Well Being Department if colleagues are experiencing stress related problems.
- iv. Consider: - modifying hours, workload, duties and responsibilities for those vulnerable to, suffering from or being rehabilitated back to work having suffered from, an episode of stress, either work related or non-work related.
- v. Ensuring that communication is maintained between managers and teams, particularly during periods of organisational change, to promote open discussion and support.
- vi. Ensuring that colleagues are trained and developed to handle job responsibilities and transitions to new roles. Clinical supervision is extremely important and part of good practice.
- vii. Regularly reviewing objectives and priorities giving support and direction through the Personal Development Plan. Meet regularly as a team and ensure effective communication of Trust and Departmental issues. Provide recognition and encouragement of good performance, but don't let poor performance or problems build up.
- viii. Encourage effective time management by monitoring working hours, overtime, workloads and travel schedules of team members and ensuring appropriate use of holiday entitlement.
- ix. Actively support the Improving Working Lives Agenda.

Tackling Stress

Everyone suffers from pressure from daily living activities including work & there are measures we can all take to help ourselves and our colleagues reduce the effects of increasing pressure to prevent it becoming distress.

- i. Take responsibility for our own health and wellbeing.
- ii. Ensure we act and promote the values and behaviours of CARES and colleagues charter.
- iii. Be aware of signs of stress in ourselves and in colleagues and offer or seek support as appropriate, as soon as possible.
- iv. Take responsibility for seeking the training, advice or supervision necessary to enable effective, safe professional performance within our jobs.
- v. Be aware of and comply with Trust policies particularly regarding Health & Safety issues.

Signs of stress

The signs of stress are many and varied; the following are not exclusive lists but are examples of common reactions.

IN THE WORKPLACE

Managers and colleagues may notice:

Work Performance

- Inconsistent performance
- Uncharacteristic errors
- Indecisiveness
- Tiredness
- Making complaints
- Irritability
- Lapses in memory
- Reference to time pressure
- Resistance to change
- Lack of holiday planning/taking
- Longer or excessive hours

Behaviour

- Malicious gossip
- Criticism of others
- Vandalism
- Shouting
- Bullying/harassment

Withdrawal

- Arriving late
- Leaving early
- Extended lunches
- Absenteeism
- Increased sickness absence
- Passivity
- Lack of commitment

PERSONAL

Physical

You may experience:

Breathlessness
Feeling sick or dizzy
Headaches
Constant tiredness
Fainting
Restlessness
Chest pains
Sleep disturbance
Tendency to sweat
Constipation or diarrhoea
Food cravings
Cramps or muscle spasms
Pins & needles
Lack of appetite
High blood pressure
Loss of libido

Emotional

You may feel:

Aggressive
Depressed
Irritable
Neglected
Angry
Dread of the future
Dread of failure
Take no interest in life
Lack of self belief
Lack of interest in others
Loss of sense of humour
Have no one to confide in

Behavioural

You may find you:

Have difficulty making decisions
Are unable to show true feelings
Have problems concentrating
Avoid difficult situations

Deny there is a problem
Frequently cry

APPENDIX C - Departmental Risk Assessment Tool for Stress Management

Consequence (if in doubt grade up, not down)

Likelihood	Insignificant (1)	Minor (2)	Moderate (3)	Major (4)	Catastrophic (5)
Almost certain (5)	5	10	15	20	25
Likely (4)	4	8	12	16	20
Possible (3)	3	6	9	12	15
Unlikely (2)	2	4	6	8	10
Rare (1)	1	2	3	4	5

RISK

	Low (1-3)		Moderate (4-6)		High (8-12)		Extreme (15-25)
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Assessment for:			By:	Date:	Reviewed:			
Description of the Hazard			Existing Safe Systems/ Controls References		Existing <small>L x I = R</small>		Suggested Safe Systems Required and Actions	
Persons in danger			Potential Harm		Complete <small>L x I = R</small>			
Demands Control Support Relationships Role Change Other.....								

Risk Assessment Review	
<u>Line Managers Review of the Risk Assessment</u>	<u>Departmental Managers Review of the Risk Assessment</u>
Reviewed by:	Reviewed by:
Date:	Date:

RISK ASSESMENT ACTION PLAN

Action	Person Responsible	Completion date

APPENDIX D - INDIVIDUAL WELLBEING REVIEW TOOL

Cause of stress	Question	Is it a problem for you? Use this space to detail what the problem is. If it is not a problem, leave it blank.	What can be done about it? Can we make any adjustments?	Who needs to make sure this action happens?	When should we review whether the action agreed has worked
Demands	Do different people at work demand things from you which are hard to combine?				
	Do you have unachievable deadlines?				
	Do you have to work very intensively?				
	Do you have to neglect some tasks because you have too much to do?				
	Are you unable to take sufficient breaks?				
	Do you feel pressured to work long hours?				

