

Stress and Mental Wellbeing Policy

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CHANGE RECORD			
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21/01/20	A Shorts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Web links updated • Additional health information in Appendix 1 • Additional information on HSE return to work checklist in Appendix 3 • Additional information in resource list re Staff Care and Wellbeing service 	
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1. **INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 NHS Lanarkshire is committed to the health, safety and wellbeing of all employees by placing value on both physical and mental health. Mental wellbeing can take many different forms, but a useful description is feeling good and functioning well. Good mental wellbeing does not mean that you never experience feelings or situations that you find difficult. But it does mean that you feel you have the resilience to cope when times are tougher than usual.

Definition (NHS Choices): <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/improve-mental-wellbeing/>

- 1.2 We acknowledge that stress can have many causes, including both work and non-work factors. We recognise workplace stress is a health and safety issue. We acknowledge it is important to identify the signs of stress and put in place measures to prevent and reduce the causes and risks associated with workplace stress.

The Health & Safety Executive (HSE) describes stress as “the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demands placed on them”. Stress is not an illness, however, if stress becomes too excessive and prolonged, mental and physical illness may develop.

Stress related sickness absence has a significant impact upon both the individual and the organisation as the employee can be absent for lengthy periods due to the nature of the issues involved. Whilst debilitating for the employee it also can result in the perception of increased workload within the workplace.

- 1.3 NHS Lanarkshire is committed to a plan of action that includes:
- Taking action to help staff stay at work or manage the return to work of those who have mental or physical health problems associated with stress to make sure their skills are not lost
 - Increasing awareness of the steps to take to improve and maintain good health
 - Provide information on the sources of stress in the organisation
 - Taking action to tackle stress and helping staff to manage stress
 - Managing health problems associated with stress by:

Recognizing stress early;
Managing stress appropriately;
Providing access to support including counselling;
Providing advice and sources of help.

2. **AIM, PURPOSE AND OUTCOME**

The aim of this policy is to promote mental wellbeing while recognising that the organisation will:

- Encourage staff well-being within NHS Lanarkshire and discourage the stigma attached to stress;
- Raise awareness of ill health associated with stress, its causes and associated factors; through appropriate interventions
- Highlight issues which may contribute to work related stress, which is likely to lead to ill health, and reduce these factors from the work environment as far as possible;
- Consider aspects of the workplace which have been identified through risk assessment as increasing the stress risk; (See appendix 1)
- Provide systems of support and ensure they are well publicised;
- Through information and education, encourage all staff to recognise and address issues;
- Offer access to counselling and other professional help and ensure there is confidentiality for those who want help (from whatever source);
- Manage workplace stressors for example, job insecurity, absence;
- Encourage staff to get help at an early stage;
- Set up procedures for return to, and rehabilitation in work, in accordance with appropriate HR policies and procedures. E.g. workplace adjustments where appropriate.

3. **SCOPE**

This policy applies to all directly employed staff of NHS Lanarkshire, irrespective of age, sex, ethnicity/race, disability, marital or civil partnership status, sexual orientation, religion or belief, pregnancy or maternity or gender reassignment.

NHS Lanarkshire take care to ensure your personal information is only accessible to authorised people. Our staff have a legal and contractual duty to keep personal health information secure, and confidential. In order to find out more about current data protection legislation and how we process your information, please visit the Data Protection Notice on our website at www.nhslanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk or ask a member of staff for a copy of our Data Protection Notice.

4. PRINCIPAL CONTENT

The content of this policy aims to highlight issues surrounding Stress and Mental Wellbeing while providing information to all staff on early recognition of signs and symptoms with guidance for managers and staff. The policy also contains information about the HSE Stress Risk Assessment, and help and advice with signposting to appropriate services.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 Senior Managers are responsible for:

- Promoting an organisational culture where stress is not seen as a sign of weakness or incompetence and where seeking help in managing stress is seen as a sign of strength and good practice:
- Recognising the systemic strains and pressures on staff and teams and working to highlight and alleviate them where possible
- Giving suitable advice, support and guidance to managers to equip them to undertake the required risk assessments in relation to stress in the workplace, and effective control measures implemented where appropriate;
- Providing information for staff on:
 - The effects of stress at work;
 - How to recognise symptoms of stress in themselves and others (Appendix 1)
- Promoting a working environment where staff who feel they are at risk of being affected by stress or are experiencing symptoms of stress can raise the issue in confidence, and necessary support mechanisms can be considered and implemented;
- Providing suitable support mechanisms for staff experiencing stress; and
- Providing good practice guidelines based on current evidence and knowledge.

