Mental Health and Wellbeing Policies and Procedures Toolkit

A policy is a clear, straightforward statement that outlines how your organisation intends to conduct its services and actions. It provides a set of guiding principles to help with decision making and response.

Having a Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy can benefit both staff members and customers alike. A clearly laid-out, accessible policy gives reassurance to staff members who will be confident in their response to difficult situations.

A policy helps to define the roles and responsibilities of staff members in such situations, and the fellow staff members, customers, service users or pupils who are receiving support benefit from a consistent and informed response. By making the policy publicly available, those who choose to disclose information can then be aware of what sort of response to expect.

This toolkit provides prompts to help to develop a comprehensive Mental Health and Wellbeing policy and associated procedures. Different organisations will require different policies, dependent on the service they provide, the work they do, the size of the organisation, the age, needs and demographic of the people they support or encounter in their work, and the make-up of their workforce.

Training

Change in working circumstances

Response to working exposure to trauma

Response to the disclosure of mental health issues

Policy Statement

How to Use This Toolkit

There needs to be some preparatory work before you can write a Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy.

1. First, ensure you are aware of any legislative framework your organisation works within and the duty of care and statutory obligations you have to staff or people who use your services, as these will have a direct impact on the organisation's response

2. Collate the existing policies your organisation has and clarify the existing procedures you have in place in response to someone disclosing a mental health issue. These may differ depending on whether the person is an employee or a person who is using your services. You may also wish to research the Mental Health and Wellbeing Policies of other organisations in your area, and/or similar organisations.

3. Gather information on the services and resources available to your staff to support their mental health and wellbeing.

4. Find out about the mental health and suicide prevention related training available to your staff members, and the current provision and uptake of this training.

5. Establish whether your organisation participates in any mental health campaigns, initiatives or awards to promote good mental health and wellbeing in your workplace.

Once you have gathered all this information, if available, you will be in a position to start writing your Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy Statement. The process of gathering this information will also help you to identify gaps in your approach to your employees' and/or customers' mental health and wellbeing. The identification of these gaps may lead you to develop an Action Plan which you could detail at the end of the Policy.

You may find it helpful to use the example Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy included as part of the Toolkit, replacing the statements in italics with statements that reflect the approach of your organisation. In the case of an organisation with particularly vulnerable staff or customers, you may wish to have specific guidance and information on how a staff member should respond to a person disclosing suicidal thoughts and/or self-harming behaviour. The same prompts regarding the duty of care, procedures, staff support, training, campaigns and information can be used to produce a policy and guidance for staff in relation to Suicide Prevention and/or Self-Harm.

Policy statement

Your Mental Health and Wellbeing policy should start with an opening statement which details what your company hopes to gain from having a policy in place. For example, protection for staff wellbeing; clarity on procedures; better informed workforce.

[Company name] believes that having a Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy benefits both staff members and customers alike. Our Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy describes how we will look after our staff and customers' mental health and wellbeing. This policy aims to provide protection for staff's wellbeing by encouraging clarity of procedures when a person discloses a mental health issue, and to give reassurance to staff members in order to be confident in their response to difficult situations. This policy defines the roles and responsibilities of staff members in such situations, and the fellow staff members and customers who are receiving support benefit from a consistent and informed response.

The next step is to clarify who this policy will be relevant to, for example staff members, customers and/or services users.

[Staff members] can use this policy in order to find out how to support *[themselves, their colleagues, those they line manage, customers]* in relation to mental health. Employees have a duty of care towards their customers and colleagues, but also a duty of self-care to themselves to keep healthy and mentally well. *[Company name]* recognises that work pressures can result in poor mental health, and wishes to promote a supportive workplace culture.

You may wish to consider the inclusion of a glossary to clarify terms used, for example definitions of mental health, suicide and self-harm.

A glossary of mental health terms can be found on page *[___]*.

Summarise the relevant legislative and policy documents and associated responsibilities that affect the target audience for this policy. This could include Employer Health and Safety legislation; Child Protection and Adult Protection frameworks.

[Company name] recognises that it is required to provide employees with a safe and healthy work environment under *[the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, The Equality Act 2010]*. *[Company name]* also has a duty of care to its service users under *[the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 and the Adult Support and Protection Act (Scotland) Act 2007]*

State how this policy will be monitored and how often it will be reviewed.

This policy will be reviewed *[every year]* by using the indicators collated at the end of this document.

State the procedures which are in place for staff to follow if they are experiencing poor mental health themselves. This could include listing the resources available through your company, such as occupational health or counselling support, and the procedures for accessing these. A flowchart may be easier for people to understand.

