Management of Violence and Aggression and Workplace Stress in the HSE

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Responsibilities

- Outlined in Corporate Safety Statement and included in local SSSS
- Delegates day-to-day operational responsibility to all Directors, Senior Managers and Line Managers
- Must ensure each site/service has in place written risk assessments which are communicated, monitored, reviewed and updated at least annually and in the event of any significant change in legislation, work activity or place of work
What is Work related aggression and violence?

The HSE has adopted the EU definition of work related aggression and violence as:

“any incident where staff are abused, threatened or assaulted in circumstances related to their work, involving an explicit or implicit challenge to their safety, wellbeing or health.”
Who is at Risk?

Employees who may be at a greater risk:
• Work alone
• Work after normal working hours
• Work and travel in the community
• Provide or withhold a service
• Exercise authority
• Provide care and advice for service users with risk factors
• New, inexperienced employees who have not received the necessary training or developed the required skills.
Risk Assessment

Employer to:

Identify the hazards at the place of work, assess the risks from those hazards and have in place a written assessment of those risks as they apply to employees and others affected by the employer’s activities.

Section 19 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005
Risk Reduction/Control Measures

Working environment:

- Layout, fixtures & fittings
- Space
- Information & signage for service users
- Access & Egress
- Security systems/monitors/alarms
Risk Reduction/Control Measures

Training: Based on a training needs analysis informed by risk assessment

Difficult People: Why they act that way & how to deal with them (HSELandD)

Facing confrontation in customer services (HSELandD)
Risk Reductions/Control Measures

- Lone Working
- Emergency Plans/Procedures
- Incident Management

NIMS
National Incident Management System
Management of Aggressive phone calls

No employee is expected to have to deal with aggressive/abusive callers.

The behaviour on the telephone may fall short of normal standards.

Consider our service users needs, maintain a balance between the rights of the employee and the rights of the service users.
Maintaining control of a call

- Keep calm and try to remain as objective as possible
- Do not respond with aggression
- Try not take what caller is saying personally
- Ask and keep asking for the facts
- Try to keep the tone of your voice calm and measured
- Let the caller “vent and have his/her say”
- Listen! Question and confirm what they are saying
- Remain positive and confident, do not allow the caller to take over the call
- Follow through on agreed actions
- END the call
Receiving Abusive Calls

- Inform the caller, firmly but politely, that you find the language they are using offensive and that you will end the conversation if the abusive language does not stop.

- If it continues, despite repeating your warning, hang up.

- Make a detailed note of the call.

- Inform the staff member(s) who is/are involved with the caller.

- Report any incidents of abusive threatening behaviour or language to your line manager.
What is Lone Working?

“are those employees who work by themselves without close or direct supervision (HSA 2011)”

Lone Workers are those who are physically isolated from colleagues and without access to immediate assistance

Risk Assessment - Section 19 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005
Risk Reduction/Control Measures

Control point established to leave details of lone working activities. For each lone worker the details should include:

- Name
- Address, home telephone number and emergency contact
- Mobile phone number and/or pager number
- Work start time
- Itinerary of visits:
  - Name, address and telephone number of each service user
  - The order of visits
  - Expected time of visit or call-in
  - Car registration make and model

Escalation procedure to be in place
Risk Reduction/Control Measures

Fixed Workplaces
• Controlled access and egress
• Access to parking
• Location and layout of consultation / interview rooms
  - centrally located with viewing panels
  - no additional equipment / furniture that could be used as missiles or weapons
  - chairs and tables should be strategically placed to allow access to exit route if necessary
• Communication devices (use of panic alarms, CCTV, etc)
• Easy access to exit as appropriate

Emergency Plans/Procedures

Incident management
**Stress**

STRESS is a mental and physical condition which results from pressure or demands that strain or exceed your capacity to cope. The sources of such pressure or demands are called STRESSORS.