5.2 **Line Managers** are responsible for:

- Carrying out a stress risk assessment with teams (Appendix 2) – e.g. this can be discussed at team meetings.
- Carrying out an individual risk assessment where a staff member cites they may be experiencing work related stress or following a period of absence due to work related stress.
- Encouraging a workplace culture where mental well-being and physical well-being are regarded as equally important.
- Making sure, as far as reasonably practical, that the physical work environments for staff are safe and do not expose them to risks that may give rise to stress at work.
- Considering the implications for staff of any changes to working practices, ways of working, work location, new policies or procedures, and the need for appropriate support and training;

- Ensuring that all new staff receive induction and training for their job, including reference to support services, e.g. Occupational Health, Human Resources, The Talking Rooms Counselling Service, PSSST.,
- Providing clear job descriptions (outlining lines of responsibility, accountability, and reporting), individual supervision and clear objectives with review;
- Resolving work related issues at individual level and at team level as appropriate, involving others outside the team as necessary;
- Managing absence in accordance with organisational policy, and linking to
 - other policies as necessary.
 - Keeping in touch with any staff member who is absent as per Sickness Absence Policy and local guidelines and agree with the individual, and if necessary, Occupational Health and Human Resources how to support their return to work;
 - Reviewing regularly excess hours worked by staff, time back, monitoring absence and staff turnover, and carrying out exit interviews;
 - Ensuring and supporting teams to take time to review and celebrate positive achievements;
 - Ensuring and supporting teams to review less positive outcomes;
 - Agreeing with teams what can be actioned and areas of action promoting openness and discussion.

5.3 Human Resource staff are responsible for:

- Ensuring that organisational policies and codes of conduct (professional and general) are adhered to;
- Facilitating discussions within areas of conflict;
- Arranging mediation where required
- Monitoring staff conduct, attendance, turnover, via the Staff Governance Committee.
- Advocating clarity of roles and responsibilities, providing advice to managers regarding clear job descriptions (outlining lines of responsibility, accountability, and reporting) and advising on organisation structure.
- Promoting a positive culture within the workforce.

5.4 Trade Unions/Professional Organisations 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 Safety Representative and Safety Committees (SRSC) Regulations and 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;
- Encouraging members to report issues to managers

5.5 **Occupational Health Services** are responsible for:

- Advising managers and staff on occupational stressors and the risk assessment process;
- Providing information, advice and support on stress risk assessment/awareness and management as required;
- Providing support for all staff who may be experiencing the negative effects of stress
- Providing access to OH case management services
- Providing information to staff attending Occupational Health on available support systems within NHS Lanarkshire
- Working with other groups/departments who are involved in staff health and wellbeing to help provide information and support to staff
- Monitoring work-related mental ill health in terms of absence patterns and self/management referrals and providing appropriate feedback in the form of anonymised data to the organisation.
- Advising on internal or external services for appropriate training / support / signposting where available. E.g. Organisational Development, Psychological Services Staff Support Team (PSSST), The Talking Rooms
- Providing information and signposting to appropriate internal and external support services in relation to specific stressor e.g. The Talking Rooms Counselling service, debt management services, mediation, Gender-Based Violence services

5.6 All **Staff** are responsible for:

- Recognising that stress is not a weakness;
- Talking to their manager as soon as possible if there is a problem, or accessing OHS, HR or their Trade Union/Professional Organisation;
- Supporting their colleagues experiencing stress and encouraging them to talk to their manager, OHS, HR or Trade Union/Professional Organisation;
- Seeking support or counselling as appropriate.
- Contacting their G.P. if concerned about mental wellbeing or health issues;
- Considering advice and recommendations offered to help reduce or alleviate symptoms of stress and optimize wellbeing.
- Attending stress management courses where appropriate, available and organisationally feasible
- Being actively involved in the risk assessment process.

6. **EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

To deal positively with stress at the workplace, NHS Lanarkshire recognises the importance of:

- The link between home and the workplace;
- The effects of prescribed medication on work performance.

These key points will be highlighted in:

- Health education for staff;
- Development for staff to meet their work demands;
- Induction programmes for new staff;
- Training programmes for managers;
- Specific training for Occupational Health Practitioners;

7. **RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

No significant cost implications however time required for all involved to carry out roles within the policy, attend training and any activities associated with this policy.

8. **COMMUNICATION PLAN**

Circulate Policy via Joint Policy Forum, intranet, Health and Safety/Partnership forums and cascade via management structure, Healthy Working Lives.

