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Belfast Health and Social Care Trust
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Reference No: SG 41/09

Title:	**Belfast Health & Social Care Trust Policy & Procedural Arrangements relating to the Management of Stress, Health & Well Being**			
Policy Author(s)	Natalie Wilson, Head of Occupational Health Clare Nellis, HR Manager [redacted] Health and Safety Manager			
Responsible Director:	Chris Hagan, Medical Director			
Policy Type: (tick as appropriate)	*Directorate-specific ☐	Clinical Trustwide ☐	Non-clinical Trustwide ☒	Regional Policy ☐

If ***Directorate-specific** please list the name and date of the local Committee/Group that policy was approved	Does this policy have Workforce implications? **Y** (if *Y please note the date it was approved at Workforce Governance Policy Sub-Committee)
Name: **Date:**	**Date:** NA as tabled at Joint Health & Safety Committee

Approval process:	Policy and External Guidance Assurance Committee Executive Team Meeting	**Approval date:**	**04/11/2025** **24/11/2025**
Operational Date:	April 2026	**Review Date:**	April 2029

Version No.	4.1	**Supercedes**	V4 – April 2026 – April 2031
Key Words:	Stress		
Links to other policies	General Health & Safety Policy Management of Attendance Protocol Personal Contribution Framework Equal Opportunities Policy Harmonious Working Environment Policy Working Well Together Policy Harassment Policy Working Time Guidance		

1.0 INTRODUCTION / SUMMARY OF POLICY

1.1 Background

Staff wellbeing as evidenced in attendance rates and staff surveys, are key indicators as to how well the Trust is managing stress. Keeping people healthy and productive at work is essential for a successful organisation and the Trust is committed to ensuring the health and wellbeing of staff.

Analysis of absence from work in the Trust has identified stress as the most significant single cause of work related absence and ill health.

There is a general duty on employers to protect the health and safety of their employees in the Health and Safety at Work (NI) Order 1978 and to make a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risk to health & safety of their employees, in the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (NI) 2000. This includes the risks to mental health.

The Trust is committed to improving employee health and wellbeing by:

- undertaking suitable and sufficient risk assessments for stress and taking action to manage the issues identified as required in the management of Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations (NI) 2000.
- providing employees with support and information on a wide range of health and wellbeing issues through b Well.

The Health and Safety Executive have provided guidance on tackling work related stress using the 'Management Standards' which demonstrate good practice through a step by step risk assessment approach and promoting active discussion with employees and their representatives to help decide on practical improvements that can be made.

They cover six key areas of work that, if not properly managed, are associated with poor health, lower productivity and increased accident and sickness absence rates. The Management Standards are:

- Demands
- Control
- Support
- Relationships
- Role
- Change

This policy is based on the Health and Safety Executive's document 'Tackling Work Related Stress using the Management Standards (WBK1) and Managing the Causes of Work Related Stress (HSG218)

1.2 Purpose

This policy and procedural arrangement is designed to provide managers and staff with clear information on their legislative responsibilities. This policy also encourages managers to use the Management Standards when assessing risks, take practical measures to prevent or minimise ill health and to provide adequate support to those with stress related problems. The key objectives of the policy are:

1.2.1 To recognise that workplace stress can be a health and safety issue and to acknowledge the importance of identifying and reducing workplace stressors at source.
1.2.2 To reduce the impact of work-related stress on the delivery of the Trust's services.
1.2.3 To protect and promote the health and well-being of staff within the Belfast Trust.
1.2.4 To ensure that training is provided for managers and supervisory staff in the Trust policies and procedures relating to their management role, including the recognition and management of work related stress.
1.2.5 To use existing sources of statistical information to help identify where and why work-related stress is likely to be a particular concern.
1.2.6 To ensure that adequate resources and commitment are identified at both a Corporate and Directorate level.
1.2.7 To reduce absence and ill health associated with work-related stress and promote successful return to work.
1.2.8 To ensure that staff have access to the required support and counselling services.

2.0 SCOPE OF THE POLICY

This is a corporate policy applicable to all staff including Directors and Managers.

3.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The ultimate responsibility for ensuring the health and safety of our staff and others who may be affected by the Trust's work activities rests with the Chief Executive. The Medical Director, lead Director for health and safety and the Director of human resources are both responsible for co-ordinating compliance with the requirements of this policy. The responsibility cascades down through the line management structure to co-directors, senior managers and ward, department and facility managers and to staff. All staff should familiarise themselves with their responsibilities in this Policy.

3.1 The Trust B Well Steering Group

This group was set up to consider ways to improve the health and wellbeing of all staff in the Trust. The group's action plan as implemented by sub groups, set out the key objectives in relation to the provision of an integrated and cohesive approach to promote health and wellbeing of staff at work by:

3.1.1 Ensuring the on-going commitment at a corporate and strategic level to the business case for a collaborative, partnership approach to addressing health and well-being at work.
3.1.2 Providing leadership and direction, clarifying the roles and responsibilities of managers and staff, in line with legislative requirements and best practice.
3.1.3 Seeking and providing the necessary direction, support, resources, both financial and human, and infrastructure to ensure an integrated and cohesive approach to the development, promotion, implementation and evaluation of a range of initiatives.
3.1.4 This group oversees the progress of the sub groups in implementing the Action Plan, requires progress updates twice yearly from them and ensures effective communication of initiatives.
3.1.5 Monitoring and evaluating progress and produce an updated action plan annually ensuring effective communication of progress throughout the Trust.
3.1.6 Seeking recognition through internal and external award schemes to promote and raise awareness of the work of the group and advocate best practice.

