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Managing Stress and Improving Employee Health & Wellbeing Policy and Procedure

Ratification Process

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Cambridgeshire & Peterborough CCG Managing Stress and Improving Employee Health & Wellbeing Policy and Procedure

Document Control Sheet

Development and Consultation:	This policy was developed by the CCG HR team and consulted upon with senior managers and staff representatives. This policy has been approved through the Joint Consultation and Negotiating Partnership (JCNP).
Dissemination	All new and updated policies and procedures are notified to senior managers via email for dissemination to their staff. Notification is also sent to all staff via the bi-weekly staff newsletters.
Implementation	All staff and managers. Line managers have an additional duty to authorise in accordance with the policy.
Training	The CCG HR team will organise to inform managers of this policy.
Audit	The CCG HR Team will hold a database of all policies and a reminder will be sent when a policy is due for renewal.
Review	This policy will be reviewed by the CCG HR Team and JCNP every two years, unless an earlier review is required e.g. due to changes in legislation or in NHS direction.
Links with other documents	This policy should be read in conjunction with: CCG Equal Opportunities Policy CCG Flexible Working Policy and Procedure CCG Health & Safety Policy and Procedure CCG Dignity at Work Policy and Procedure CCG Lone Working Guidance

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Revisions

Version	Page/ Paragraph no.	Description of change	Date approved
1	2.3	Addition of section 'Potential Causes of workplace stress'	
1	5	Update to reflect the CCG's Committees/Groups with responsibility for stress management	
1	7	Addition of section 'Risk Assessment'	
1	Appendix 1	Addition of 'How to recognize stress in the workplace'	
1	Appendix 3	Revised stress assessment tool	
1	Appendix 4	Addition of 'External support organisations'	
1	Appendix 5	Addition of 'Summary of on line resources related to stress management'	
2	Document control sheet	Reference to Lone Working Guidance added	
2	6	The difference between pressure and stress is the moment the individual begins to feel out of control and unable to do what is being asked of them which leads to unwanted and damaging mental and physical symptoms. Added.	
2	12	References to CMET replaced by Clinical Executive Committee	
2	12 Bullet point 6.6 b	CEC is responsible for the quarterly reporting of all matters relating to the CCG workforce to the Remuneration and Terms of Service Committee to include nature and type of reported sickness absence and staff turnover and any correlation between the two. Added	
2	Various	References to Oakdale Counselling Service have been replaced by Insight Counselling Service.	
2	12 bullet	Exit Interviews have been added.	

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2	Appendices 4 & 5	Have been updated	

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1. Introduction

Stress is a natural reaction to excessive demand or pressure. Our bodies are well adapted to cope with short term stress, but if pressure is prolonged, too frequent or out of our control, the stress reactions in our body can become chronic and can lead to ill health. A controllable level of pressure is healthy and leads to improved motivation and job satisfaction. In contrast, harmful excessive stress can be damaging.

This policy statement sets out the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Clinical Commissioning Group's (CCG) aims and objectives in relation to stress at work, in accordance with its duties under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, and the Equality Act 2010.

The CCG as an employer places high value on maintaining a healthy and safe environment for all its employees, and seeks to minimise the causes of stress in the workplace through the risk assessment process. This policy is, therefore, primarily concerned with stress arising from the workplace. However it is recognised that stress may be influenced by a variety of factors and that no single cause may necessarily be identified. The CCG will make every effort to support staff in managing stress irrespective of its source.

The CCG is committed to ensuring the health, safety and welfare of all its employees. The CCG is also committed to enhancing the total wellbeing of its employees and recognises that an effective organisation comprises a workforce that both feels well and is well managed.

Stress in the workplace can be a major factor in reduced staff performance, commitment and motivation, increased sickness absence, loss of productivity and general absenteeism.

The CCG is committed to identifying sources of stress in the workplace and taking action to reduce harmful stress.

The difference between pressure and stress is the moment the individual begins to feel out of control and unable to do what is being asked of them which leads to unwanted and damaging mental and physical symptoms.

2. Definition of Stress

The Health & Safety Executive (HSE) defines stress as:

“The adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them”. (HSE 1999)

3. Aim

Through the implementation of this policy the CCG aims to:

- a. Assess the risk of stress-related ill-health arising from work activities (Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999);
- b. To take measures to control the risk of stress-related ill-health arising from work activities (Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974);
- c. Engender a climate which encourages personal responsibility in the recognition and management of stress-related ill-health and promote the management of stress as a way of maintaining a healthy workplace;
- d. Contribute to supporting staff in periods of change;
- e. Reduce the rate of sickness absence from stress related illness.