9. **QUALITY IMPROVEMENT - MONITORING AND REVIEW**

This policy has been developed in partnership and will be subject to on-going monitoring and will be reviewed every 3 years by the Joint Policy Forum and ratified by the Human Resources Forum.

As well as the policy itself, the risk-assessment process should be reviewed in light of any changes to work activities or significant organisational change.

Regular evaluation of staff turnover, sickness absence, accidents/ incidents will also contribute to the monitoring and reviewing of the policy.

10. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

This policy meets NHS Lanarkshire's EQIA

11. SUMMARY OF POLICY / FAQ'S

This policy provides information, advice, signposting and support for all NHS Lanarkshire staff in relation to Stress and Mental Wellbeing. NHS Lanarkshire is committed to the health and wellbeing of all employees. Further information is available via Occupational Health.

12. REFERENCES

Definition (NHS Choices): <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/improve-mental-wellbeing/>

The Safety Representative and Safety Committees (SRSC) Regulations
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/1977/500/contents/made>

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/1999/3242/contents/made>

Appendix 1

STRESS AND MENTAL WELLBEING INFORMATION

Stress affects us in many ways, including the way we feel, behave and think. It can influence us physically, emotionally and psychologically, both at home and work, and can have an impact on our relationships, including family, friends and colleagues.

What are some of the causes of Stress?

Causes can be personal, work related, or a combination of both. These can include –

- inter- personal relationships
- family/personal problems
- ill health
- childcare issues
- change
- environmental
- too much work/too little work
- time management issues
- control over workload
- perceived lack of support, clarity of role etc.

In relation specifically to the workplace, stress can result in reduced ability to make decisions, forgetfulness, reduced concentration, absenteeism, poorer outcomes, lack of communication and commitment, increased incidents of accidents/errors, and can lead to less job satisfaction.

Possible Effects

- Physical: could include symptoms of aches and pains, numbness, palpitations, increased Blood Pressure, tremor, sweating and “butterflies in the stomach” increased tiredness and fatigue. This may in turn effect our...
- Behaviour: can result in emotional outbursts, eating too much/too little, increased smoking/alcohol intake, antagonistic tendencies, increased irritability, reduced motivation and withdrawal from friends/family or hobbies and interests.
- Feelings: can include anxiety, tiredness, low mood, frustration, loneliness, irritability and aggressiveness.

What can we do to help ourselves deal with the negative effects of stress and improve our mental wellbeing?

5 steps to improve mental wellbeing:
[https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety- depression/improve-mental-wellbeing/](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/improve-mental-wellbeing/)

- Connect with people
- Be active
- Keep Learning
- Give to others
- Be mindful

Also -

- Discuss your feelings with your manager.
- Take time for rest and relaxation, be aware of local & national campaigns, increase our exercise, increase awareness of leisure services and discounts for NHS Lanarkshire staff, eat healthier, utilise specialist agencies and NHS Lanarkshire staff benefits.
- Salus Occupational Health is available for help, support, information and advice.
- The Talking Rooms Counselling Service is available to all staff, including face to face, telephone and remote counselling sessions.
- Change our outlook,
- Change our situation,
- Change our mindset.
- Take care of each other and ourselves.

Mentally Healthy Workplace: Staff Support Guide

This guide lists support for mental and physical health for all NHS Lanarkshire employees.

All services: self referral (unless otherwise stated).

Helplines

Immediate Support

If you need to talk about how you are feeling: **Staff Care and Wellbeing: 01698 752000, 24hr National Wellbeing Helpline: 0800 111 4191, 24hr Samaritans: 116 123, 24hr Breathing Space: 0800 83 85 87, Weeknights, 6pm–6am, and 24hr at weekend**

Ongoing Support

The Talking Rooms: 0800 138 9150 or visit: www.thetalkingrooms.com/self-referral (staff confidential counselling service)
SALUS Helpline: 01698 759333
(Mon- Fri: 8.30am–4.30pm) Occupational health – assist with mental health support questions

Staff Mental Health & Wellbeing

Mental Health Support

Mental health support for you or colleagues – access at work or at home: www.nhslanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk/services/mental-health-staff/

Your Health Matters

Information, support and resources on many topics. Links/guidance to access services: www.nhslanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk/your-health-matters

COVID-19 Staff Information HUB

Webpage: www.nhslanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk/novel-corona-virus-covid-19/nhsl-staff

Mental Health Occupational Therapy

If mental health and wellbeing issues affect day-to-day activities, you can self-refer to a local Occupational Therapy Community Clinic. Visit: www.nhslanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk/services/occupational-therapy/mentalhealth/

Money Advice

My Life My Money app

For advice and support on money worries, download via: www.nhslanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk/services/financial-inclusion/

Urgent Help

If you are concerned about your or someone else's safety, call GP, 111 or 999.