Cause of stress	Question	Is it a problem for you? Use this space to detail what the problem is. If it is not a problem, leave it blank.	What can be done about it?	Who needs to make sure this action happens?	When should we review whether the action agreed has worked
Demands	Do you feel you have to work very fast?				
	Do you have unrealistic time pressures?				
Control	Can you decide when to take a break?				
	Do you feel you have a say in your work speed?				
	Do you feel you have a choice in deciding how you do your work?				
	Do you feel you have a choice in deciding what you do at work?				
	Do you feel you have some say over the way you do your work?				
	Do you feel your time can be flexible?				

Cause of stress	Question	Is it a problem for you? Use this space to detail what the problem is. If it is not a problem, leave it blank.	What can be done about it?	Who needs to make sure this action happens?	When should we review whether the action agreed has worked
Support (manager)	Does your manager give you enough supportive feedback on the work you do?				
	Do you feel you can rely on your manager to help you with a work problem?				
	Do you feel you can talk to your manager about something that upsets or annoys you at work?				
	Do you feel your manager supports you through any emotionally demanding work?				
	Do you feel your manager encourages you enough at work?				
Support (peers)	Do you feel your colleagues will help you if work becomes difficult?				
	Do you get the help and support you need from your colleagues?				
	Do you get the respect at work you deserve from your colleagues?				

Cause of stress	Question	Is it a problem for you? Use this space to detail what the problem is. If it is not a problem, leave it blank.	What can be done about it?	Who needs to make sure this action happens?	When should we review whether the action agreed has worked
	Are your colleagues willing to listen to your work-related problems?				
Relationships	Are you personally harassed, in the form of unkind words or behaviour?				
	Do you feel there is friction or anger between colleagues?				
	Are you bullied at work?				
	Are relationships strained at work?				
Role	Are you clear about what is expected of you at work?				
	Do you know how to go about getting your job done?				
	Are you clear about what your duties and responsibilities are?				
	Are you clear about the goals and objectives for the department?				

Cause of stress	Question	Is it a problem for you? Use this space to detail what the problem is. If it is not a problem, leave it blank.	What can be done about it?	Who needs to make sure this action happens?	When should we review whether the action agreed has worked
	Do you understand how your work fits into the overall aim of the organisation?				
Change	Do you have enough opportunities to question managers about change at work?				
	Do you feel consulted about change at work?				
	When changes are made at work, are you clear about how they would work out in practice?				
Other issues	Is there anything else that is a source of stress for you, at work or at home?				
	Do you feel you would benefit from access to confidential support to discuss these issues?				

