This FAST FACT provides a brief overview of the HSE Policy on the Prevention & Management of Work-related Aggression and Violence 2018

The policy can be downloaded here.

DID YOU KNOW THAT that the Health and Social Care Sector accounted for 20.1% of Incidents of Violence and Aggression reported to the HSA in 2015¹?

DEFINITION: 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”

POLICY STATEMENT: The HSE is committed to creating a safe environment within which to work or to be treated. The HSE does not tolerate verbal or physical harassment in any form by employees, service users, members of the public or others.

AIM: The aim of the Policy is to bring about a reduction of any foreseeable risks and ensure that appropriate measures are in place to provide safe systems of work in relation to the risk of aggression and violence.

SCOPE: This Policy applies to all HSE staff and others working in the HSE including temporary employees (including agency staff) and students.

KEY HEALTH AND SAFETY LEGISLATION AND REFERENCE MATERIAL (for full list please refer to Section 4 of the Policy)

- Safety, Health & Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 2007 (S.I. No. 299 of 2007)

MANAGERS KEY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Ensure that this Policy and related procedures are communicated to all employees
- Carry out a suitable and sufficient risk assessment in consultation with employees, thus ensuring that all hazards associated with work related aggression and violence are identified and appropriate control measures introduced to eliminate, minimise or control risks
- Ensure where appropriate, that service user specific clinical risk assessment is undertaken and informs the service department risk assessment and that relevant information is communicated appropriately to relevant staff
- Ensure employees identified as being at risk are given appropriate training based on training needs assessment
- Provide appropriate support and ensure the availability of additional supports

¹ HSA (2016) Summary of workplace injury, illness and fatality statistics
It is important to note that incidents which occur within the context of service provision involve a broad range of contributory factors and influences. These factors involve a process of complex interactions between:

- Service Users and others
- Employees
- The interaction taking place
- The physical and service environment in which the interactions takes place

Managers must ensure that all work activities are subjected to hazard identification and risk assessment(s) and that agreed control measures are put in place to eliminate those hazards or reduce the risk so far as is reasonably practicable.

**Risk Assessments & Clinical Risk**

Clinical risk assessment happens within the context of multi-disciplinary care processes including assessment care planning and evaluation in a formal documented way. All clinical risk assessment processes in clinical care areas, which must be conducted by clinical staff, will include an assessment of aggression & violence risk. Where a service user poses a risk of aggression & violence, Individual care plan and risk assessments must be completed and regularly reviewed as part of the care planning process.

**Incident Management**

All accidents, incidents and near misses must be reported, and managed in accordance with the *HSE Incident Management Framework, 2018*. For further information, please refer to Section 7.4.

**Support for Employees**

Employees who are exposed to various manifestations of aggression and violence will be provided with sensitive and practical support to assist them cope with the occurrence. Please refer to section 7.9 for additional guidance.

**Supporting Documentation (For Full List please refer to Section 10 the Policy)**

- HSE (2017) Best Practice Guidance for Mental Health Services