Lanarkshire Mind Matters (NHS Lanarkshire): www.lanarkshiremindmatters.scot.nhs.uk/urgent-help/

SALUS – Occupational Health Service

Advice and help on health, work and wellbeing. Find support services for you and your colleagues: www.nhslanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk/services/occupational-health/

Psychological Services Staff Support Team

Mental Health assessment and psychological therapy for mental health difficulties such as anxiety, depression, poor sleep. Self-refer: email psychological_services_staff_support_team@lanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk or call 01698 687055

Spiritual Care & Wellbeing

Staff Care & Wellbeing

NHSL wellbeing support service – tailored to meet the needs of the individual as well as staff groups. www.nhslanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk/services/staff-care-and-wellbeing

Human Resources

Work / life balance and HR policies to support staff: www.nhslanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk/corporate-policies/human-resources-policy

National Attendance Policy – guidance for managers, employees and Occupational Health referrals: <https://workforce.nhs.scot/policies/attendance-policy-overview/attendance-policy/>

National Wellbeing HUB

Resources, support and ideas on how to stay well: <https://wellbeinghub.scot/>

Mentally Healthy Workplace: Learning Guide

This learning guide aims to support you to further develop your understanding, knowledge and awareness.
Learning can be accessed via Firstport – Resources or Staff Support sections

LEARNING OPTIONS

NHSScotland Workforce Attendance Policy

This policy aims to encourage and support employee attendance, where health impacts their ability to be at work.

Link: <https://workforce.nhs.scot/policies/attendance-policy-overview/>

Staff Wellbeing: taking care of yourself

This short module provides the ABCs of taking care of yourself and the active steps we can all take to protect and sustain our wellbeing.

Link: <https://learn.nes.nhs.scot/45275/psychosocial-mental-health-and-wellbeing-support/taking-care-of-myself/staff-wellbeing-taking-care-of-yourself>

Taking care of your staff

Information to help managers support the wellbeing of staff.

Link: <https://learn.nes.nhs.scot/29715/psychosocial-mental-health-and-wellbeing-support/taking-care-of-your-staff#pfa>

Wellbeing Planning Tool

A planning tool to support your wellbeing

Link: <https://learn.nes.nhs.scot/30741/psychosocial-mental-health-and-wellbeing-support/taking-care-of-myself/wellbeing-planning-tool>

A Webinar Programme for Health and Social Care Staff

Webinar sessions with a focus on wellbeing.

Link: <https://wellbeinghub.scot/our-events/>

Protecting the psychological wellbeing of staff and teams (for managers and team leaders)

The purpose of this unit is to help managers, planners and leaders of teams understand the evidence based factors that support the wellbeing of managers and teams through crisis events such as COVID-19.

Link: <https://learn.nes.nhs.scot/30532/psychosocial-mental-health-and-wellbeing-support/taking-care-of-your-staff/protecting-the-psychological-wellbeing-of-staff-and-teams-for-managers-and-team-leaders>

Difficult Conversations

This 1-2-1 opportunity to explore upcoming difficult conversation is available to staff as a bespoke opportunity to consider how best to approach the difficult conversation. 1 or 2 sessions of approximately one hour each – log your enquiry on HR ServiceNow

Link: <http://firstport2/staff-support/learning-organisational-development/facilitated-support/individual-development/managing-difficult-conversations/default.aspx>

Coaching for wellbeing

A digital coaching service for all health and social care staff

Link: <https://learn.nes.nhs.scot/30455/psychosocial-mental-health-and-wellbeing-support/taking-care-of-your-staff/coaching-for-wellbeing-a-digital-coaching-service-for-all-health-and-social-care-staff>

Coaching with NHSL

Through working with a coach, you will get valuable time and space to explore personal and professional development issues that are important to you such as managing self or others at work, leadership challenges or career reflections. Coaching gives an opportunity for constructive reflection with someone who will be open, honest and impartial - log your enquiry on HR ServiceNow

Link: <https://learn.nes.nhs.scot/30455/psychosocial-mental-health-and-wellbeing-support/taking-care-of-your-staff/coaching-for-wellbeing-a-digital-coaching-service-for-all-health-and-social-care-staff>

ASIST

2 day interactive suicide first-aid training. Aims to enable helpers to become more willing, ready and able to recognise and intervene effectively to help persons at risk of suicide.

