NHS
Leeds Community Healthcare
NHS Trust

Managing Stress in the Workplace Policy	
Authors	HR Advisor
Corporate Lead	Director of Workforce
Document Version	Final
Date approved by Joint Negotiation and Consultation Forum (JNCF)	March 2015
Date Ratified by Remuneration Committee	March 2015
Date issued	October 2018
Review date	October 2019

Executive Summary

This document sets out Leeds Community Healthcare NHS Trust's (LCH) standard Policy for Managing Stress in the workplace.

This policy applies to all staff working within the Trust, which includes those who are within a Bank. This Policy also extends to those who may hold an Honorary Contract with the Trust

This policy has been developed to comply with statutory requirements and following professional body guidance and must be read together with other relevant Trust policies, procedures and local guidance.

The Policy may be reviewed at the request of Management or Staff Side by giving four weeks' written notice with reasons for the review.
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Contents

1 Introduction

Leeds Community Healthcare NHS Trust (LCH) is committed to protecting the health, safety and welfare of employees, recognises that workplace stress is a health & safety issue and acknowledges the importance of identifying and reducing workplace stressors.

This policy adheres to the Health & Safety Executive example policy and Management of Standards for Occupational Health and Safety within the NHS 2010. This Policy takes into consideration its legal obligations under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974.

2 Aims and Objectives

The purpose of this policy is to promote positive attitudes towards health at work by outlining the responsibilities of managers and individual staff members and by providing a framework for the successful prevention and management of situations involving stress at work.

This policy aims to encourage the management of work related stress effectively and sensitively. Staff should be supported to maintain a work life balance by addressing the issues of work place stress and its causes (stressors) through the development of working practices that reduce and/or prevent the factors which may lead to stress in the workplace.

3 Definition

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) define

Stress as "the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them".

This makes an important distinction between pressure, which can be a positive state if managed correctly, and stress which can be detrimental to health.

The HSE management standards cover the primary sources of stress at work these are: -

- **Demands**: Includes issues like workload, work pattern and the work environment;
- **Control**: Includes how much say the person has in the way in which they do their work;
- **Support**: Includes the encouragement, sponsorship and resources provided by the Trust, line management and colleagues;
- **Relationships**: Includes whether people understand their role within the Trust and whether the Trust ensures that the person does no have conflicting roles
- **Change**: Includes how the Trust and its managers manage and communicate the change process

Risk is the likelihood that someone may be harmed by a hazard that has been identified.

4 Responsibilities

All staff employed by LCH must work in concordance with the Leeds Safeguarding Multi-agency Policies and Procedures and local guidelines in relation to any safeguarding concerns they have for children or adults they are in contact with.

Chief Executive The overall responsibility for Health and Safety of staff employed by the Trust lies with the Chief Executive. In practice, this responsibility is delegated to Heads of Service and Operational Managers.

Director of Workforce is responsible for providing, so far as is reasonably practicable, a safe working environment and ensuring the health, safety and welfare of employees, patients and users.

Line Managers are responsible for implementation of the policy and are required to manage and act fairly and consistently. Management is responsible for ensuring that the policy is disseminated effectively and observed by all relevant employees.

It is recognised that good communication helps to prevent work related stress. Team meetings can be an effective forum for discussing work issues and finding solutions to problems. It is important that staff are able to be open and honest in meetings and are encouraged to raise concerns. Agreed actions arising from meetings should be identified, outcomes recorded, actions compiled and reviewed by the manager

Regular planned meetings between individuals and their line managers to review work progress and provide support with respect to work issues are also valuable forums for ensuring that staff are coping with their workload.

Heads of Service/Operational Managers/Line managers must:

- Assist employees in identifying potential workplace stressors (see Appendix 1)
- Undertake appropriate risk assessments for the prevention and management of work related stress
- Conduct and implement recommendations of risk assessments within their scope of responsibility in order to strive to eliminate stress or control the risks from stress. These risk assessments will be regularly reviewed.
- Know where to access information on the management aspects of work related stress
- Consult with Trade Union Safety Representatives on all proposed action relating to the prevention of workplace stress ensuring that managers are aware of the 'primary' stressors and how these can be addressed.
- Develop procedures to manage problems that do occur and to support individuals who are experiencing stress at work; assisting staff in managing stress in themselves and where appropriate in others (see Appendix 2 and 3)
- Ensure good communication between management and staff, particularly where there are organisational and procedural changes.
- Ensure staff are clear on their roles and are fully trained to undertake those roles effectively.
- Support staff by monitoring workloads, working hours, overtime and holidays to ensure that staff are taking joint responsibility for managing their health and well being

- Support staff with managing their absence
- Ensure that unacceptable behaviour is not tolerated within their area of responsibility.
- Offer appropriate support following critical incidents (cross reference to Incident Policy.)
- Help staff maintain a healthy work life balance, being perceptive and sensitive and offering appropriate support to members of staff who experience stress outside of work. e.g. bereavement or separation.
- Encourage referrals to the staff counselling service or specialist agencies as required.