4. Potential Causes of Workplace Stress

The HSE identifies the following potential causes of workplace stress in accordance with the [HSE management standards](#):

- a. **Demands**
Examples are workload and exposure to physical hazards or difficult situations;
- b. **Control**
How much say the individual has in the way they carry out their work;
- c. **Support**
Support from peers, colleagues and managers;
- d. **Relationships**
Relationships with colleagues, and issues such as bullying and harassment;
- e. **Role**
Whether the individual understands their role in the organisation and if they have conflicting roles or role demands;
- f. **Change**
The way organisational change is managed and communicated in the organisation.

5. Approach

The CCG is committed to assessing the risk of and taking measures to control stress in the workplace. Staff involvement and consultation is embedded throughout policy and guidance development systems within the CCG.

The identification of unhealthy stressors and possible gaps in support structures follows a risk management process, with the aid of the stress management toolkit, which can be found in appendix 3 of this policy, and more general risk management processes.

The outcomes of the hazard identification processes will lead to stakeholder development of solutions, as with the general risk management process it will include monitoring and audit for effectiveness.

The following list, although not exhaustive, identifies the vast majority of measures that can be used, however other means may be used as they are identified:

- a. Organisational Risk Assessment**
Carried out by manager and used to identify groups of staff who may be affected, through the use of a toolkit, which can be found in appendix 3;
- b. Encouragement of managers to manage the causes and effects of stress, with support from their local Risk Assessors, Trade Union Safety Representatives;**
- c. Risk Support, Occupational Health and HR departments;**
- d. Personal Risk assessments carried out by affected employee and manager through the use of a toolkit, which can be found in appendix 3;**
- e. Encouragement of employees to recognise potential stressors and inform their managers of such;**
- f. Provision of free access to an independent, confidential counselling service;**
- g. Reference to Insight Counselling service monitoring HR monitor sickness absence reasons and statistics, via the workforce information monthly sickness reports;**
- h. Datix Incident Form reporting**
Used to highlight increases in accidents and near misses, and thus potential causes of stress in the workplace. These reports are monitored by Joint Consultation and Negotiating Partnership (JCNP).
- i. Sickness absence monitoring**
Using workforce information monthly reports, the CCG can look at records of absence

generally and stress-related absence in particular, check if incidences are increasing, and whether any patterns are emerging, and whether some groups of staff have more stress-related absence than others.

- j.** Return to work interviews
- k.** Incidences of bullying, harassment, grievances
HR monitor all such casework and are able to isolate incidence rates and patterns of incidences.
- l.** Exit interview process
HR monitor exit questionnaires and are able to identify reasons staff give for leaving and any other issues identified which may be stress-related.
- m.** Staff turnover statistics
HR regularly review figures on staff turnover and would be able to isolate whether turnover is high in some areas without obvious reason.
- n.** Appraisals and Key Skills Framework
- o.** Trade union feedback
Individual and organisational via the Joint Consultation & Negotiating Partnership.
- p.** Occupational Health referral and feedback.
- q.** Ensuring that support policies are in place and available to all staff to assist in the management of stress. For example, Health & Safety Policy and Procedure, Dignity at Work Policy and Procedure (which includes bullying and harassment), Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure, Management of Sickness Absence and Attendance at Work Policy and Procedure, Lone Worker Guidance, Bullying and Harassment Policy and Procedure.
- r.** Ensuring that working practices are regularly reviewed and monitored in accordance with the CCG's Flexible Working Policy and within the constraints of the service to ensure that staff are able to achieve a healthy balance between working and home life;
- s.** Feedback to the senior management team;
- t.** Ensuring that there is a clear and effective organisational structure to enable staff to know who they are accountable to and where they should go if they have a problem or need support.

6. Duties and Responsibilities

The following specific duties and responsibilities apply within the CCG.