3.2 Directors, Co-Directors, Senior Managers

3.2.1 To use the example general stress risk assessment on the LOOP and supporting guidance to complete and review the required risk assessments on the management of stress.
3.2.2 To undertake and implement recommendations arising from the completion of a stress risk assessment within their areas of responsibility, using the Stress Indicator Tool **Appendix 4** and the Talking Toolkit **Appendix 5**.
To ensure staff completing the General Stress Risk Assessors are trained General Risk Assessors.
3.2.3 To ensure that staff who are absent with a stress-related illness are referred to the Occupational Health Service and have an appropriate return to work plan agreed prior to their return. **Appendix 2** details flowcharts to guide on the process for completing an individual stress risk assessment, for example where a member of staff has been absent due to work-related stress (as part of a return to work interview).
3.2.4 To ensure that all staff are aware of the Corporate Objectives and Directorates Management Plan and that they have a personal contribution plan (PCP) clearly identifying how their role contributes to the overall success of the Trust and a Personal Development Plan (PDP) detailing their development and training needs for the following year, developed in accordance with the training provided and the PCF guidelines.
3.2.5 To communicate and consult with staff both collectively and individually at the earliest opportunity on decisions that will affect them such as organisational and procedural changes and to encourage open discussion to assist in the early identification of stress related problems.
3.2.6 To effectively manage capability issues and management of attendance in accordance with Trust Policies. Changes in the frequency of absence and reasons for absence may be indicators of stress.
3.2.7 To consider the appropriateness and value of facilitating team-building events which are important for staff morale and the development of teams working well together.

3.2.8 To examine ways in which the working environment could be improved together with considering requests for flexible working arrangements under the Trust Work Life Balance Policies and facilitating these where possible.
3.2.9 To be aware of the signs and symptoms of stress and changes in individual staff behaviours. Staff may be suffering from stress that is due to external factors; this may become apparent in the workplace and affect performance. Although managers will have no control over these external stressors, beyond recommending sources of expert advice, managers need to be alert to the warning signs of stress and be as supportive as possible.
3.2.10 To promote Trust Human Resources Policies & Procedures and support services for staff.
3.2.11 To deal with individual concerns as per Health & Safety Executive guidance HSG218 and Human Resources Policies.
3.2.12 To monitor working hours and adhere to the requirements of the Working Time Regulations to ensure that staff receive adequate breaks and monitor holidays to ensure that staff are taking their full entitlement.
3.2.13 To involve trade union safety representatives in the risk assessment process, consult them in relation to any changes in work practices or work design that could result in work - related stress.
3.2.14 To achieve substantive compliance with BRAAT Stress Standard.
3.2.15 To provide support or alternative formats in terms of disability communication support or language linguistic needs, if required, to communicate the policy.

3.3 Ward, Department and Facility Managers

3.3.1 Collate information based on the Management Standards ensuring active discussion with employees and their representatives to help decide on practical improvements that can be made.
3.3.2 To complete and keep under review a general stress risk assessment for the Service as per the process outlined in Appendix 1
3.3.3 To Communicate and consult with staff through the use of the Stress Indicator Tool collectively to gather information on work related stress.
If any of the Stress Indicator Tool standards are amber or red complete the Talking toolkit with Service Area/group/staff
3.3.4 To undertake and implement recommendations arising from the completion of a stress risk assessment within their areas of responsibility.
3.3.5 To obtain the relevant information, training and guidance as are necessary to assist them in their management role and in managing work-related stress.
3.3.6 To ensure that staff who advise or are absent with a stress related illness have an individual stress risk assessment (Refer to Appendix 2) completed and where relevant have an appropriate return to work plan agreed prior to their return.
3.3.7 To communicate and consult with staff both collectively and individually at the earliest opportunity on decisions that will affect them such as organisational and procedural changes and to encourage open discussion to assist in the early identification of stress related problems.
3.3.8 To effectively manage capability issues and management of attendance in accordance with Trust policies.

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3.4 Occupational Health Service (OHS)

3.4.1 To provide advice and support to staff as well as providing advice to management on fitness to return to work and recommendations following a management referral.
3.4.2 To provide advice to managers, staff and the Health and Well Being at Work Group on the effect of work on health and well-being.
3.4.3 To direct staff to other appropriate health professionals and services (including voluntary) confidential support and counselling services.
3.4.4 To provide collective and anonymous statistical information relating to staff referrals and the reasons for such.
3.4.5 To promote and implement health and well-being initiatives in the workplace to assist in the provision of training initiatives relating to the recognition of work-related stress.
3.4.6 To develop best practices in the area through research and innovative methods that could potentially enhance the wellbeing of Trust staff.

3.5. Human Resources Department

3.5.1 To ensure the development and implementation of the relevant human resources policies and the provision of advice and guidance to managers and all staff.
3.5.2 To develop, co-ordinate and evaluate appropriate training interventions in partnership with Occupational Health Service and Health Improvement to support managers and staff in addressing stress in the workplace.
3.5.3 To provide advice and support in managing attendance associated with work-related stress in accordance with the Trust Management of Attendance Protocol.
3.5.4 To promote and evaluate the implementation of the Improving Working Lives Initiatives.

3.5.5 To provide collective and anonymous statistical information relating to staff absence and the reasons for such.
3.5.6 To promote the availability of the range of psychological and counselling services for staff to help them to resolve problems and develop-coping strategies.

3.6 Trade Union Safety Representatives

3.6.1 To consult with their members on the issue of work-related stress including conducting workplace surveys and undertaking joint workplace inspections.
3.6.2 To work in partnership with Trust managers to address stress in the workplace as outlined in this policy.
3.6.3 To encourage their members to address stress related issues and access the range of support services outlined in Here 4 U.

3.7 Health Improvement Team

3.7.1 To deliver and evaluate a range of health promotion and training initiatives to improve health and wellbeing for staff as detailed in the Health Promotion Mental Health Training Brochure.
3.7.2 To promote the services and courses available from the Recovery College.

3.8 Health and Safety Managers

3.8.1 To provide advice and guidance to managers on the Stress Management Standards and on the risk assessment process.
3.8.2 To work in partnership with the B Well Steering Group in implementing the strategy/action plan.
3.8.3 To present the key themes, in the form of a report, arising from stress focus groups to the relevant service area managers.