Staff have a duty to comply with Trust policies and procedures. If an employee has any questions or concerns about these they must raise these with their line manager and/or the Human Resources Department

Staff must:

- Take care of their own health and safety at work and others including maintaining and improving their own physical and mental health. Staff have a responsibility to acknowledge problems caused by excessive pressure or demands and know that this does not indicate weakness or failure
- Know where to access information on the management aspects of work related stress
- Help to identify factors in departments which may cause excessive stress. It is the responsibility of all employees not to encourage, overlook or excuse working environments or working practices, which create excessive pressure at work.
- Raise issues of concern with the line manager, staff side or health and safety representatives, occupational health or Trust Health and Safety Manager. Staff are able to raise fair concerns about excessive pressure or demands without criticism or harsh treatment
- Consider opportunities for support where recommended and/or available. Staff can expect to receive adequate training, information and supervision to do the job required in a safe manner and in the hours allowed
- Ensure they are clear on their role and responsibilities in the job.

Occupational Health Department

It is important to have good support mechanisms for staff in place for staff. Occupational Health provides a confidential service for individuals to discuss work place stressors and can provide

- A confidential and supportive service to Trust employees

- Support for individuals who have been off sick with stress and advice to both the employee and their manager, on workplace modifications including where appropriate, a phased return to work.

- Signpost employees to primary care teams, workplace counsellors or specialists, as appropriate.

Counselling Services
Provide confidential counselling for staff affected by stress caused by either work or external factors.

Professional Bodies and Trade Union organisations, this will include accredited Health and Safety Representatives- accept the responsibility of working together on issues in good faith and with goodwill with the shared intention of facilitating good working relations.

They will:

- Take part in consultation on changes to work practices or work design that could precipitate stress.
- Support members on an issue(s) of stress.
- Be involved in conducting joint assessments of the workplace to ensure that environmental stressors are managed appropriately.

Workforce will work in partnership with Managers and Employee Representatives to ensure employees are treated fairly and consistently within the framework of the policy they will

- Advise managers of options available should an employee be managed under this policy.

- Make available training for all managers and supervisory staff in good management practices

- Take a lead role in monitoring the effectiveness of measures to address stress by for example co-ordinating the staff survey action plan, collating sickness absence statistics and identifying trends in information produced relating to the potential primary causes of stress via regular workforce information reports submitted to Finance and Performance committee

- Provide continuing support to managers and individuals in a changing environment and encouraging referral to occupational health and the staff counselling service where appropriate.

Health & Safety Staff
- The Health and Safety Manager will provide specialist advice and awareness training on stress management and stress risk assessment.
- The Health and Safety team will contribute to monitoring and reviewing the effectiveness of measures to reduce stress.
- Inform LCH Health and Safety Committee of any changes developments in the field of stress.

5   Equality Analysis
The Trust expects the same standards of conduct of all employees. Managers should bear in mind the possibility that some employees may need assistance to follow or understand rules or procedures because of language or disability factors, for example. If such assistance is needed or requested, consideration should be given to providing it.

LCH aims to design and implement services, policies and measures that meet the diverse needs of its population and workforce, ensuring none are placed at a disadvantage over others.

LCH is subject to the equality duty as set out in the Equality Act 2010 and must pay "due regard" for the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

Due regard for advancing equality involves:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people

See appendix 4

6   Mental Capacity Act (MCA 2005 Code of Practice)

This Act applies to all persons over the age of 16 who are judged to lack capacity to consent or withhold consent to acts which are considered by health and social care professionals to be in the best interests of their welfare and health.

The Mental Capacity Act 2005 imposes a legal requirement on health and social care professionals to 'have regard to' relevant guidance within the Code of Practice when acting or making decisions on behalf of someone who lacks capacity to make the decision for themselves. Furthermore, they should be able to explain how they had regard to the Code when acting or making decisions.