6.1. Role of the Employee

Employees have a duty to take care of their own health and safety at work and need to have an awareness of their own feelings and reactions to stressful situations and their personal methods of coping. To discharge these responsibilities all employees:

- a. Should take all reasonable steps to ensure that they do not cause unnecessary stress to others;
- b. Are encouraged to have the confidence to raise issues of concern and express their views to colleagues and line managers with regard to potential stressors in the workplace;
- c. Have a duty to report any problems they may be facing, be it illness or injury, stress-related or otherwise, which they feel may be caused or exacerbated by work. If such issues are not highlighted to management, then managers will not be able to manage the issue.
- d. Should, when unable to cope with excessive stress, co-operate with any management referral to and support offered through the Occupational Health Service and/or self-refer to the counselling service, if appropriate;
- e. Should attend any training offered in the recognition and management of excessive stress.

6.2. Role of the Line Manager

Line managers at all levels have an important role to play in the management of stress at work, as well as their **individual responsibility as an employee** they have responsibility to staff in their charge, managers should therefore comply with the HSE management standards by;

- a. Ensure that staff are fully trained to discharge their duties, and ensure that staff attend mandatory training;
- b. Monitor workloads to ensure that employees are not overloaded, and monitor working hours to ensure that members of staff are not overworking. Managers should ensure that employees are taking their full holiday entitlement;
- c. Ensure that bullying and harassment is not tolerated within their team and deal with any conflict in a timely manner;

- d. Create a team culture where staff are supported to raise issues;
- e. Conduct and implement recommendations of risk assessments within their teams;
- f. Encourage wherever possible, open communication between managers and staff, particularly where there may be organisational and/or procedural changes;
- g. Provide appropriate referral to Occupational Health Services and involve HR for further support and advice if work related stress is identified as a problem or is a reason for sickness absence;
- h. Carry out regular supervision and annual appraisal with their staff;
- i. Managers will allow Safety Representatives to have paid time away from normal duties to attend appropriate training relating to workplace stress;
- j. Conduct annual appraisals and objective setting to ensure staff are aware of their duties in accordance with the CCG Appraisal Policy and Procedure;
- k. Offer additional support to any staff that are experiencing stress outside of work (e.g. bereavement, divorce).

6.3. Role of the Occupational Health Service

- a. To provide support to staff and advice to managers on the management of ill-health, including instances where absence may be due to a stress-related reason, and where this may have resulted in absence or poor performance;
- b. To provide appropriate advice on reasonable adjustments and redeployment to facilitate an employee to return to the workplace in order to avoid a recurrence of the problem;
- c. To signpost employees to the Insight counselling service as required;
- d. Participate where appropriate in training activities on the issue of stress management, offered as part of a rolling plan of HR training on the subject of management of attendance.

6.4. Role of Human Resources

- a. Provide continuing support to managers and employees in the management of ill-health cases and referrals to the Occupational Health service;
- b. To give guidance and support on the CCG Improving Employee Health & Wellbeing Policy and Procedure and other related policies;
- c. Assist in monitoring the effectiveness of measures to address stress by collating sickness absence statistics.

6.5. Role of Trade Union Safety Representatives

The Safety Committees & Safety Representatives Regulations (SRSCR) 1977 affords Trade Union Safety Reps the right to consultation on matters of health & safety, to this effect:

- a. Safety Representatives must be consulted on any changes to work practices or work design that could precipitate stress;
- b. Safety representatives must be able to consult with members on the issue of stress including conducting any workplace surveys.
- c. Safety Representatives should be involved in risk assessments, for the purpose of a personal stress risk assessment, only if the employee effected has given their consent for this;
- d. Safety Representatives should be involved in joint inspections of the workplace, along with the responsible manager and local risk assessor, to ensure that environmental stressors are properly controlled.

6.6. Role of Committees/ Groups with Responsibility for Stress Management

- a. Clinical Executive Committee (CEC)
CEC has overall responsibility for ensuring the CCG delivers high quality services that are efficient and effective. The Committee will monitor implementation of the policy across the organisation. It will oversee the monitoring of the efficacy of the policy and other measures to reduce stress and promote workplace health and safety.
- b. CEC is responsible for the quarterly reporting of all matters relating to the CCG workforce to the Remuneration and Terms of Service Committee to include nature and type of reported sickness absence and staff turnover and any correlation between the two.
- c. Joint Consultative & Negotiation Panel (JCNP)
The policy will be reviewed at the JCNP and any associated relevant reports will be

shared at this group.

7. Identification of Work-Related Stressors

The following information may be reviewed as appropriate to identify potential stressors in the workplace:

- a. Staff Surveys
- b. Sickness absence reports and reasons for absence
- c. Grievances
- d. 360 feedback
- e. Work related stress risk assessment tool
- f. Team meetings
- g. Exit interviews

8. Well-being at Work

The management of stress at work forms part of the organisation's overall management of well-being at work. The CCG is taking positive steps to manage stress and increase well-being at work. The specific details for the management of the different aspects of well-being at work can be found in the relevant supporting HR policies.