[Staff members and customers] who are experiencing issues with their mental health can find general information on sources of support *[in the Mental Health Directory of Services]*. If a member of staff is concerned about the mental health of a fellow staff member they can *[raise these concerns with their line manager]*.

State the procedures which are in place for staff to follow if they have concerns about the mental health or wellbeing of a staff member colleague.

Staff members who are worried about the mental health or wellbeing of a colleague can *[raise concerns with their line manager]*. Managers who are concerned about a member of staff can *[contact Human Resources]*. If an employee advises they are off sick due to their mental wellbeing, a manager should *[follow the Mental Wellbeing Early Intervention flowchart found on the company intranet.]*

State the procedures which are in place for staff to follow if they have concerns about the mental health or wellbeing of a service user and/or customer, if these are different to the above.

Staff members who are concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a customer can *[direct the customer to the Directory of mental health services available in their area]*.

Provide a comprehensive list of the internal and external information and resources available to support people who are experiencing issues with their mental health.

Resources and information available to support people who are experiencing issues with their mental health include *[the directory of services, helpline, peer support]*.

List the areas within your organisation where there are workers who are particularly at risk of trauma due to the nature of their work. This should cover cumulative trauma (regular exposure to bereaved persons, palliative care workers etc) and vicarious trauma (disclosure of traumatic events, support workers etc).

[Company name] acknowledges that they have a duty of care to carry out risk assessments in work areas to identify scenarios that could give rise to staff experiencing trauma. Environments within *[company name]* where there are workers who are particularly at risk of trauma due to the nature of their work include cumulative trauma from *[regular exposure to bereaved persons, palliative care workers]* and vicarious trauma from [*disclosure of traumatic events, support workers]*, for example. If a staff member is concerned about the effects of trauma on a colleague or customer they can *[make their line manager aware of their concerns].*

Write the support offered to those who may experience single incident trauma (accident, traffic collision, assault etc), and how staff access this support.

Single incident traumas such as *[accidents, traffic collision]* can be reported to [*Occupational Health]*. Support after trauma is triggered by *[the events itself, request from staff member, request from manager]*. Support offered after a single incident trauma can be accessed by *[requesting support from managers, calling a helpline].*

State the support offered to those who may experience cumulative or vicarious trauma due to the nature of their work and how the organisation targets those workers exposed to trauma. This should include information on regularly scheduled support (team meetings, supervision) or support available on request (counselling, peer support), and the pathways to this support.

Regularly scheduled support offered after cumulative or vicarious trauma can include *[training, staff supervision]*. Support available on request can include *[helplines, counselling]. [Company name]* targets those vulnerable to experiencing trauma by *[monitoring those in 'at risk' roles, promoting training].*

Changes in work and life circumstances

Detail the support in place to respond to a significant change in working circumstance for employees (redundancy, change of job or pay grade, mergers, significant events or changes, retirement).

A significant change in working circumstances such as *[redundancy, retirement, mergers]* can create a need for support for staff members. Employees moving either to a new organisation or to a new role within *[company name]* can be supported in their transition by *[discussions with their line manager or HR]*.

Outline the support offered to workers experiencing a change in their life circumstances external to work (having a baby, sickness, bereavement). Support could include maternity leave, flexible worker, compassionate leave etc.

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Training

Write a statement on the mental health training available to staff members. This should cover:
- The range of training available
- Who can access the training – such as staff members, the general public and volunteers
- Whether time off is made available to attend training
- The standard of training each employee is expected to attain

[Company name] recognises that mental health and wellbeing training is important for staff members to access in order to fulfil their duty of self-care and duty of care to their customers. All Mental Health and Suicide Prevention training such as *[Scotland's Mental Health First Aid, Suicide Intervention Prevention Programme and ASIST]* is available to *[all staff members].* Information about availability of training can be found *[on the [company name] website, noticeboard, emails].* Training can be taken *[during work hours with the line manager's permission, during company-wide training days].* *[Company name]* takes the approach that 100% of staff should complete *[Essential Wellbeing Training, Scotland's Mental Health First Aid]* training.

Promotion of Good Mental Health

Write down the awareness raising activities and campaigns that your organisation participates in to promote good mental health among your employees. Detail the initiatives or awards which your organisation has signed up to or is working towards.

The workforce at *[company name]* is made aware of mental health, wellbeing and stress through various events. *[Company name]* is committed to running activities during Mental Health Awareness Week in May, Suicide Prevention Week in September, and the Mental Health Arts and Film Festival in October. *[Company name]* supports staff members who wish to promote mental health and wellbeing as part of activities set up during these campaigns. *[Company name]* has also signed up to the See Me at Work and Healthy Working Lives initiatives and seeks to become an employer which supports good mental health and address stigma through these initiatives.