Please note that face to face courses will be postponed until further notice

Link: www.elament.org.uk/training/

safeTALK

Half-day session. Complements ASIST and other intervention training courses. Participants learn how to provide practical help to persons with thoughts of suicide.

Please note that face to face courses will be postponed until further notice

Link: www.elament.org.uk/training/

suicideTALK

One hour session. Short exploration and awareness raising.

Please note that face to face courses will be postponed until further notice

Link: www.elament.org.uk/training/

Scottish Mental Health First Aid

2-day training course designed to give participants the knowledge and skills to recognise the signs of mental ill-health and support someone to seek the right help.

Please note that face to face courses will be postponed until further notice

Link: www.elament.org.uk/training/

For further information on courses being delivered by NHS Lanarkshire contact hina.sheikh@lanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk

Suicide Alert Briefing

A briefing for Health and Social Care staff and call handlers to provide them with support if talking with someone who may be at risk of suicide. It explains the 'ALERT' model and provides some ideas for putting it into practice, as well as useful information about support services and suicide prevention resources.

For copies of briefing, contact susan.mcmorrin@lanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk

ALERT Webinar Session

This webinar will introduce you to the ALERT model which supports you if you are talking with someone who may be at risk of suicide. During the webinar we will provide an explanation of the ALERT model and some ideas for putting it into practice, as well as useful information about support services and suicide prevention resources and the chance to ask questions.

Sessions being rolled out. For more information contact Macdonaldly@northlan.gov.uk for North Lanarkshire dates & susan.mcmorrin@lanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk for South Lanarkshire dates

1. Ask, Tell - Look After Your Mental Health

Understanding mental health and keeping mentally healthy

Link: <https://vimeo.com/338176495>

2. Ask, Tell - Have a Healthy Conversation

Supporting compassionate conversations with people who may be experiencing mental distress or who are at risk of suicide

Link: <https://vimeo.com/338176444>

3. Ask, Tell - Save a Life: Every Life Matters

Suicide prevention and keeping people safe

Link: <https://vimeo.com/338176393>

Facilitation notes & slides for 1, 2, & 3

You are required to complete a short application form to gain access to the facilitators section

Link: TURAS – <https://learn.nes.nhs.scot/35565>

Promoting Children and Young People's Mental Health and Preventing Self Harm and Suicide

These animations are designed to support learning about mental health, self-harm and suicide prevention

Link: <https://learn.nes.nhs.scot/17099>

National Trauma Training Programme

Videos introduce the purpose and aims of the workshop followed by viewing an animation. Workshops are approximately 1.5 hours long and can be delivered face-to-face or adapted for remote delivery where required.

Link: <https://transformingpsychologicaltrauma.scot/resources/understanding-trauma/>

NHS Lanarkshire Psychological Services resources

Lanarkshire Mind Matters

The Lanarkshire Mind Matters website, run by NHS Lanarkshire Psychological Services, is a comprehensive source of high-quality, free mental health and wellbeing resources. It provides swift access to local and national information, courses, apps and more.

Link: www.lanarkshiremindmatters.scot.nhs.uk

Resources include:

Calm Distress

A friendly, five-session video-based course that you can watch at any time of the day or night. Designed by Lanarkshire psychologists, it is all about coping with stress – and stopping it tipping over into distress.

Link: www.lanarkshiremindmatters.scot.nhs.uk/how-we-can-help-you/calm-distress-online-course-overview/

Daylight and Sleepio online CBT

Designed for your phone, **Daylight** is a tailored programme for managing anxiety, guided by narration and animation. **Sleepio** is all about getting a better night's sleep: like Daylight, it is designed by experts using top-quality evidence-based techniques.

Link: www.lanarkshiremindmatters.scot.nhs.uk/how-we-can-help-you/daylight-and-sleepio-courses/

SilverCloud online CBT

Four courses can be accessed by self-referral, to help you cope with Covid-19 anxiety, resilience, sleep and general stress.

Link: www.lanarkshiremindmatters.scot.nhs.uk/how-we-can-help-you/silvercloud-online-therapy/

This is just a snapshot of what is on offer. Lanarkshire Mind Matters is continually being developed and updated: it is your go-to source for high-quality mental wellbeing information. All staff working in health or social care in Lanarkshire can access its resources.