9. Risk Assessment

Where an individual is showing signs of stress, an individual stress risk assessment should be carried out for them, using the form in appendix 3. Managers should allow any work related stressors to be managed effectively and reduced; assistance and support should also be given to allow the individual to deal with any external sources of stress, whether these are short or longer term. Regular review meetings between the manager and the individual must be held to ensure appropriate support is being provided and agreed actions being taken. The regularity of the meetings should be agreed between the manager and the individual as different situations will require a greater regularity of meetings than others. Appendix 2, 'How to help reduce stress at work' also provides further self-help methods for coping with and reducing stress at work.

10. Management of Stress related Absence

When managing any absence which is stress-related, managers must be consistent and follow the agreed absence management procedure as clearly laid out in the Managing Sickness Absence and Attendance at Work Policy and Procedure. In particular, managers should be aware that increased or more frequent absence may indicate an underlying stress problem. Managers should use the opportunity of return to work interviews to discuss any stress-related problems when appropriate. Where an absence is stress-related, or thought likely to be, an early referral to Occupational Health is essential, in order to provide

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as much support to the employee as possible. Managers should seek advice from the OD & HR team or Occupational Health if in any doubt.

11. References and Acknowledgements

- a. The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (HASWA).
- b. Equality Act 2010.
- c. Human Rights Act 1998 (HRA).
- d. Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1999).

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Appendix 1 - How to Recognise Stress in the Workplace

Whilst many of the symptoms listed below can have unrelated causes, in the context of stress in the workplace they can all be regarded as indicators:

1. Emotional Symptoms

- a. Feeling out of control;
- b. Sense of failure, guilt, blame or self doubt;
- c. Growing feeling of being overwhelmed;
- d. Apathy, frustration.

2. Physical Symptoms

- a. Tiredness/exhaustion;
- b. Nausea, indigestion or heartburn;
- c. Migraine, insomnia;
- d. Muscle constriction causing aches and pains;
- e. Constipation or diarrhoea or frequent urination;
- f. Loss of appetite;
- g. Rashes, irritated skin;
- h. Hot and cold spells (blushing/sweating);
- i. Poor sleeping patterns;
- j. High levels of sickness absence.

3. Behavioural Symptoms

- a. Nervous habits e.g. nail biting, clumsiness;
- b. Unusual changes in behaviour;
- c. Poor time keeping;
- d. Panic, leading to 'freezing up' or inability to do a simple task;
- e. Avoidance rituals – sleep, frequent visits to the toilet;
- f. Unexplained mood changes;
- g. Making more mistakes than usual;
- h. Excessive eating, smoking, abuse of alcohol or other substances;
- i. Frequent forgetfulness, loss of memory;
- j. Loss of sense of humour;
- k. Low productivity.

4. Organisational Symptoms

- a. Increased absenteeism;
- b. Poor relationships in work;
- c. Reduced output;
- d. Loss of job satisfaction;

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- e. Increased accident rate;
- f. High employee turnover.

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Appendix 2 - How to Help Reduce Stress at Work

Work can be a stressful place. Some stress is good and everyone needs a certain amount in order to carry out their everyday duties. Too much is not good and it can cause problems for those experiencing excessive amounts. Fortunately there are specific things everyone can do that will help reduce stress at work and better cope with it.

1. Improve your time management and organisational skills

Of the many things you can do in this area, the best ones include getting a to do list that works, learning to say “no”, asking for help when you need it, and stop setting unrealistic goals for yourself.

2. Take more breaks from your work.

Even a five-minute break will help. Get away from your desk. Go for a walk outside. Ensure you take a lunch break each day. Ensure you take regular annual leave and that you take all the annual leave owing to you each year.

3. Take more exercise

Taking more exercise in general will help you reduce your overall stress levels and that will make it easier to reduce your stress level at work.

4. Learn to listen better

Instead of getting upset when others disagree with you, listen actively and find the areas of agreement. Be assertive and stand up for yourself, but don't be rigid.

5. Get more sleep

This is another of the things you can do to reduce your overall stress levels that will have benefits in the workplace as well. In addition to reducing your stress, it will increase your energy level and your ability to concentrate.