Detailed guidance is available in the Mental Capacity Act 2005 Code of Practice (http://www.dca.gov.uk/legal-policy/mental-capacity/mca-cp.pdf).

7   Risk Assessment

It is the managers responsibility to undertake risk assessment to prevent and manage work related stress. Risk management training is available- see training section 9. Support mechanisms are available for staff should they wish to access these, including, counselling and occupational health services.

Any incidents and the way they were managed must be reported to the line manager and formally documented via the Datix® system as required under the Trust's Incident and Serious Incident Management Policy.

The principles of risk assessment for stress are the same as for any other hazard. However, it is recognised that it may be more difficult for managers to identify psychological hazards.

The risk assessment process involves the following steps:

1. identify / look for the hazards
2. assess the risk to health, i.e. decide who might be harmed and how
3. establish adequate control measures to reduce the risk to health
4. record the significant findings of the assessment
5. monitor the controls and periodically review the assessment

Process for identifying Work place Stressors
This should be raised in the first instance with the line manager and advice should be given in line with responsibilities as to how best to provide support and identify stressors.

Refer to Appendix 2 and 3 for examples of workplace stressors and what measures can be taken to minimise these

See appendix 5 for process flowchart

8   Management of Staff with work related stress
Everyone will have different coping thresholds so it can be difficult to predict who will be affected. However, it is important that when employees are identified with work place stressors, they are referred to occupational health for support and advice to both them as individuals as well as the manager.

The Sickness Absence Policy will also provide advice on how to manage those who may be absent from work due to work place stressors.

Support for Staff

Mediation
An identified employee is available for support with mediation or advice for staff members. Please refer to the intranet for contact details

Clinical Supervision
For staff involved in clinical practice, clinical supervision is a key support mechanism. Clinical supervision arrangements should be robust, adhered to, and should include peer support. The standards for supervision are outlined in the Clinical Supervision Policy and are monitored via the Quality Framework submissions.

Process for accessing information on the management of work related stress
Staff will have access to information and be made aware of the issues relating to work-related stress through:

- This policy which will be available to all staff via the Trust intranet
- Through the implementation this policy
- The Health and Safety Executive website
- Engagement in the NHS staff survey
- Trust wide risk assessments and local risk assessments.

Workshops
A specific stress management workshop is available to support staff. This is available for all staff and provides tools and techniques to recognise personal stress and

identifies some common coping mechanisms to support self management of the symptoms.

9 Training Needs

Staff are directed to the LCH Statutory and Mandatory Training Policy for Risk Management Training in relation to completing risk assessments, up to date information is available on the Intranet for course details.

Competency frameworks for staff should be developed and expectations of the role clearly explained during induction. During employment if it is identified that staff are suffering with work related stress then these elements of initial training will need to be revisited.

10   Monitoring Compliance and Effectiveness

- Counselling will provide quarterly data on the numbers of staff that have sought help from the counselling team to the Workforce department
- Workforce will provide reports on the number of cases reported as absent due to work related stress as part of the quarterly performance report to Finance and Performance Committee
- Annual staff survey results will advise the Trust of staff opinion in this area and provide a report relating to the HSE stress management standards
- Compliance with statutory and mandatory training requirements will be monitored by Workforce Information through ESR, a follow up system is in place for non attenders within Workforce information and the service manager.
- All of the above data will be reviewed annually to identify any themes and allow planning of targeted intervention to reduce incidents of work related stress.

11   Ratification and approval process

This policy will be approved by JNCF, it will then be ratified by the Remuneration Committee.

12 Dissemination and Implementation

Dissemination of this policy will be via the Workforce Department, line managers and is made available to staff via the Trust intranet.

Implementation will require Operational Directors/General Managers/Heads of Services to ensure that they and their staff understand their responsibilities for reporting and managing stress.

13   Review arrangements

The Stress Management Policy will be reviewed by after 3 years or after any significant change in legislation

14   Associated documents

Sickness Absence Policy
Equality Act 2010
HSE Guidance
Health and Safety at Work Act
Incident reporting policy

15   References

LCH recognises and accepts its responsibilities as an employer to provide a safe and healthy working environment for all its employees, as required under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, to ensure the health, safety and welfare at work of their employees and of any persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions

Appendix 1

HSE Management Standards

The Management Standards approach has been developed by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) to reduce the levels of work-related stress reported by British workers.