**Work-related (WRS) or occupational stress**
The conditions, practices and events at work which may give rise to stress. WRS is stress caused by or made worse by work.
Stress

Work-related stress in Ireland doubled from 8% in 2010 to 17% in 2015 (2018 study by the Economic and Social Research Institute)

Sectors where employees are most likely to report stress:
- Health sector (18%)
- Public administration (16%)
- Manufacturing (15%)

Causes of stress:
- Emotional demands (dealing with angry clients/customers, hiding emotions at work).
- Time pressure (not enough time, tight deadlines)
- Bullying, harassment, violence, discrimination
- Long working hours
Employee opinion of stress

My organisation is genuinely interested in the wellbeing of its staff

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I feel that my level of stress sometimes affects my work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I believe the source of my stress is work-related

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I tend to manage any work-related stress well

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I am aware of facilities where I work that provide support to staff experiencing stress in work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At my work I always persevere, even when things do not go well

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Symptoms of stress

**Behaviour: You may:**
- Find it hard to sleep
- Change your eating habits
- Smoke or drink more
- Avoid friends and family

**Mentally you may:**
- Be more indecisive
- Find it hard to concentrate
- Suffer poor memory
- Feelings of inadequacy
- Low self esteem

**Physical symptoms**
- Tiredness
- Ingestion & nausea
- Headaches
- Aching muscles

**Emotionally you are likely to:**
- Get irritable or angry
- Be anxious
- Feel numb
- Be hypersensitive
- Feel drained and listless
Workplace Stress Risk Assessment

• Workplace stress risk assessment is a **legal requirement**.
• The HSE Workplace Stress Risk Assessment form is based on the UK Management Standards
• It can be used proactive or reactively, with an individual staff member or a team
# Work related Stress Risk Assessment Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demands</th>
<th>Relationships</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is causing you to feel under excessive pressure at work?</td>
<td>Are there any issues or tensions within your team/service?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are key aspects of your role/job description?</td>
<td>Have you seen any bullying/harassing behaviour in your team?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you clear on service priorities? How do you prioritise your daily work duties?</td>
<td>Do you have difficulty working with anyone? Manager/colleague/other health care worker?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you clear on work deadlines and are they realistic?</td>
<td>Do you and your work colleagues support each other?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you feel you have the right skills &amp; knowledge to do your job?</td>
<td>What is morale like within your team?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you the resources you need to do your job?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you find your work boring or repetitive?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Control</th>
<th>Role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Are you clear about who does what in your Dept/area?</td>
<td>Do you feel you have been properly inducted into your role?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do I, as your manager, give you enough guidance &amp; support?</td>
<td>Do you understand your role?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you have opportunities to develop your skills/use your initiative?</td>
<td>Do you have a clear reporting structure?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you any flexibility in when you take your breaks/Annual Leave?</td>
<td>Do you know what is expected of you at work?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Support</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is there good communication in your Dept/area? e.g. One-to-one meetings with manager/team meetings?</td>
<td>Is there a lot of change in your service?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are your work colleagues supportive?</td>
<td>Have you had an opportunity to discuss/comment on these changes within your service – e.g. at team meetings?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you require further training/skills development?</td>
<td>Am I, as your manager, supporting you enough in this change?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are there pressures outside work that are affecting you at work?</td>
<td>Do your colleagues/team provide support through the change?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would you like support to deal with these pressures?</td>
<td>Is there further information/support you require?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you aware of HSE employee supports available? Do you need information on how to access any of them?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Risk Reduction/Controls measures

Eliminate the source of hazards/stressors - often involves affecting change

Reduce the risk by reducing the hazards/stressors in the workplace and /or limiting their impact

Protecting employees from the risk by limiting the exposure to the hazards/stressors

Monitor and review
Critical Incident Stress Management

A critical incident as ‘an event out of the range of normal experience – one which is sudden and unexpected, makes you lose control, involves the perception of a threat to life and can include elements of physical or emotional loss’.