6. Find a mentor.

The CCG has several trained mentors. Details can be obtained through the OD & HR Team.

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Appendix 3 – Stress Toolkit

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.

1.1. The standard is that:

- a. Employees indicate that they are able to cope with the demands of their jobs; and
- b. Systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns.

1.2. What should be happening /states to be achieved:

- a. The organisation provides employees with adequate and achievable demands in relation to the agreed hours of work;
- b. People's skills and abilities are matched to the job demands;
- c. Jobs are designed to be within the capabilities of employees; and
- d. Employee's concerns about their work environment are addressed.

2. Control

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

2.1. The standard is that:

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

2.2. What should be happening/states to be achieved:

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

3. Role

Do staff understand their role within the organisation and whether the organisation ensures that the person does not have conflicting roles.

3.1. The standard is that:

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

3.2. What should be happening/states to be achieved:

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

4. Change

The way organisational change (large or small) is managed and communicated in the organisation.

4.1. The standard is that:

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

4.2. What should be happening/states to be achieved:

- a. The organisation provides employees with timely information to enable them to understand the reasons for proposed changes;

- b. The organisation ensures adequate employee consultation on changes and provides opportunities for employees to influence proposals;
- c. 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;
- d. Employees are aware of timetables for changes and;
- e. Employees have access to relevant support during changes.

5. Support

This includes the encouragement, sponsorship and resources provided by the organisation, line management and colleagues.

5.1. The standard is that:

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

5.2. What should be happening/states to be achieved:

- a. The organisation has policies and procedures to adequately support employees;
- b. Systems are in place to enable and encourage managers to support their staff;
- c. Systems are in place to enable and encourage employees to support their colleagues;
- d. Employees 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 behavior.

6.1. The standard is that:

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

6.2. What should be happening/states to be achieved:

- a. The organisation promotes positive behaviours at work to avoid conflict and ensure fairness;
- b. Employees share information relevant to their work;
- c. The organisation has agreed policies and procedures to prevent or resolve unacceptable behavior;
- d. Systems are in place to enable and encourage managers to deal with unacceptable behavior;

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- e. Systems are in place to enable and encourage employees to report unacceptable behavior.

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Appendix 3 – Stress Toolkit: Individual Work-related Stress Risk Assessment Tool

Employee Name and Job Title	
Manager Name and Job Title	
Date of Assessment	

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, please leave 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 agreed action has worked?
Demand	Do different people at work demand things from you which are hard to combine?				
	Do you have unachievable deadlines?				

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	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?				
	Do you feel you have to work very fast?				
	Do you have unrealistic time pressures?				

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, please leave 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 agreed action has worked?
Control	Can you decide when to take a break?				
	Do you feel you have a say				

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	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, please leave 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 agreed action 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				

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	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?				

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, please leave 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 agreed action has worked?
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?				

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	Do you get the respect at work you deserve from your colleagues?				
	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?				
Relationships	Are you bullied at work?				
	Are relationships strained at work?				

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, please	What can be done about it? Can we make any adjustments?	Who needs to make sure this action	When should we review whether the
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		leave blank.		happens?	agreed action has worked?
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?				
Change	Do you understand how your work fits into the overall aim of the organisation?				

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, please leave blank.	What can be done about it? Can we make any adjustments?	Who needs to make sure this action happens?
Change	Do you have enough opportunities to question managers about change at			

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	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?			

Employee signature		Date	
Manager Signature		Date	

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Appendix 3 – Stress Toolkit: Identification and Management of Stress

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

Issue Identified	Potential Practical Solutions
Demands of the job	Employees indicate they can cope with the demands of their jobs
Too little time for task Inadequate staffing	Prioritise tasks Cut out unnecessary work Try to give warning of urgent or important jobs to enable individuals to plan their work.
Boring or repetitive work Too little to do	Job enrichment/ job rotation 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
Inadequate resources for tasks	Analyse requirements for any project/task, including: equipment and tools staffing funds
Supporting staff	Make staff aware of referral pathways to support Provide adequate information and training for line managers.
Managing Staff	Ensure all staff in management roles have adequate training and support from senior colleagues in managing complex staff matters. Ensure managers know about central services (Educational development, HR, finance, staff development, occupational health, counselling, safety) available to support their work. Have formal written procedures to help new managers.
Employees experiencing	Review workload and demands regularly and as an integral part