The standards and supporting processes are designed to:
- Help risk assessment for stress
- Encourage employers, employers and their representatives to work in partnership to address work – related stress throughout the organisation
- Provide the yardstick by which organisation can gauge their performance in tackling the key causes of stress

The Management Standards define the characteristics, or culture, of an Organisation where stress is the being managed effectively. They are listed here and can also be found on www.hse.gov.uk/stress/standards along with a comprehensive tool kit

The Management Standards cover six key areas of work design that, if not properly managed are associated with poor health and well being, lower productivity and increased sickness absence. In other words, the six Management Standards cover the primary sources of stress at work. These are:

1. Demands: Includes issues like workload, work patterns and the work environment

The standard is that:

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

What should be happening/states to be achieved?

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

2. Control: How much say the person has in the way they do their work

The standard is that:

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

What should be happening/states to be achieved?

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

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

The standard is that:

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

What should be happening/states to be achieved?

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

4. **Relationships: Includes promoting positive working to avoid conflict and dealing with unacceptable behaviour**

The standard is that:

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

What should be happening/states to be achieved?

- The Trust promotes positive behaviours at work to avoid conflict and ensure fairness;
- Employees share information relevant to their work;
- The organisation has agreed policies and procedures to prevent or resolve unacceptable behaviour;
- Systems are in place to enable and encourage managers to deal with unacceptable behaviour; and
- Systems are in place to enable and encourage employees
- To report unacceptable behaviour.

5. Role: Whether people understand their role within the Trust and whether the Trust ensures that the person does not have conflicting roles

The standard is that:

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

What should be happening/states to be achieved?

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

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

The standard is that:

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

What should be happening/states to be achieved?

- The organisation provides employees with timely information to enable them to understand the reasons for proposed changes;
- The organisation ensures adequate employee consultation on changes and provides opportunities for employees to influence proposals;
- Employees are aware of the probable impact of any changes to their jobs. If necessary, employees are given training to support any changes in their jobs;
- Employees are aware of timetables for changes;
- Employees have access to relevant support during changes.

Appendix 2

Possible Signs, Symptoms and Consequences of Stress

Signs and symptoms of stress vary from one individual to another. Some of the signs and symptoms may include the following:

Behavioural

Short term	**Long term**
Over indulgence in smoking/alcohol/drugs	Marital/family breakdown
Impulsive behaviour/apathy	
Errors/accidents	
Poor interpersonal relationships	
Poor work performance/job loss	

Physical

Short term	**Long term**
Headaches	Heart disease
Backaches	Hypertension
Disturbed sleep patterns/tiredness	Ulcers
Nausea/dizziness	Poor general health
Indigestion	Insomnia
Chest pain	

Emotional

Short term	**Long term**
Anxiety/depression	Chronic depression & anxiety
Lack of motivation	Neurosis
Difficulty in concentrating	Mental breakdown
Boredom	Suicide
Irritability	
Low self esteem	
Panic attacks	

Possible consequences of stress in the workplace:

- Reduced motivation & commitment to work
- Reduced morale
- Decreased productivity
- Poor judgement
- Reduced quality of patient care
- Increase in errors and accidents
- Tension & conflict between colleagues
- Increased absenteeism
- High staff turnover
- Effects on home / family life
- Whole teams, department and organisations can suffer from stress in the same way as individuals do. This can result in "fight, flight or freeze" reactions. Information on this is also available from Breathe.

Appendix 3

Hints & Tips Which May Help People to Cope Better with Stress

In addition to support available from the occupational health department and e learning, the following ideas may also help:

- Rest & relaxation – learning to relax

- Take a lunch break away from your work place

- Exercise – take regular exercise.

- Lifestyle – making time for leisure activities and interests

- Talking – talking things through with friends or relatives can help

- Take time to think – thinking time each day can help to manage time and priorities

- Good health – eating sensibly, getting enough rest & avoiding harmful effects of alcohol and tobacco

- Not being afraid to ask for help

Appendix 4: Equality Analysis (EA) – Relevance Screening Form

1. Name of the document	Managing Stress in the workplace Policy			
2. What are the main aims and objectives of the document	The specific aim of this policy is to assure Leeds Community Healthcare NHS Trust that all staff who experience stress is supported in the workplace			
3. Is this a key strategic document?	**Yes**		**No**	
			No	
4. What impact will this document have on the public or staff?	**High**	**Medium**	**Low**	**Don't know**
		medium		
Explain:				
5. Is there any evidence, or reasons that different groups have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in respect of this particular document?	**Yes**	**No**		**Don't know**
	yes			
Explain:				

If you have answered **Yes** to question 3, you should move straight onto EA.