3.9 Staff

3.9.1 Staff have a legal responsibility to take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others. Staff should seek advice to assist in managing excessive pressure and demands they feel are being placed on them. Staff are expected to be aware of the impact of their behaviour at work on others.
3.9.2 Staff should support their colleagues if they are experiencing work-related stress or volunteer to raise the issue with management on their behalf.
3.9.3 Staff should inform their manager at an early stage of any stress related issue; particularly work-related that they feel may be adversely affecting themselves or their work. Where staff feel unable to report their concerns to their line manager, they should feel confident to approach any of the following:

- Human Resources Department
- Their GP

- Their Trade Union Side or Professional Body Representative
- Their work colleagues
- A senior manager within their directorate
- The Trust's Chaplains
- The Occupational Health Service

3.9.4 To raise any training and development needs they feel may have with their line manager, particularly during the agreement of their Staff Development Review.
3.9.5 To co-operate with their manager and assist them in identifying the probable causes of their work-related stress and identifying and implementing possible solutions.
3.9.6 To familiarise themselves with the Stress Management Standards in order to be able to contribute to discussions and risk assessments.
3.9.7 To consider opportunities for support and counselling, when recommended.
3.9.8 To fully participate in the completion of the Stress Indicator Tool and Talking Toolkit or stress risk assessment.

4.0 KEY POLICY PRINCIPLES

4.1 Definitions

The Health & Safety Executive Northern Ireland (HSENI) defines **stress** as "the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demands placed on them. This makes an important distinction between pressure, which can be a positive state if managed correctly, and stress that can be detrimental to health.

The **Management Standards** define the characteristics, or culture of an organisation where the risks from work-related stress are being effectively managed and controlled. The Management Standards cover the primary sources of stress at work. These are:

- **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 if the organisation ensures they do not have conflicting roles.
- **Change** – how organisational change is managed and communicated in the organisation.

4.2 Key Policy Statement(s)

The Trust accepts its responsibility as an employer to provide a safe and healthy working environment and recognises that this applies both to the physical and psychological wellbeing of staff.

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4.22 The Trust recognises that staff can experience stress during their working lives and that it has a duty to assess the risk of stress related ill health, which can be associated with the workplace and to regularly review such risk assessments.

4.23 The Trust has a duty to take all reasonable and practical measures to prevent or minimise work-related stress.

4.24 To use evidence based Stress Management Standards, Stress Indicator Tool and Talking Tool Kit to assess and manage workplace related stress using surveys or Stress Focus Groups.

4.25 To work in partnership with managers, staff and their representatives, to continuously improve the recognition and management of work-related stress.

4.26 To promote the psychological wellbeing of our staff by integrating effective management, staff care and employment practices with the delivery of services.

4.27 The Trust recognises that individuals need to take responsibility for their own general health & wellbeing.

4.28 The Trust recognises that by promoting psychological wellbeing in staff, this will improve not only the quality of staff's working lives but also the quality of care to service users.

4.3 Policy Principles

4.3.1 All service areas must have a Stress General Risk Assessment inplace which is kept under review.

4.3.2 Managers can utilise the Stress Indicator Tool to assist in identifying trends and stressors within the dept/team.

4.3.3 Managers can utilise the Talking Tool Kit which will assist in identifying the Stressors that might be affecting an individual.

4.3.4 Any Stress Risk Assessments that are put inplace for an individual must be kept confidential.

5.0 POLICY STATEMENT/IMPLEMENTATION

5.1 Dissemination

This Policy is required to be implemented by all Directorates.
All staff, managers and departments with specific responsibilities are required to comply with this Policy as detailed.

5.2 Resources

Responsibility for training requirements and other aspects associated with this policy are detailed in Section 3.0, Roles and Responsibilities. Training is arranged by the Trust's Learning and Development, Health Promotion Departments and the Recovery College. Additional sources of support can be found in Appendix 8.

5.3 Exceptions

There are no exceptions.

6.0 MONITORING AND REVIEW

It is the responsibility of the line manager to monitor attendance and absence due to stress related illness, to refer relevant staff absent from work due to stress to the Occupational Health Service (in accordance with the Management of Attendance Policy) to ensure that staff receive training, information and guidance, to assist them in their role to monitor hours of work, annual leave and breaks and to be alert to the warning signs of stress.

Working lives initiatives will be monitored by the Human Resources Department.

The B Well Steering Group will perform a pivotal role in ensuring that this Policy is implemented and will oversee monitoring of the Policy and other measures to reduce stress and promote workplace health & safety.

It is the Manager's responsibility to ensure substantive compliance with BRAAT Stress Standard.

7.0 EVIDENCE BASE/REFERENCES

- Health & Safety at Work (NI) Order 1978
- Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations (NI) 2000
- Managing the causes of work-related stress. HSG218
- Tackling Work Related Stress using the Management Standards
- Here 4U Booklet.
- Trust Management of Attendance Protocol
- BRAAT (Belfast Risk, Audit & Assessment Tool)

- NG146 Workplace Health
- NG212 Mental Wellbeing at Work

New on-line resource for Managing and Tackling Stress
The Health & Safety Executive in association with the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development and Investors in People, have designed a series of tools to allow managers to assess whether they currently have the behaviours identified as effective for preventing and reducing stress at work; its aim is to help managers reflect on their behaviour and management style.

The tool contains online resources for managers to help them manage their staff in ways that prevent and reduce stress within the team. See the following link for further information: Line Manager Competency Indicator Tool.

8.0 CONSULTATION PROCESS

The Policy has been devised in collaboration and consultation with the Trust's Health & Safety Managers, Human Resources, Occupational Health Service and Trade Unions and through wider consultation with the Trust Directors, Co Directors, Senior Management and staff. The Trust's Joint Health and Safety Committee, will also be consulted on this Policy.

9.0 NURSING AND MIDWIFERY STUDENTS

Nursing and/or Midwifery students on pre-registration education programmes, approved under relevant 2018/2019 NMC education standards, must be given the opportunity to have experience of and become proficient in **Management of Stress, Health & Well Being**, where required by the student's programme. This experience must be under the appropriate supervision of a registered nurse, registered midwife or registered health and social care professional who is adequately experienced in this skill and who will be accountable for determining the required level of direct or indirect supervision and responsible for signing/countersigning documentation.