excessive workloads Employees working under excessive pressure	of the appraisal and performance management process. Support staff 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.
Issue identified	Potential Practical Solutions
Demands of the job	Employees indicate they can cope with the demands of their jobs
The physical working environment: poor temperature control noise lack of facilities for rest/ breaks poor lighting poor ventilation	Make sure workplace hazards are properly controlled. Undertake risk assessments of work space and significant tasks
The psychological working environment: Threat of aggression or violence verbal abuse	Assess risks, implement controls including appropriate training
Control	Employees indicate they have no say in how they do their work
Not being able to balance the demands of work and life outside work	Encourage a healthy work-life balance. Ensure staff take their allocated holiday allowance and distribute it sensibly across the year.
Rigid work patterns	Try to provide some scope for varying working conditions and

Fixed deadlines occurring in different parts of the year shift work lone work Lack of control over work	flexible work schedules (e.g. flexible working hours, working from home), and the scope for people to influence the way their jobs are done. This will increase their interest and sense of ownership. Avoiding scheduling extra projects at busy times of the year.
Conflicting work demands e.g. research and teaching	Set realistic deadlines for tasks. Take into account that everyone is different, and try to allocate work so that everyone is working in the way that helps them work best and using their talents. Be clear about tasks required
Issue identified	Potential Practical Solutions
Control	Employees indicate they have no say in how they do their work
Too much training for the job Too little training for the job Skills not recognized Promotion prospects not recognised Over promotion	Make sure individuals are matched to jobs. Analyse skills alongside the task. Provide training for those who need more e.g. when introducing new technology Increase the scope of jobs for those who are over-trained. Consider mentoring to help less experience staff or those underperforming
Other difficulties faced by area/ team Details	Discuss stress with the team to create a better understanding of the difficulties faced and the possible solutions available. This type of approach can lead to providing a longer-term solution and one that is shared and supported by the whole team.
Role	Employees indicate they understand their role and responsibilities

Lack of clarity about job role	<p>Make sure everyone has a clearly defined job description/ role profile.</p> <p>Revise this when circumstances change e.g. promotion or reorganisation of team</p>
Confusion about how everyone fits in ie ambiguity about others' roles	<p>Make sure that everyone has clearly defined objectives and responsibilities linked to business objectives, and training on how everyone fits in. Visual diagrams can help people's understanding of this.</p>
Conflicting demands	<p>If reporting to more than one person ensure there are no conflicting demands on the individual</p> <p>Ensure all staff have an annual appraisal with clearly defined objectives with realistic timelines.</p> <p>Ensure staff can raise any concerns about conflicting demands on their time.</p>
Issue identified	Potential Practical Solutions
Change	<p>Employees indicate that the organisation engages frequently with them when undergoing organisational change</p>
<p>Poor communication - uncertainty about what is happening</p> <p>Fears about job security</p> <p>Not enough time allowed to implement change</p> <p>Inexperience/ fear of new technology</p> <p>Lacks of skills for new tasks</p> <p>Not enough resource allocated for change process</p>	<p>Consult with staff likely to be involved in a change management programme – if staff feel included and acknowledged in the process they are more likely to cooperate with a change.</p> <p>Provide timely information so they have time to understand the reasons for change</p> <p>Provide effective support for staff throughout the process.</p> <p>Getting together as a team can help people feel less isolated with their concerns</p> <p>Ensure effective two way communication throughout process – knowing exactly what is going to happen when can help people feel less anxious about a change. Consider developing a timetable of the change process</p> <p>Allow adequate time for the process – time planning for the change and for people to talk through their concerns about the</p>

Dysfunctional teams	<p>change will pay off at a later stage</p> <p>Allocate adequate resources – this includes financial resources, space, time and the emotional energy needed to effect the change</p> <p>Consider training needs – do people have the tools to effect change? Does the skill mix of the team need to be reviewed?</p> <p>Consider environmental factors – a poor work environment can be very stressful.</p> <p>Consider changes in group dynamics – an apparently small change e.g. a different positioning of desks can have a major impact on communication and work relationships</p>
Issue identified	Potential Practical
Relationships	Employees indicate they are subjected to unacceptable behaviours
<p>Poor relationships with others</p> <p>Patient\staff complaints</p>	<p>Provide training in interpersonal skills. Engage in team-building activities, both informal through social events and formal such as an away day.</p> <p>Provide clear information for staff. Consider staff support needs. The learning and development department provides information and training for staff in people management and patient experience.</p>
Combative or confrontational communication styles	<p>Encourage constructive and positive communications between staff. Managers should discuss and address combative and/or confrontational communication styles with members of staff who display these behaviours.</p> <p>Consider training in managing conflict</p>
Bullying, racial or sexual harassment	<p>Set up effective systems to prevent bullying and harassment. Ensure staff members are aware of Trust's policies on equal opportunities and harassment and know how to get support. Practice by example and make it clear that these behaviours are not acceptable in your team.</p>
Support & Organisational Culture	Employees indicate they receive adequate support and information from colleagues and managers