If, for question 4 you have answered **Low**, there is no need to continue to conduct an EA.

If for question 4 you have answered **Medium** and **No** for question 5, there is no need to conduct an EA.

If, for question 4 you have answered **Medium** or **Don't Know**, and have answered **Yes** or **Don't Know** for question 5 you should move on to a **Stage One** EA.

If, for question 4 you have answered **High**, you need to conduct an EA.

	Equality Analysis	None
6. Based on the result of the screening, is an EA required?	yes	

Amanda Wilkinson HR Manager, 25 October 2011

Process for the management of work related stress to be undertaken by the manager

Step 1
Examine existing data to help identify workplace stressors using the information below which can be provided through Workforce information, Human resources and the Clinical Governance team

Sickness absence particularly stress related

Turnover rates and exit interviews
Examine reasons for leaving

Accidents at work
Review accidents or near misses related to human factors

Reports of Physical and non physical abuse

Grievances

Complaints

Staff survey

Appraisal

Step 2
Identify who is at risk and ways of reducing the risk

Complete a risk assessment template using the form and guidance available on the intranet

Step 3
Implement control measures via use of an action plan

Ensure all members of staff have job descriptions and understand their role

Ensure appraisals are undertaken, that objectives are set, and performance monitored; identifying and addressing issues at an early stage.

Involve staff where possible in decision making

Identify training needs and provide support for these

Consider flexible working options where possible

Provide support to staff in coping mechanisms

Step 4
Monitor control measures put in place and revise as necessary

Meet with employee to ensure agreed actions have been implemented
This may be linked to PKDR

Revise control measures if they need changing

Record when actions are complete

Step 5
Review

Review the agreed actions with the employee in 6 months

Complete a second risk assessment if necessary to assess if the control measures implemented have reduced the risk.

Review the agreed actions with the employee after 1 year

Policy dissemination and implementation plan - Tick boxes that apply and add comments

John Glynn		LCH Managing Stress in the Workplace Policy	
	Actions	**Dates**	**Comments**
No	Induction Sessions required - provide dates:		
No	Launch Event required - provide dates:		
Yes	Raising at meetings, provide dates/which meetings:		Discussed at absence meetings if appropriate
Yes	Specific Instructions for disseminating the document	Ongoing	During induction process and training events
Yes	Lead for audit and monitoring		Workforce information H&S team
No	Do you require a link through to Leeds Health Pathways?		
The following will be actioned by the Workforce lead who uploads documents onto the intranet:			

- Email business units and departments requesting dissemination of document to applicable services
- Document uploaded on the LCH intranet
- Article submitted for to the next Community talk

Policy Consultation Responses

Responder (including job titles and organisation)	Version, Comment and Date	Response from Author
Staffside	Can we expand Occupational Health responsibilities	Included suggested wording
	Are the appendices available on the intranet	Not separately they are part of the policy and this is on the intranet
	Is this the risk assessment for the prevention and management of work related stress?	Not specifically for work related stress. This is a generic assessment which can be used to assess any risk
	Is there an assessment for staff to self assess?	No
	Can appendix 2 be used as a self assessment?	No
	Is the risk assessment template on the intranet	Yes
Gill Armstrong	Can section 7 be put in a table	This has been incorporated as a flow chart see appendix 5
Aventis	The risk assessment tool should be an appendix	This is on the intranet with guidance in a format which can be used electronically. If attached to the policy this would be pdf and not usable electronically
	Consider additions to Support for staff section	Relevant sections included
	Consider additions to monitoring section	Relevant sections included
Liz Whitworth	Staff responsibilities section Staff must accept opportunities- This does not fit with the voluntary nature of counselling and mediation	Changed to staff must consider
	Workforce Section – Provide training	Change this to make available
	Appendix 3 – Can we refer to e learning instead of Breathe	Changed wording in appendix

Policy Consultation Process

Title of Document	**Managing Stress in the workplace Policy**
Author	**Amanda Wilkinson, HR Manager**
New / Revised Document	**Revised**
Lists of persons involved in developing the policy	**John Glynn, Health and Safety Officer**
List of persons involved in the consultation process	Maureen Goddard, Head of Workforce John Glynn Health and Safety Officer Mike Harrop Risk and Health and Safety Manager NHS Leeds Aventis solutions Shelagh Davenport – Staff side