Direct and indirect supervision

- Direct supervision means that the supervising registered nurse, registered midwife or registered health and social care professional is actually present and works alongside the student when they are undertaking a delegated role or activity.
- Indirect supervision occurs when the registered nurse, registered midwife or registered health and social care professional does not directly observe the student undertaking a delegated role or activity. (NIPEC, 2020)

This policy has been developed in accordance with the above statement

10.0 APPENDICES

- **Appendix 1:** Process for Service Areas/Group to develop a team stress risk assessment.

- **Appendix 2**: Process for Individual staff member.

    - **Flowchart 2.1:** What to do when a staff member reports symptoms of stress and they are in work
    - **Flowchart 2.2:** What to do when a staff member is absent and reports symptoms of stress
    - **Flowchart 2.3:** Staff member completes Talking Toolkit and agrees actions with manager
    - **Flowchart 2.4:** Staff member not comfortable to compete Talking Toolkit with manager
    - **Flowchart 2.5:** Staff member too acutely unwell to be able to complete the Talking Toolkit

Appendix 3: Referring a Member of Staff to the Occupational Health

Appendix 4: PREVENTING WORK-RELATED STRESS: Stress Indicator Tool

Appendix 5: Recognising and Responding to Stressors: Talking Toolkit

Appendix 6: Stress, Initiatives and Contacts

Appendix 7: Considerations when developing a service area/group/individual stress General Risk Assessment refer to info below.

Appendix 8: Resources

11.0 EQUALITY SCREENING

The Trust has legal responsibilities in terms of equality (Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998), disability discrimination and human rights to undertake a screening exercise to ascertain if the policy has potential impact and if it must be subject to a full impact assessment. The process is the responsibility of the Policy Author. The template to be complete by the Policy Author and guidance are available on the Trust Intranet or via this **link** *(Appendix 5)*. Also available is the equality toolkit via this **link**.

All policies must complete the template and submit with a copy of the policy to the Equality & Planning Team via the generic email address equalityscreenings@belfasttrust.hscni.net

The outcome of the equality screening for the policy is:

Screened out	☒
Screened out (with mitigation)	☐
Screened In for an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)	☐

12.0 STATUTORY RURAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT DUTIES

The Trust has a legal responsibility to have '**due regard'** to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising policies, and when designing and delivering public services. For more information go to Rural Needs Duties

To satisfy this '**due regard duty'** Trust staff must consider the impact of any policy, proposal or decision on the social and economic needs of people who live in a rural community. For Belfast Trust, this is particularly so when the policy/proposal/decision impacts regional services.

Please tick the box to indicate that you have paid 'due regard' to the social and economic needs of the rural community when developing, adopting, implementing or revising policies, strategies and plans and when designing and delivering public services and that a rural impact assessment is not required.

OR

Please complete a Rural Needs Impact Assessment Template if there is an impact on the social and economic needs of people who live in a rural community.

Please go to the: Rural Impact Assessments Toolkit for HSC NI to find out how to undertake a rural impact assessment.

Contact [redacted]@belfasttrust.hscni.net for further advice

13.0 STATUTORY EQUALITY DUTIES – MAKING REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS AND INFORMATION ACCESSIBLE

Please ensure you have made **explicit reference** in the policy to the legal duty to make reasonable adjustments and information accessible.
Please state that the policy has been developed in accordance with the Trust's legal duties and that staff will make reasonable adjustments and information accessible as appropriate.

1. Under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended) the Trust has a **statutory duty to make reasonable adjustments** in respect of disabled patients/service users/carers/visitors. This includes making all communication (in person, by phone, via email) *and* any information provided (in writing, verbally) accessible using alternative formats. The aim of the reasonable adjustment duty is to reduce or remove any barrier a person with a disability faces when accessing or using goods, facilities and services. This is a non-delegable duty.

Accessible/ Alternative formats can include, for example, information translated into Easy Read format or into Audio format - when a patient/service user/carer/visitor has a learning disability or is visually impaired.

For advice on making information accessible for a person with a disability please refer to the staff guidance Making-Communication-Accessible-for-All-A-guide-for-HSC-Staff

2. In addition, if a patient/service user/carer/visitor does not speak English as their first language or has poor English, the Trust has a **statutory duty** to **provide an interpreter** and to **translate written information**. This facilitates informed consent, better understanding and greater independence.

SIGNATORIES

(Policy – Guidance should be signed off by the author of the policy and the identified responsible director).

[redacted]

Date: 04/11/2025

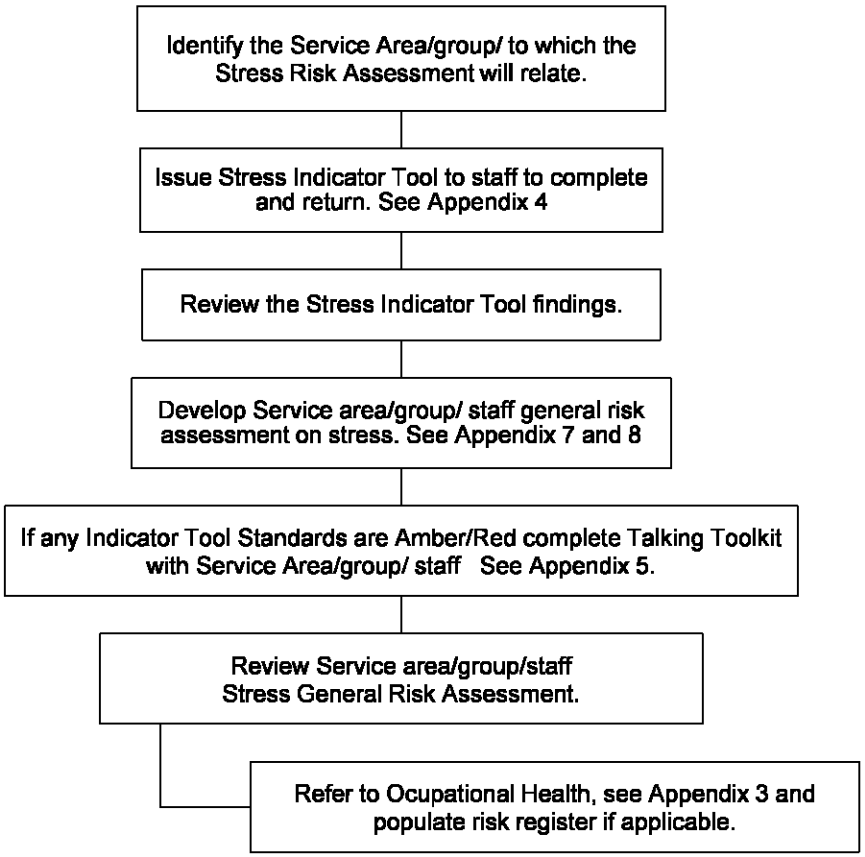
Health and Safety Manager
Policy Author

[redacted]

Date: 21/4/2026

Chris Hagan
Medical Director

Appendix 1: Process for Service Areas/Group to develop a team stress general risk assessment.



