MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING POLICY

There is a strong link between levels of staff wellbeing and performance and as a result THE COMPANY believes Mental Health and Wellbeing are as important to the success and sustainability of the business as physical health. A workplace where Mental Health is valued and looked after results in an increase in employee satisfaction, engagement with the business and therefore productivity.

PURPOSE

This policy states how THE COMPANY will take a positive, proactive approach to improving Mental Health and Wellbeing and will promote and maintain this through workplace practices and encouraging everyone to take responsibility for their own Mental Health and Wellbeing.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees, contractors and visitors.

AIMS OF THIS POLICY

- To build and maintain a workplace environment and culture that supports Mental Health and Wellbeing and prevents discrimination (including bullying and harassment).
- To treat people with mental health Issues in exactly the same way as any other employee, unless they ask for help or demonstrate clear signs that they need it.
- Not to make assumptions about people's capabilities, their promotability or the amount of absences from work they may need because of their illness.
- To increase employee knowledge and awareness of Mental Health and Wellbeing issues and behaviours.
- To reduce stigma around Mental Health issues in the workplace.
- To facilitate all employee's active participation in a range of initiatives that support Mental Health and Wellbeing.
- To provide mental health first aid to any employees that need support.

THE COMPANY is committed to addressing the issues that contribute to poor mental health as identified in the Health and Safety Executive Management Standards. These cover six key areas of work design that, if not properly managed, are associated with poor mental health, lower productivity and increased absence rates.

- Demands – this includes issues such as workload, work patterns and the work environment
- Control – how much say the person has in the way they do their work
- Support – this includes the encouragement, sponsorship and resources provided by the organisation, line management and colleagues
- Relationships – this includes promoting positive working to avoid conflict and dealing with unacceptable behaviour
- Role – whether people understand their role within the organisation and whether the organisation ensures that they do not have conflicting roles
- Change – how organisational change (large or small) is managed and communicated in the organisation

RESPONSIBILITIES

Employees are encouraged to:

- Support fellow workers in their awareness of this policy;
- Support and contribute to THE COMPANY's aim of providing a mentally healthy and supportive environment for all workers;
- Take an active part in the process of assessing the risk, e.g. completing surveys or providing honest feedback when requested;
- Raise any Mental Health concerns they have with their line manager, HR or one of the Mental Health First Aiders. THE COMPANY can make adjustments to ease problems, but only if they have an understanding of the situation
- Accept guidance for where to get help and support when offered.

Employees have a responsibility to:

- Understand this policy and seek clarification from management where required;
- Consider this policy while completing work-related duties and at any time while representing THE COMPANY;
- Take reasonable care of their own Mental Health and Wellbeing, including physical health;
- Take reasonable care that their actions do not affect the health and safety of other people in the workplace;
- Raise issues of concern with your safety representative, line manager or HR;
- Be aware of the support available including, if applicable, the Employee Assistance Program and Mental Health First Aid;

Managers have a responsibility to:

- Ensure that everyone is made aware of this policy and the support available and actively support and contribute to the implementation of this policy;
- Respond positively to any employee raising mental health concerns and proactively help them to access support.
- Comply with legal obligations for managing Mental Health issues including the application of the Equality Act 2010 where, if a mental health issue has adverse effects on someone's ability to perform day-to-day tasks, this is considered a disability and therefore protected.
- Taking care of any employee absent from work for mental health related reasons by keeping them informed about what is going on, including social events, reassuring them early on and throughout their absence
- If an employee has been absent from work for mental health related reasons, support them in their return to work and reintegration into the workplace.
- Make reasonable adjustments to their job to relieve symptoms and be positive and supportive while exploring the issues and how you can help.
- Implement any recommendations as a result of Mental Health risks assessments;
- Ensure good communication between management and staff, particularly where there are organisational and procedural changes;
- Ensure staff are fully trained to carry out their role and provided with meaningful developmental opportunities;
- Monitor workloads to ensure that people are not overloaded or underutilised;
- Discourage work-related contact with staff outside normal working hours or whilst on holiday;
- Monitor working hours and overtime to ensure that staff are not overworking; monitor holidays to ensure that staff are taking their full entitlement;
- Ensure that bullying and harassment is not tolerated;
- Offer additional support to any employee experiencing stress outside work, e.g. bereavement or separation.

HR have a responsibility to:-

- Provide specialist advice and awareness training on stress;
- Train and support managers in implementing mental health risk assessments;
- Support individuals who have been absent from work for mental health related reasons and advise them and their management on a planned return to work;
- Refer to workplace counsellors or specialist agencies as required;
- Manage the Mental Health First Aider team;
- Monitor and review the effectiveness of measures to reduce stress;
- Keep updated with any changes and developments in the field of mental health and wellbeing at work.

Directors have a responsibility to

- Implement a communication strategy to raise awareness of the impact of work-related issues on mental health and explain the organisation's commitment to tackle them.
- Identify risk factors through analysing absences, employee performance and turnover and feedback from employee surveys, safety representatives and Mental Health First Aiders.
- Implement change as a result of this analysis and evaluate the effectiveness of the change.
- Consult with employees and employee representatives as to how to improve Mental Health & Wellbeing in the workplace.
- Ensure there are adequate resources within organisation to support Mental Health and Wellbeing.
- Identify and develop the competencies of the managers to reduce potential sources of work-related stress
- Create an environment where employees are encouraged to talk, both formally and informally, to their manager or another person in their management chain.
- Consider diversity issues in all Mental Health and Wellbeing support.
- Ensure the organisation has policies in place to comply with legal obligations for managing Mental Health issues.

Mental Health First Aiders have a responsibility to

- Develop an in-depth understanding of mental health and the factors that can affect wellbeing
- Develop practical skills to spot the triggers and signs of a range of mental health issues
- Step in, reassure and support a person in distress using the Mental Health First Aid action plan and support skills such as non-judgemental listening
- Help someone recover by guiding them to further support, whether self-help resources, internal support such as EAP, or external sources such as their GP or support charities.
- Keep themselves safe while performing their duties

COMMUNICATION

THE COMPANY will ensure that:

- all employees receive a copy of this policy during the induction process
- this policy is available to all interested parties.
- employees are empowered to actively contribute and provide feedback to this policy
- employees are notified of all changes to this policy.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

THE COMPANY will review this policy {six} months after implementation and annually thereafter to determine if objectives have been met and to identify barriers and enablers to ongoing policy implementation.