Critical Incidents can include:
- multiple deaths,
- severe injuries
- exposure to human remains
- injuries to or death of children or people known to
Benefits of Managing Violence & aggression & Stress in the Workplace

**Employees**: obtain greater wellbeing and job satisfaction

**Managers**: obtain a healthier more motivated and productive workforce

**Workplaces** results in:

- improved performance
- reduced accident and injury rates and
- lower absenteeism

**Society**: results in lower costs and reduced burden on services
Supports Available - HR

HR helpdesk - 1850 444 925

- Advice offered on HR policy implementation

- Advice offered on the management of employee relations etc.
Supports available- Occupational Health

-Offer specialist advice Managers/staff

-Assess employee & provide support in relation to functionality & to consider options/solutions for the benefit of employee & Manager.

-Referral pathways for both Manager & employees

[www.hse.ie/eng/staff/safetywellbeing/occhealth]
Supports - Health Promotion & Improvement
The little things campaign

- Talking to someone about what’s troubling you can make a big difference to how you feel.

- Confide in someone you trust and what’s troubling you can seem more manageable.

- You can always call the Samaritans for a listening ear. Free call 116 123.

When we do, little things can make a big difference to how we feel.

Find the little things that work for you.
The little things campaign

Keeping active is a great way to protect both your health and your mood.

Even a quick walk every day will make a difference to how you feel.

When we do, little things can make a big difference to how we feel.

Find the little things that work for you

The HSE have developed a website to promote physical activity [www.getirelandactive.ie](http://www.getirelandactive.ie)

This web site gives direction, support and resources to anyone wishing to get physically active.
The little things campaign

We all feel better after a good sleep and even better if we do it regularly.

Get the 8 hours a night that we all need.

When we do, little things can make a big difference to how we feel.
Find the little things that work for you.

www.healthpromotion.ie
Supports - Employee Assistance and Counselling Services (EACS)

- Provides confidential counselling support for employees experiencing stress
- Provide support & guidance to Managers in responding to employee wellbeing issues
- Group support /facilitation sessions for staff who have experienced event that has been emotionally/mentally upsetting
- Group /individual support for staff who are preparing for an emotionally challenging event
- CISM support following critical incidents

www.hse.ie/eng/staff/safety wellbeing/eap
Supports - HR LEDT

Coaching focuses on unlocking a person's potential in order to maximise performance.
• Career Management
• Personal Development - Planning and Implementation
• Tailored Assessment - Strengths and Development
NHSF Homepage

http://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/safetywellbeing/
Supporting documentation

- Policy on the Prevention and Management of Work-Related Aggression and Violence 2018
- Aggression & Violence Policy fast fact

- Work Related Aggression & Violence FAQ
- Aggressive Phone Calls Fast Fact

- Policy on Lone Working
- FAQ on Lone Working
- Lone Working Policy fast

- Policy for Prevention and Management of Stress in the Workplace 2018
- Stress policy fast fact
- Policy on Preventing and Managing Critical Incident Stress

- Risk Assessment forms:
  General Risk Assessment, Workplace Stress Risk Assessment

www.hse.ie/safetyandwellbeing
Helpdesk – Logging a Request

Safety, Health and Wellbeing

Health & Safety Helpdesk:
Use the H&S Helpdesk to log your requests for advice and information and to book/cancel training.

NEW USER

REGISTERED USER

Health and Safety HELPDESK

For support with helpdesk, call 1850 420 420 between 10:30-12:00 and 14:00-15:30

Home - My Health and Safety Self Service

User name
Not Required
Password
Not Required
Log on

Log a new Request
- INFORMATION/ADVICE/AUDIT: Log your Request
- TRAINING: Log a Training Request
- TRAINING: Log a Group Training Request (5 or more)
- Report HSA Correspondence

All Notices
Welcome to your Health & Safety Help Desk
Helpdesk User Manual
Training Brochure
Training Terms and Conditions
Helpdesk

Log your health and safety request at HSE Safety, Health and Wellbeing @ www.hse.ie/safetyandwellbeing

Alternatively, contact the

Health and Safety HELPDESK

For support with helpdesk, call 1850 420 420 between 10:30-12:00 and 14:00-15:30