Appendix 2: Process for Individual staff member.

The below flow charts are designed to guide the manager through the process of addressing stress with an individual staff member.

Please note: The most helpful first step is often a supportive conversation with the individual to ascertain and ensure employee has support or is enabled to access support. **Please note that individual stress risk assessments are confidential documents and should be held securely and shared only with the individual and agreed relevant persons.**

Ensure a secure place with a time and venue to allow for privacy, absence of interruptions and sufficient time to allow this conversation the attention it requires.

- **Flowchart 2.1:** What to do when a staff member reports symptoms of stress and they are in work.
- **Flowchart 2.2:** What to do when a staff member is absent and reports symptoms of stress.
- **Flowchart 2.3:** Staff member completes Talking Toolkit and agrees actions with manager.
- **Flowchart 2.4:** Staff member not comfortable to compete Talking Toolkit with manager.
- **Flowchart 2.5:** Staff member too acutely unwell to be able to complete the Talking Toolkit

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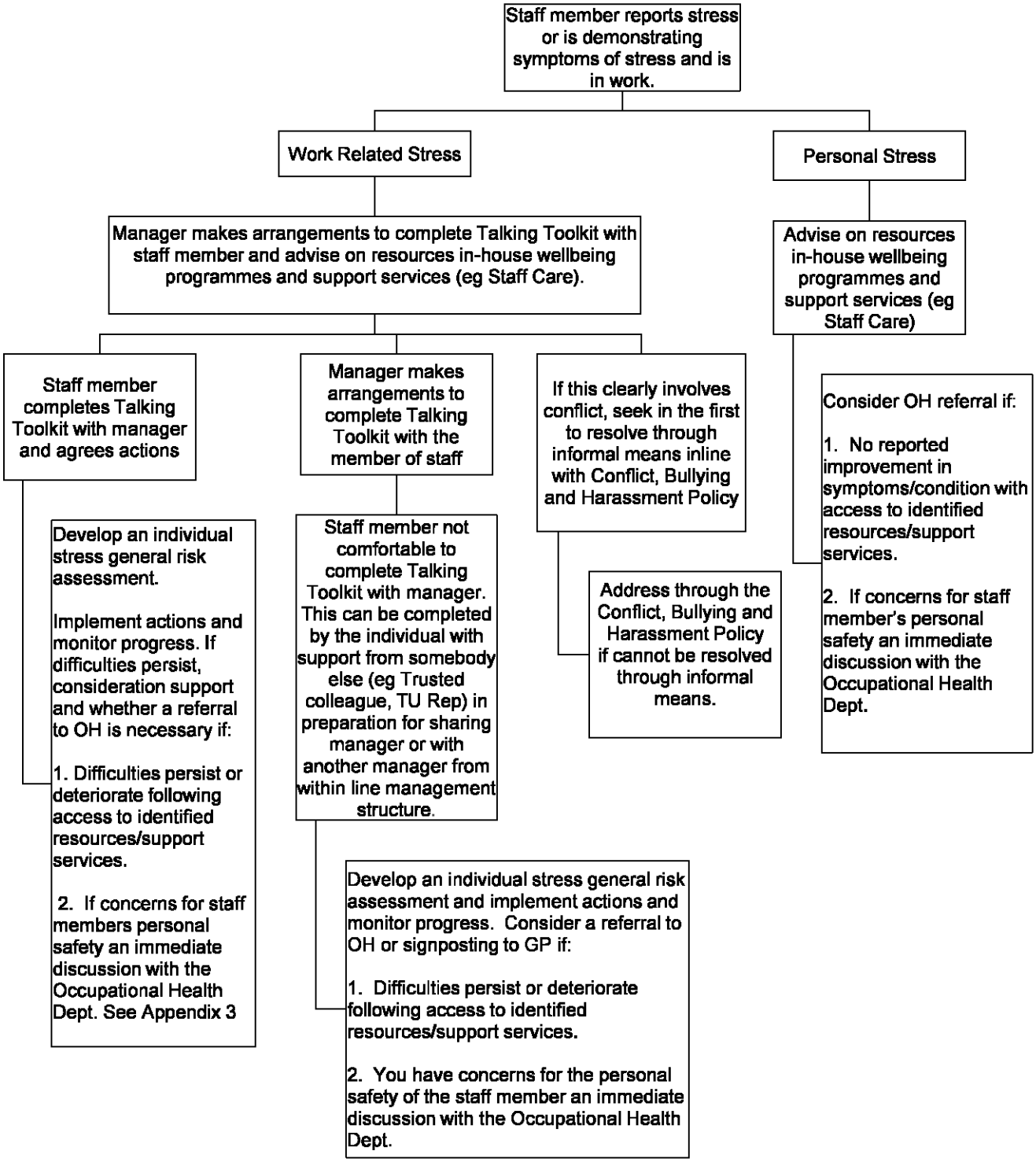
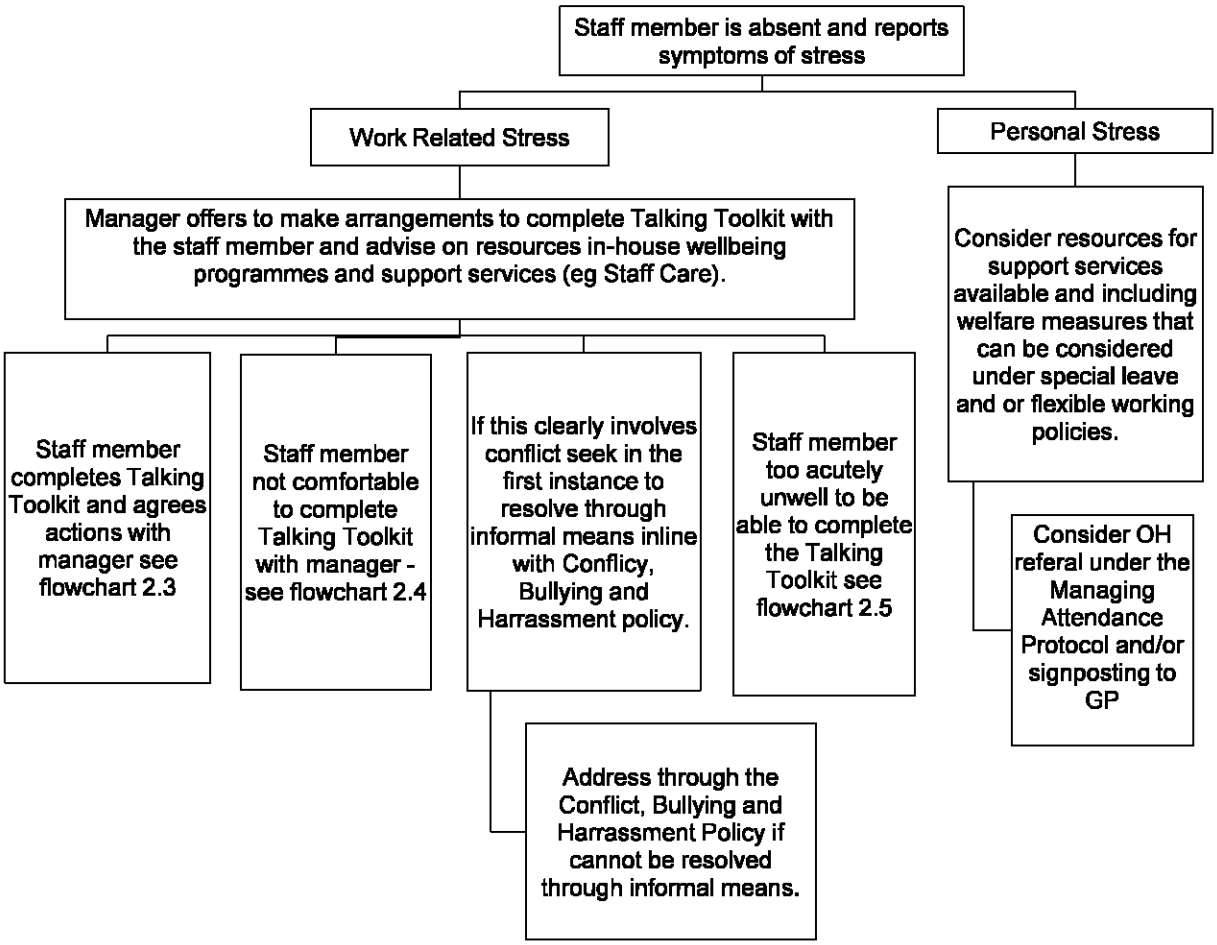
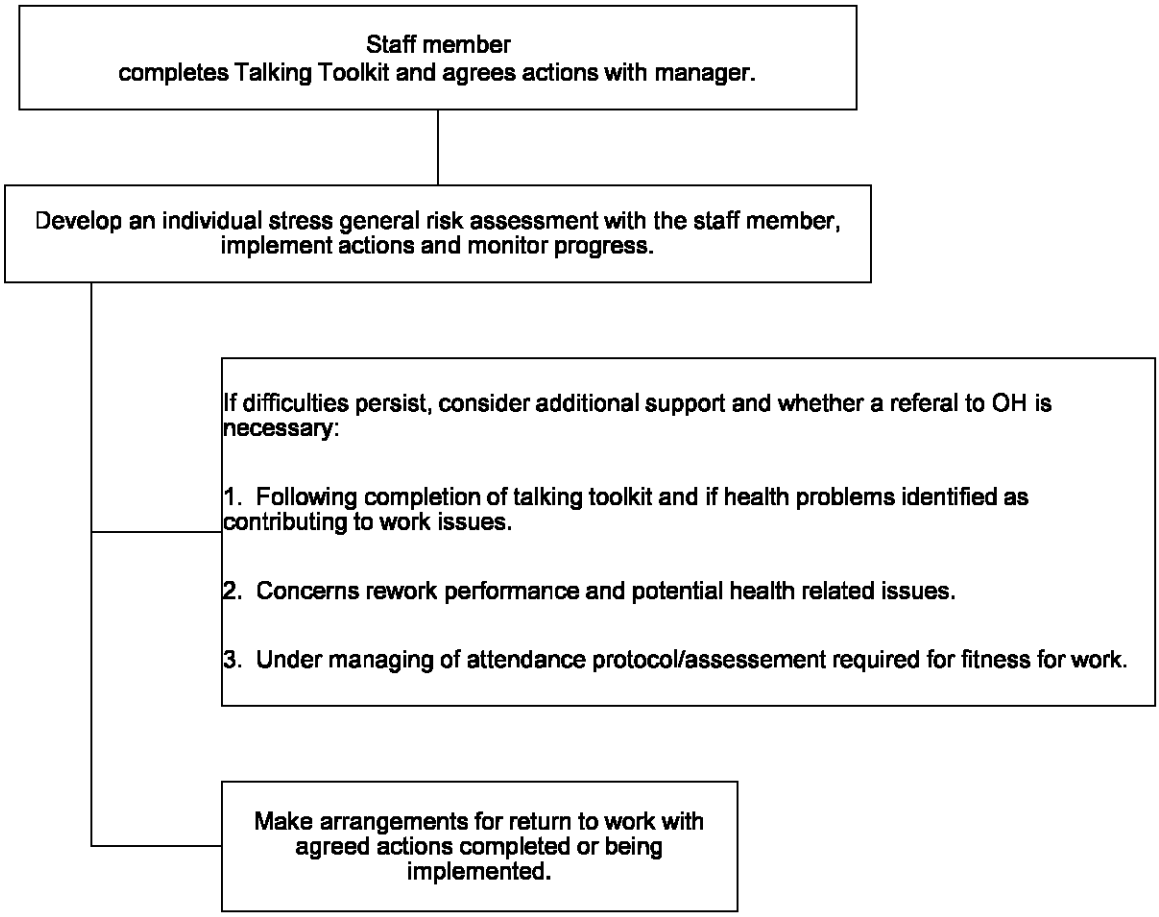
Flowchart 2.1: What to do when a staff member reports symptoms of stress and they are in work.