<p>Lack of support from managers and co-workers.</p>	<p>Support and encourage staff, even when things go wrong. Consider having regular one to one meetings with staff and give regular constructive feedback on performance. Consider introducing a mentoring scheme</p>
<p>Employees unaware of support available to them</p> <p>Failure to celebrate success</p> <p>Lack of communication and consultation</p> <p>A culture that considers stress a sign of weakness</p> <p>An expectation that people will regularly work excessively long hours or take work home with them</p>	<p>Ensure staff members are aware of support services available to them -the Staff Counsellor, Occupational Health Service, Chaplaincy, HR and Trade Unions.</p> <p>Ensure staff members know how to access resources needed to undertake task.</p> <p>Acknowledge and reward successes in your staff.</p> <p>Introduce clear objectives, good communication and close employee involvement, particularly during periods of change. Hold regular team meetings.</p> <p>Be approachable – create an atmosphere where people feel it is OK to talk to you about any problems they are having. Have an open door policy Be understanding towards people who admit to being under too much pressure.</p> <p>Avoid encouraging people to work excessively long hours. Lead by example.</p> <p>Schedule work in a way that allows recovery time after unavoidable busy periods.</p>

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Appendix 4 - External support organisations

1. Alcohol

- a. Alcoholics Anonymous: 0800 9177 650 <http://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk/>
- b. Drink Aware: <https://www.drinkaware.co.uk/>

2. Bereavement

- a. Cot Death Helpline: <http://www.childdeathhelpline.org.uk> 0800 282 986
- b. Stillbirth and Neonatal Death Society (SANDS): 0207 436 5881
<https://www.sands.org.uk/>
- c. Cruse – Bereavement Care <http://www.cruse.org.uk/> 0808 808 1677
Cambridge with Fenland and Uttlesford Branch: 01223 633536
Huntingdonshire Branch 01480 414511
Peterborough Branch: 01733 348439

3. Debt

- a. National Debtline: 0808 808 4000 <http://www.nationaldebtline.co.uk/>

4. Divorced and Separated

- a. National Family Mediation: <http://www.nfm.org.uk/>

5. Domestic Violence

- a. Women's Aid National Helpline: 0808 2000 247 <http://www.womensaid.org.uk/>
- b. Men's Advice Line: 0808 801 0327
http://mensadvice.org.uk/mens_advice.php

6. Drugs

- a. Release: 020 7324 2989 <http://www.release.org.uk/>
- b. Frank: 0300 123 6600 <http://www.talktofrank.com/>
- c. Narcotics Anonymous: 0300 999 1212 <http://www.ukna.org/>

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7. Other useful contacts

- a. NHS Choices: <http://www.nhs.uk/Pages/HomePage.aspx>
- b. British Heart Foundation: 0300 330 3311 (Mon-Fri 9-5pm)
<https://www.bhf.org.uk/>
- c. Samaritans: 116 123 (24hrs per day) <http://www.samaritans.org/>
- d. Citizens Advice Bureau: <http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/>
- e. Rethink: 0300 5000 927 (Mon-Fri 9.30am - 4pm) <http://www.rethink.org/>
- f. MIND: Mind infoline 0300 123 3393 <http://www.mind.org.uk/>
- g. Gamblers Anonymous <http://www.gamblersanonymous.org.uk/>

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Appendix 5 - Summary of on-line resources related to stress management

Name	Overview	Web link
HSE Stress web site	Front page of HSE stress website HSE What are the Management Standards for work related stress? (web page)	http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/index.htm http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/standards/index.htm
HSE How to tackle work-related stress	A guide for employers on making the Management Standards work (INDG430)	http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg430.pdf
HSE "Managing the causes of work-related stress – A step-by-step approach using the Management Standards" HSG218 2ND Edition 2007	The main guidance document from HSE regarding occupational work related stress including suggestions on how to address the six work place stressors as detailed in the HSE Management Standards	http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/hsg218.pdf
HSE The Management Standards; Indicator tool and analysis spreadsheet	The Indicator analysis tool to determine the work place stressors within a team (and individual) – (Download Excel file HSE Analysis Tool and enable macros) Indicator Tool question sheet in English The Indicator tool question sheet in 18 different languages	http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/standards/downloads.htm http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/standards/pdfs/indicatortool.pdf http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/standards/languages/index.htm