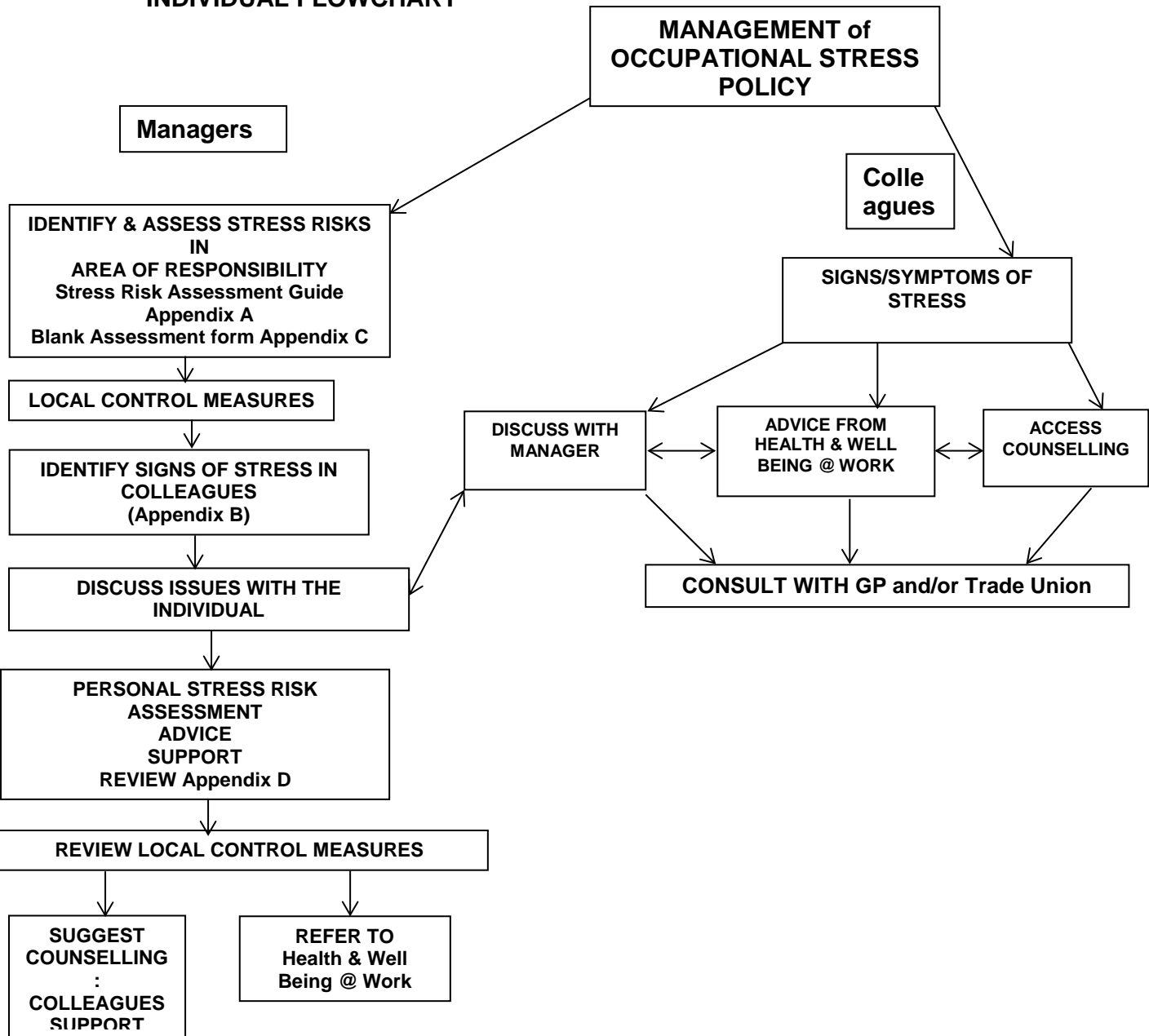
Appendix E - Linking problems to solutions

The table below gives practical guidance on how tackle any problems identified.

ISSUE IDENTIFIED	POTENTIAL PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS
<i>A. DEMANDS OF THE JOB</i>	COLLEAGUES INDICATE THEY CAN COPE WITH THE DEMANDS OF THEIR JOBS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Too little time for task ▪ Inadequate colleaguing 	<p>Prioritise tasks</p> <p>Cut out unnecessary work</p> <p>Try to give warning of urgent or important jobs to enable individuals to plan their work.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Boring or repetitive work ▪ Too little to do 	<p>Job enrichment/ job rotation</p> <p>Change the way jobs are done by moving people between jobs, giving individuals more responsibility, increasing the scope of the job, increasing the variety of tasks, giving a group of workers greater responsibility for effective performance of the group</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Inadequate resources for task 	<p>Analyse requirements for any project/task:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Equipment/ tools ▪ colleaguing ▪ funds
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Supporting colleagues 	<p>Make colleagues aware of referral pathways to support</p> <p>Provide adequate information and training for line managers</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Managing colleagues 	<p>Ensure all colleagues in management roles have adequate training and support from senior colleagues in managing complex colleagues matters.</p> <p>Ensure managers know about central services (Educational development, HR, finance, colleagues development, occupational health, counselling, safety) available to support their work.</p> <p>Have formal written procedures to help new managers.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Colleagues experiencing excessive workloads ▪ Colleagues working under excessive pressure 	<p>Review workload and demands regularly and as an integral part of the appraisal and performance management process.</p> <p>Support colleagues in planning their work. Try to establish what aspects of their job they find challenging. Redistribute work or set different work priorities if not coping.</p>

ISSUE IDENTIFIED	POTENTIAL PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS
ISSUE IDENTIFIED	POTENTIAL PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS
<p>The physical working environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ poor temperature control ▪ noise ▪ lack of facilities for rest/breaks ▪ poor lighting ▪ poor ventilation 	<p>Make sure workplace hazards are properly controlled. Undertake risk assessments of work space and significant tasks</p>
<p>The psychological working environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ threat of aggression or violence ▪ verbal abuse 	<p>Assess risks, implement controls including appropriate training</p>

INDIVIDUAL FLOWCHART



REFERENCES

- **The Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 – HSE**
- **Management of Health, Safety and Welfare Issues for NHS Colleagues 2005 – HSE**
- **The Equality Act 2010**
- **NHS Health & Wellbeing Review Report 2009**
- **The Working Time Regulations 2012 - HSE**