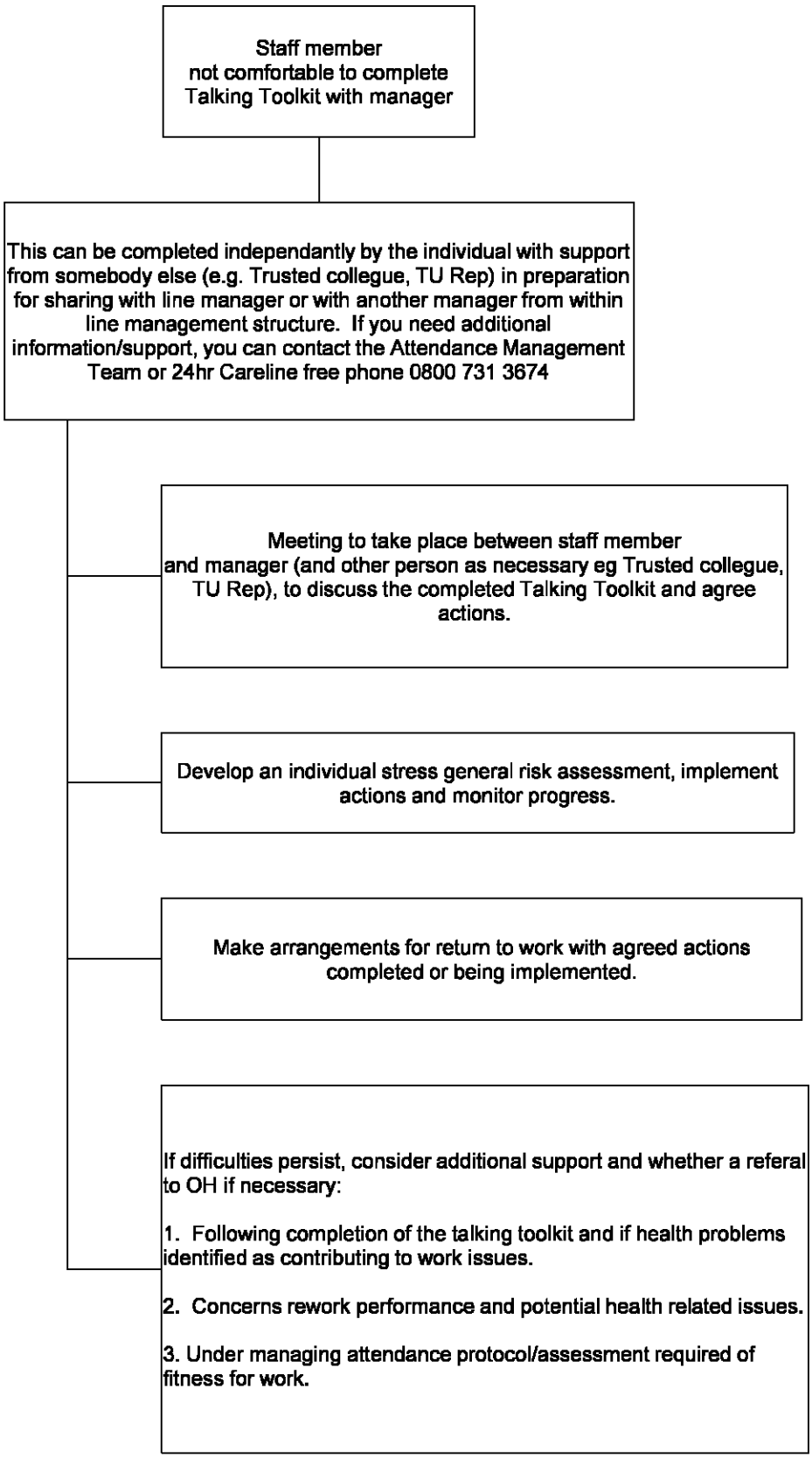
Flowchart 2.2: What to do when a staff member is absent and reports symptoms of stress.