Monitoring

Identify a range of indicators which can be routinely gathered to measure to impact of your mental health and wellbeing policy. This could include:
• Uptake of training
• Uptake of counselling services
• Hits on webpages
• Sickness absences related to mental health issues
• Participation in awareness raising campaigns
• Employee feedback forms

You may wish to capture this information in a table, assigning targets and actions alongside them.

[Company name] has developed an action plan to further improve its support for its employees' mental wellbeing. It monitors the progress of these actions and the overall health of the mental health and wellbeing of its workforce by analysing the indicators detailed below.

Monitoring (cont.)

Action	Indicator	Target	Progress	Comment	Future Actions
Staff know how to respond appropriately to a person disclosing poor mental health	Percentage of workforce trained in Mental Health and Suicide Prevention	10% trained by 2018	15% trained by October 2017	Exceeded target by 5%	Continue to roll out training. Ensure 50% of Line Managers are trained.
Staff are encouraged to talk openly about mental health	[Company name] seeks See Me accreditation	Accreditation by March 2018	Ran stigma awareness campaign in May 17; mental health e-learning available to all staff	On course to achieve accreditation by March 2018	Continue to run annual anti-stigma campaign
Staff are supported to access employee counselling scheme review.	Employees report in annual survey that they felt able to access counselling	90% of employees who felt they could have benefited from counselling were able to access it.	Criteria for accessing counselling and need to seek line manager permission reviewed		Continue to monitor responses to counselling questions in survey
Improve the information available to employees – assess the information available to employees on the central intranet and ensure this is kept up to date and comprehensive					
Target those employees who are more likely to be exposed to vicarious trauma through the nature of their work with information about the employee support available	Staff targeted through emails and leaflets to accompany their payslips				

Mental health: Mental health is defined as a state of well-being in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community.

Self-harm: Self-harm is when somebody intentionally damages or injures their body. It's usually a way of coping with or expressing overwhelming emotional distress.

Mental wellbeing: Mental wellbeing describes your mental state - how you are feeling and how well you can cope with day-to-day life.

Cumulative trauma: Trauma created by the combined effects of stressors such as demeaning work conditions, worker/job mismatch, prejudice, unclear job expectations, impossible workloads, abusive treatment by peers or superiors, emotionally draining interactions with difficult people, and job insecurity.

Vicarious trauma: Stress and personal damage caused by helping or wanting to help a traumatised person.

Single incident trauma: Trauma from a single catastrophic event, such as violence in the workplace.

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You can also send us a text message on 07824 498145.

All Council Services can offer a telephone translation facility.

1. Policy Statement

1.1 *[Company name]* believes that having a Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy benefits both staff members and customers alike. Our Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy describes how we will look after our staff and customers' mental health and wellbeing. This policy aims to provide protection for staff's wellbeing by encouraging clarity of procedures when a person discloses a mental health issue, and to give reassurance to staff members in order to be confident in their response to difficult situations. This policy defines the roles and responsibilities of staff members in such situations, and the fellow staff members and customers who are receiving support benefit from a consistent and informed response.

1.2 *[Staff members]* can use this policy in order to find out how to support *[themselves, their colleagues, those they line manage, customers]* in relation to mental health. Employees have a duty of care towards their customers and colleagues, but also a duty of self-care to themselves to keep healthy and mentally well. *[Company name]* recognises that work pressures can result in poor mental health, and wishes to promote a supportive workplace culture.

1.3 A glossary of mental health terms can be found on page *[__]*

1.4 *[Company name]* recognises that it is required to provide employees with a safe and healthy work environment under *[the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, The Equality Act 2010]* . *[Company name]* also has a duty of care to its service users under *[the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 and the Adult Support and Protection Act (Scotland) Act 2007]*

1.5 This policy will be reviewed every *[every year]* by using the indicators collated at the end of this document.

2. Response to the disclosure of mental health issues

2.1 *[Staff members and customers]* who are experiencing issues with their mental health can find general information on sources of support *[in the Mental Health Directory of Services]*. If a member of staff is concerned about the mental health of a fellow staff member they can *[raise these concerns with their line manager]*.

2.2 Staff members who are worried about the mental health or wellbeing of a colleague can *[raise concerns with their line manager].* Managers who are concerned about a member of staff can *[contact Human Resources]*. If an employee advises they are off sick due to their mental wellbeing, a manager should *[follow the Mental Wellbeing Early Intervention flowchart found on the company intranet.]*

2.3 Staff members who are concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a customer can *[direct the customer to the Directory of mental health services available in their area].*

2.4 Resources and information available to support people who are experiencing issues with their mental health include *[the directory of services, helpline, peer support]*.