Mentally Healthy Workplace: Managers Guide to Staff Support

This guide supports managers – it shows pathways to maintain and improve staff's health and well-being (both physical and mental)

National and Local HR Policies

Workforce Attendance Policy – applies if health is impacting on an employee's ability to be at work: <https://workforce.nhs.scot/policies/attendance-policy-overview/>

Flowchart to support the policy, with an overview of main steps in the process: <https://workforce.nhs.scot/media/zw3c5syu/nhsscotland-workforce-attendance-policy-flowchart.pdf>

NHS Lanarkshire HR policies: www.nhslanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk/corporate-policies/human-resources-policy/

Guidance for Managers

Guide to help managers to encourage and support employees to maximise their attendance at work and supportively manage employees during sickness absence: <https://workforce.nhs.scot/supporting-documents/guides/attendance-policy-guide-for-managers/>

Guidance for Employees

Guide to what employees need to do when their health impacts their ability to be at work and how their manager can support them: <https://workforce.nhs.scot/supporting-documents/guides/attendance-policy-guide-for-employees/>

Occupational Health

Salus

Salus offers a range of Occupational Health services provided by a multi-disciplinary team. The Occupational Health team helps promote physical and psychological well being for employees and prevent illness and injury from work activity.

Occupational Health Case Management (OHCM) is available to all employees who require support with a mental health related condition, whether they are absent or still in work: www.nhslanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk/your-health-matters/

EASY/Helpline

EASY – Easy Access to Support for You

EASY is NHS Lanarkshire's staff support service for people absent from work. Support services are focused on mental health and musculoskeletal disorders, as well as onward referral to Physiotherapy and additional Occupational Health services. Every staff member who is off sick should be referred to EASY, irrespective of the reason, so appropriate support can be offered: <http://firstport2/staff-support/salus-occupational-health-and-safety/early-access-to-support-for-you/>

Salus Helpline – 01698 759310

The helpline gives employees and managers quick access to information and guidance on COVID-19, Blood Borne Virus reporting, Physiotherapy referrals and mental health supports.

Stress & Mental Well-Being

Your Health Matters

An employee support hub for all health and wellbeing concerns on NHS Lanarkshire's website. A range of information and support on topics that impact work and personal life. Links and guidance for all staff on how to access services: www.nhslanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk/your-health-matters/

Stress & Wellbeing Policy

Provides information and guidance to all staff on prevention and recognition of signs and symptoms. Guidance for managers on completing HSE Stress Risk Assessment for staff with work related stress: www.nhslanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk/download/stress-and-mental-wellbeing-policy/

Appendix 2

GUIDANCE ON COMPLETION OF THE STRESS RISK ASSESSMENT

Introduction

Employers have a legal duty to protect employees from stress at work by doing a risk assessment and acting upon it. This is a requirement under the Management of Health and Safety at Work regulations. Stress has been defined as **"the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them"**. The risk assessment is based on the workplace and should focus on elements of work which could result in harm to health through stress.

The following may help you complete the Stress Risk Assessment.

SECTION 1:

You can complete this section with information already available to you.

- Indicate the work area or department relevant, staff groups covered and the relevant line manager/managers if there is a mix of professional groups.
- Record any information that might indicate the general level of stress in the workforce in this area. This might include absence rates (if known), turnover, staff absence known to be linked with workplace stress, staff complaints or feedback concerning work stress. The results of any staff survey or issues raised during Imatter or Turas appraisals may also be relevant.

If the information available to you suggests that the risk is Low, proceed to Section 4, complete the Risk Assessment and give a review date. If not, proceed to Section 2

SECTION 2:

In this section, you first identify if there are any special features of the workplace or the work conducted in the area which are particularly likely to cause stress.

Examples might be **physical factors** such as noise, temperature, etc. **threats** such as risk of violence, aggression or verbal abuse from clients, or **factors** such as the need to provide **an emergency response**, regularly **break bad news**, deal with traumatic incidents, deal with death, especially in children or young adults. These are only examples – there may be other stressors peculiar to your workplace.

Only record these if you, or your staff, believe that these issues pose a particular, unusual stressor in your work area. Recording every possible occasional stressor may distract from the really important stressors.

You may decide there are no special features or stressors which should be recorded under section 2, and you can then go to Section 4.

Once you have listed the stressors, record any control measures that are in place to help reduce the risk of stress and **record whether the risk remains high, medium or low**. Control measures might be departmental systems, clinical supervision, policies and procedures or other measures.

If you now have enough information to make a decision about the level of RISK, go to Section 4 and complete the Risk Assessment.

If you are unable to make a decision on RISK, go to SECTION 3.

SECTION 3:

You may wish to obtain further information on which to base your assessment. You can consider the 6 HSE management standards and assess how your department or area rates against these standards. Details of this are in Appendix 2.