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Name	Overview	Web link
<p>HSE Stress Management Competency Indicator Tool</p>	<p>This tool is to help managers reflect on their behaviour and management style, and allows managers to assess whether they have behaviours identified as effective for preventing and reducing stress at work. (web page) HSE Line Manager Competency Indicator Tool (Interactive spread sheet) <i>(save to your computer & enable macros)</i> HSE Line Manager Competency Indicator Tool (Paper version) HSE, IIP & CIPD Line management behaviour and stress at work Updated guidance for line managers</p> <p>Preventing stress: prompting positive manager behaviour – online tools for managers</p>	<p>http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/mcit.htm</p> <p>http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/mcit.xls</p> <p>http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/mcit.pdf</p> <p>http://www.cipd.co.uk/NR/rdonlyres/898B09D3-6F8A-49AF-BD11-66EC76B086D4/0/stress_at_work_updated_guidance_for_line_managers.pdf</p> <p>http://preventingstress.cipd.co.uk/content/OnlineTools.aspx</p>
<p>HSE Stress web site - individuals</p>	<p>Specific information relating to stress in individuals</p> <p>Information related to mental health, anxiety and depression</p>	<p>http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/dealingwith.htm</p> <p>http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/mystress.htm</p> <p>http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/furtheradvice/stressandmentalhealth.htm</p>

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Name	Overview	Web link
HSE – suggested actions related to the work place stressors	Suggested actions related to the work place stressors	http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/standards/pdfs/suggestions.pdf?ebul=stress&cr=01/sep11
HSE – Focus Groups	Suggested advice on how to organise and run focus groups	http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/standards/pdfs/focusgroups.pdf
HSE Is my risk assessment approach suitable and sufficient?	Equivalence checklist from HSE	http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/pdfs/checklist.pdf
HSE Risk assessment website	Details of how to undertake a risk assessment HSE Five Steps to risk assessment	http://www.hse.gov.uk/risk/fivesteps.htm http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg163.pdf
NHS Choices	A workplace stress self-assessment tool that links responses to questions to further information on areas identified as stressors Five tools linked to mental health	http://www.nhs.uk/Tools/Pages/Workplacestress.aspx?Tag http://www.nhs.uk/Tools/Pages/Toolslibrary.aspx?Tag=Mental+health
Other resources relating to stress, anxiety and depression	Shift (DoH) Line Managers' Resource A practical guide to managing and supporting people with mental health problems in the workplace CIPD Work-related stress: what the law says CIPD Stress (website) ACAS Stress at Work	http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/pdfs/manage-mental-health.pdf http://www.cipd.co.uk/NR/rdonlyres/1B504994-F40F-4801-B93D-8FA4DE73E1FD/0/5233Stress_and_Law_guide.pdf http://www.cipd.co.uk/hr-resources/employment-law-faqs/stress.aspx http://www.acas.org.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=1072&p=0

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Name	Overview	Web link
	MIND - This page is aimed at anyone who experiences anxiety. MIND - Symptoms and treatments of depression Depression Alliance – Home page	http://www.mind.org.uk/help/diagnoses_and_conditions/anxiety http://www.mind.org.uk/help/diagnoses_and_conditions/depression http://www.depressionalliance.org/
ISMA (International Stress Management Association)	Additional resources regarding stress including the Top 10 stress busting tips	http://www.isma.org.uk
SERCO ASP Wellbeing resources	Web page of information related to Well being	http://www.connect.asp.nhs.uk/oh/SitePages/Well%20Being.aspx
SERCO ASP Occupational Health Home page	Web page of information related to occupational health	http://www.connect.asp.nhs.uk/oh/SitePages/Home.aspx
Insight Counselling service	Details of service provided to all staff by Insight	http://www.connect.asp.nhs.uk/oh/SitePages/Staff%20Counselling.aspx
NHS Employers stress management information	An overview of stress management in the NHS	http://www.nhsemployers.org/Aboutus/Publications/Documents/Stress%20management.pdf