3. Response to working exposure to trauma

3.1 *[Company name]* acknowledges that they have a duty of care to carry out risk assessments in work areas to identify scenarios that could give rise to staff experiencing trauma. Environments within *[company name]* where there are workers who are particularly at risk of trauma due to the nature of their work include cumulative trauma such as *[regular exposure to bereaved persons, palliative care workers]* and vicarious trauma such

as [*disclosure of traumatic events, support workers*]. If a staff member is concerned about the effects of trauma on a colleague or customer they can [*make their line manager aware of their concerns*].

3.2 Single incident traumas such as [*accidents, traffic collision*] can be reported to [*Occupational Health*]. Support after trauma is triggered by [*the events itself, request from staff member, request from manager*]. Support offered after a single incident trauma can be accessed by [*requesting support from managers, calling a helpline*].

3.3 Regularly scheduled support offered after cumulative or vicarious trauma can include [*training, staff supervision*]. Support available on request can include [*helplines, counselling*]. [*Company name*] targets those vulnerable to experiencing trauma by [*monitoring those in 'at risk' roles, promoting training*].

4. Change in work and life circumstances

4.1 A significant change in working circumstances such as [*redundancy, retirement, mergers*] can create a need for support for staff members. Employees moving either to a new organisation or to a new role within [*company name*] can be supported in their transition by [*discussions with their line manager or HR*].

4.2 Staff members experiencing a change in their lives external to work such as [*becoming a parent, sickness, bereavement*] can access support through [*compassionate leave, maternity leave, flexible working, return to work meetings*].

5. Training

5.1 [*Company name*] recognises that mental health and wellbeing training is important for staff members to access in order to fulfil their duty of self-care and duty of care to their customers. All Mental Health and Suicide Prevention training such as [*Scotland's Mental Health First Aid, Suicide Intervention Prevention Programme and ASIST*] is available to [*all staff members*]. Information about availability of training can be found [*on the [company name] website, noticeboard, emails*]. Training can be taken during [*work hours with the line manager's permission or during company-wide training days*]. [*Company name*] takes the approach that 100% of staff should complete [*Essential Wellbeing Training, Scotland's Mental Health First Aid*] training.

6. Promotion of Good Mental Health

6.1 The workforce at [*company name*] is made aware of mental health, wellbeing and stress through various events. [*Company name*] is committed to running activities during Mental Health Awareness Week in May, Suicide Prevention Week in September, and the Mental Health Arts and Film Festival in October. [*Company name*] supports staff members who wish to promote mental health and wellbeing as part of activities set up during these campaigns. [*Company name*] has also signed up to the See Me at Work and Healthy Working Lives initiatives and seeks to become and employer which support food mental health and address stigma through these initiatives.

7. Monitoring

7.1 [*Company name*] has developed an action plan to further improve its support for its employees mental wellbeing. It monitors the progress of these actions and the overall health of the mental health and wellbeing of its workforce by analysing the indicators detailed below.

Action	Indicator	Target	Progress	Comment	Future Actions
Staff know how to respond appropriately to a person disclosing poor mental health	Percentage of workforce trained in Mental Health and Suicide Prevention	10% trained by 2018	15% trained by October 2017	Exceeded target by 5%	Continue to roll out training. Ensure 50% of Line Managers are trained.
Staff are encouraged to talk openly about mental health	[Company name] seeks See Me accreditation	Accreditation by March 2018	Ran stigma awareness campaign in May 17; mental health e-learning available to all staff	On course to achieve accreditation by March 2018	Continue to run annual anti-stigma campaign

8.1 Glossary

Mental health: Mental health is defined as a state of well-being in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community.

Self-harm: Self-harm is when somebody intentionally damages or injures their body. It's usually a way of coping with or expressing overwhelming emotional distress.

Mental wellbeing: Mental wellbeing describes your mental state - how you are feeling and how well you can cope with day-to-day life.

Trauma: A specific event or events that triggers an intense emotional response of helplessness, terror or horror. An individual will usually exhibit symptoms such as flashbacks, persistent anxiety, sleep disturbance, distraction, nervousness and a desire to avoid stimuli associated with the event.

Cumulative trauma: Trauma created by the combined effects of stressors such as demeaning work conditions, worker/job mismatch, prejudice, unclear job expectations, impossible workloads, abusive treatment by peers or superiors, emotionally draining interactions with difficult people, and job insecurity.

Vicarious trauma: Stress and personal damage caused by helping or wanting to help a traumatised person.

Single incident trauma: Trauma from a single catastrophic event, such as violence in the workplace.