Possible methods of obtaining information would be:

- Obtaining views of staff through existing groups such as open discussions, departmental meetings, partnership meetings, etc. It is important that staff side reps have the opportunity to contribute if this option is chosen.
- Conducting focus groups with a representative group of staff. HSE has issued guidance about how to conduct focus group work.
<https://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/standards/step2/otherways.htm>
- Conducting a survey within your own department. HSE have suggested and provided a survey toolkit online which may be useful
www.hse.gov.uk/stress/standards/downloads.htm.
- The HSE have a checklist for managers to ensure that their approach to risk assessment is suitable and sufficient, which managers may find helpful. Managers may also wish to adapt the example stress risk assessment for individuals or use the HSE Return to Work questionnaire which can be accessed here <https://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/standards/>
- The HSE also has a useful “Talking Toolkit” which is designed to help line managers hold initial conversations with employees as one of part of an employer’s journey towards preventing work-related stress.
<https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/wbk01.htm>
- Staff representatives should be invited to be involved in these procedures.

Advantages/Disadvantages

The main advantage of any of these methods is that they offer a much clearer picture of how your staff view workplace stress. The main disadvantage is that it is time and resource intensive. However, with the information obtained you can list any relevant control measures and assign your rating of the risk as **high, medium or low**.

If considering focus groups or surveys, Occupational Health would strongly advise that you contact your local OH team to discuss the advantages/disadvantages in full.

SECTION 4:

Consider the stressors and risk ratings in sections 1, 2 and/or 3 and decide on an **overall risk rating** for stress in the work area as **low, medium or high**.

Remember that if your assessment is Medium or High you must put together a plan to reduce that risk

ACTION PLAN

In the **ACTION PLAN**, consider the following:

- what possible additional steps could be taken to reduce risk,
- what steps have been taken (this section can be updated as action is taken),
- any outcomes.

It is accepted that some possible actions may be resource constrained and not possible to implement but they can still be listed as possible actions. **This section is the most important to complete carefully.**

Finally, sign and date the assessment. Give a date for review.

Health and Safety Executive (HSE) Management Standards for Stress

In November 2004 HSE published a series of six standards for management of stress. In general, the approach is the standard 5-step risk assessment: i) Look for the hazards; ii) decide who might be harmed and how; iii) evaluate the risk and decide what needs to be done; iv) record your findings; v) monitor and review. In the case of stress, it is particularly important to consult with staff, identify problem areas, agree an action plan in partnership, and review the plan. See HSE guidance at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/standards/>

The six specific standards are:

1. **Demands**
Employees indicate that they are able to cope with the demands of their jobs
2. **Control**
Employees indicate that they are able to have a say about the way they do their work
3. **Support**
Employees indicate that they receive adequate information and support from their colleagues and superiors
4. **Relationships**
Employees indicate that they are not subjected to unacceptable behaviours, e.g. bullying at work
5. **Role**
Employees indicate that they understand their role and responsibilities
6. **Change**
Employees indicate that the organisation engages them frequently when undergoing an organisational change

In each case an additional standard is that “Systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns”.

The standards are derived from the generic issues that can cause stress in the average workplace.

Below is an example of a Stress Risk Assessment Template. This can be used and adapted as required and can also be adapted for individuals; other examples can be found on the HSE website.

Prior to starting the risk assessment, you may find it useful to read some information around using the Management Standards approach; you will also find some “Top Tips” and a checklist for ensuring that the risk assessment approach is suitable and sufficient.
<https://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/standards/before.htm>

A Return to Work questionnaire can also be used where appropriate, is helpful for individual risk assessment, and can be help to identify issues using the Management Standards approach <https://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/standards/downloads.htm>

STRESS RISK ASSESSMENT			
SECTION 1			
Work Area/Department:			
Staff Groups Covered:		Line Manager(s):	
Indicators of stress Outline here any general indications of the level of stress, e.g. staff turnover, sickness absence rate, work related absences, staff feedback. These may indicate high or low levels of stress			
Staff turnover	Sickness absence rate	Complaints of work stress	Absences related to stress
SECTION 2: Stressors Particular to the Department/Area of Work			
Stressor See guidance notes: examples may include stressors such as temperature, noise, threat of violence, emotional demands.	Staff groups affected	Control measures	Assessment of risk (High–medium–low)

SECTION 3: HSE MANAGEMENT STANDARDS			
STANDARD	Indicators of performance (e.g. staff survey, local survey, focus group feedback, other staff feedback)	Control measures	Assessment of risk (High–medium–low)
Demand			
Control			
Support			
Relationships			
Role			
Change			
OVERALL RISK ASSESSMENT (HIGH-MEDIUM-LOW) This sums up your overall assessment of risk taking into account indicators of stress, sections 1 and 2.			

SECTION 4

ACTION PLAN: Indicate here any actions identified that may improve stress levels. Indicate actions taken and outcome.

Possible actions	Action taken	Outcome

Signed

Title

Date of completion

Review

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Appendix 3

Resource List

The Talking Rooms

Confidential Counselling is available for all staff via The Talking Rooms, NHSL's contracted counselling service for staff. This includes local face to face, electronic or telephone counselling at a time convenient for you. Staff can self-refer by completing the on line form here <https://www.thetalkingrooms.com/self-referral/> or can call directly on **0800 138 9150**.

Staff Care and Wellbeing service

The Staff Care and Wellbeing service seeks to build resilience and enhance wellbeing through: provision of wellbeing focused events; facilitated reflective practice session; 1:1 active listening; peer support; group and team support; promoting wellbeing information and a range of training. The service offers a variety of safe and confidential spaces for staff to tell their stories and to reflect on their experiences - helping them to identify sources of strength and to build resilience.

The service is

open to all staff within NHS Lanarkshire. Staff can access our services and support by contacting us on email staffcare@lanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk or in more urgent circumstances can call us directly on the 24-hour staff care helpline on **01698 752000**

The Psychological Services Staff Support Team (PSSST)

PSSST is a specialist service developed to support any member of Health and Social Care Staff living or working within Lanarkshire. We offer a range of support, including coaching Team Leaders in supporting staff/team wellbeing, as well as assessment signposting and a specialist mental health service for individual staff members. We see people who are experiencing psychological distress which is blocking ability to actively engage in work duties or having a negative impact on quality of life, for example, those experiencing stress, worry or low mood, sleep difficulties or struggling to cope with everyday life due to emotional difficulties. We also assess those who are distressed but unsure of what help they require, or are experiencing burnout and seeking advice on recovery. Please email pssst@lanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk to request a referral form or speak to one of the team.

See Me in Work

'See Me in Work' is a great resource for staff to encourage them to feel confident about being able to openly discuss mental health without fear of discrimination. Find out more: <https://www.seemescotland.org/workplace/see-me-in-work/>.

Elament

A great local point of information for mental health is the Elament Lanarkshire website, which hosts a variety of local resources and can be accessed by following this link: <http://www.elament.org.uk/self-help-resources.aspx>.

The 'Well Connected' resource is a great tool in terms of proactive and reactive

ways of supporting staff and making a positive impact on mental health and wellbeing: <https://www.elament.org.uk/self-help-resources/well-connected-programme/>

Scottish Recovery Network

Another link you may want to access is <https://www.scottishrecovery.net/> Scottish Recovery Network promotes and supports mental health recovery.

Physical Activity and Mental Health

Promoting the benefits of physical activity as part of supporting mental health and wellbeing in the workplace can have a positive impact for colleagues. See: <http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/healthadvice/treatmentswellbeing/physicalactivity.aspx>

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Local links to physical activity include...

Get Walking Lanarkshire

<http://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/getwalking>

Greenspace – Mental Health & Well being

It is well known that being outside in nature is proven to reduce stress, instill a sense of calmness and is essential to our happiness and overall health and well-being.

Access information at: <https://www.element.org.uk/support-projects-groups/projects-campaigns/greenspace/>

Weigh to Go

'Weigh to Go' programmes for North and South Lanarkshire which can be accessed via this link: <https://www.nhslanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk/services/weight-management-service/weigh-to-go/>

Healthy Working Lives

Local strategy and action plan can be accessed at:

<http://firstport2/staff-support/healthy-working-lives/default.aspx>

Lanarkshire team contact details

Email: enquirieshw@lanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk

Tel 01698 759376

National website <https://www.healthyworkinglives.scot/>

Health & Safety Executive

Stress & mental health links can be accessed at: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/>

Living Life

0800 328 9655

Living Life is a free telephone Cognitive Behavioural

Therapy service available in Scotland. CBT is a type of 'talking therapy', which can help you identify unhelpful ways of thinking and learn new ways of coping.

Through Living Life, you will be offered a series of telephone appointments with a self-help coach or therapist, who will talk you through specific materials and workbooks. These support sessions will help you react more positively to situations and boost your self-esteem and confidence.

The wellbeing hub - [Home - National Wellbeing Hub](#)

Lanarkshire Mind Matters: [Lanarkshire Mind Matters - NHS Lanarkshire Adult Psychology Services \(scot.nhs.uk\)](#)