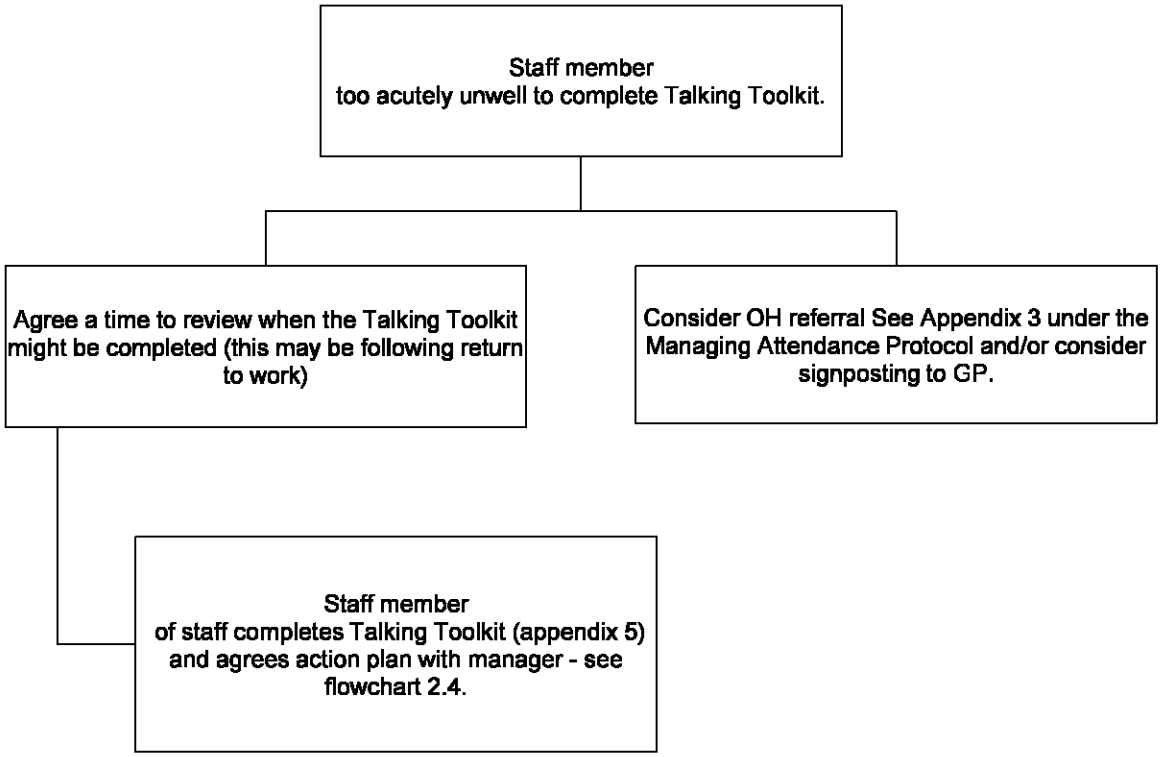
Flowchart 2.3: Staff member completes Talking Toolkit and agrees actions with manager



Flowchart 2.4: Staff member not comfortable to complete Talking Toolkit with manager



Flowchart 2.5: Staff member too acutely unwell to be able to complete the Talking Toolkit


Staff member
too acutely unwell to complete Talking Toolkit.
Agree a time to review when the Talking Toolkit might be completed (this may be following return to work)
Consider OH referral See Appendix 3 under the Managing Attendance Protocol and/or consider signposting to GP.
Staff member
of staff completes Talking Toolkit (appendix 5) and agrees action plan with manager - see flowchart 2.4.

Appendix 3: Referring a Member of Staff to the Occupational Health

There are a number of occasions where an Occupational Health referral is appropriate:

- If there are concerns for staff member's personal safety/patient safety, however the service is not a crisis service and does not take urgent referral.
- If there is no reported improvement in symptoms/condition with access to identified resources/support services.
- If health problems/concerns are identified as contributing to work stress/issues.
- If a referral is required under the managing attendance protocol.
- If assessment is required with regard to fitness to attend meetings/to complete tool kit.
- If assessment is required in relation to fitness for work.

Not every staff member who reports symptoms of stress will require or benefit from a referral to the Occupational Health Department. On occasion, an Occupational Health referral can inadvertently medicalise a situation or delay action that could reasonably be undertaken at the earliest opportunity at management/local level. Those experiencing symptoms of stress can be emotional and upset and will benefit from prompt action that is appropriate to the situation. Measures could include a listening ear, time and space to reflect, signposting to resources and if work related, every attempt made to resolve any issues raised both early and at a local level as well as consideration of relevant/related organisational policies that might resolve the situation e.g. Flexible working policy or special leave policy. When a referral to Occupational Health is considered appropriate, the referral should include:

- detail relevant to the situation and likely to be of benefit to the assessment.
- related measures in place/or actions already taken.
- any specific questions requiring a response.
- ensure the staff member is aware of the referral, its contents, and consents to this.

If there is any query regarding the appropriateness of a referral, do not hesitate to contact the Occupational Health Department.

Appendix 4

PREVENTING WORK-RELATED STRESS

Stress Indicator Tool

This questionnaire is used for Managers to send to a group of staff to gather responses and develop stress general risk assessment with action plan.

Health and Safety Executive (HSE) research has identified that poor management of the following areas can increase the risk of work related stress:

1. Demands.
2. Control.
3. Support.
4. Relationships.
5. Role.
6. Change.

They have made recommendations on the standards to be achieved in the six areas and called them the 'Management Standards'.

How to Use the Stress Indicator Questionnaire:

This toolkit contains a questionnaire based on the six areas in the 'Management Standards', a scoring system is provided to help you determine any potential areas of risk.

It is recognised that working conditions affect staff well-being. Your responses to the questions below will help determine working conditions now, and enable the service to monitor future improvements. In order for us to compare the current situation with past or future situations, it is important that your responses reflect your work in the last six months.

Instructions are as follows:

- Work through each question in turn.
- Answer every question by circling the response you feel is most applicable.
- Add up the score for each section.
- Check the total against the table and identify the relevant "what next" box.
- Follow the instructions on what to do next!
- Make some notes in the blank table to help you focus on the areas for improvement!
- Upon completion return to confidential post box

Detail Information Below:

Insert Directorate:
Service Area:
Insert Banding:

DEMANDS

	Demands	Answer				
		Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
1	Different groups at work demand things from me that are hard to combine	5	4	3	2	1
2	I have unachievable deadlines	5	4	3	2	1
3	I have to work very intensively	5	4	3	2	1
4	I have to neglect some tasks because I have too much to do	5	4	3	2	1
5	I am unable to take sufficient breaks	5	4	3	2	1
6	I am pressured to work long hours	5	4	3	2	1
7	I have to work very fast	5	4	3	2	1
8	I have unrealistic time pressures	5	4	3	2	1

My Score for Demands	

Score	Colour	What Next?
32-40	GREEN	Indicates there are no significant issues requiring immediate Action. However, consider individual options, and/or consult line management, with the aim of continual improvement, and continue to monitor the situation for relevant changes
17-31	AMBER	Indicates potential for improvement. Consider what can be done individually; discuss any issues/concerns identified with line manager(s), and/or other employee representative(s), and/or seek advice from employee counselling/health and safety
8-16	RED	Indicates action required. Look at what needs to be done individually, consult with line managers as appropriate, and/or make an appointment with Employee Counselling. Use the self-assessment questionnaire as evidence of potential problem areas

	Demands	Possible Actions / Notes
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		

7		
8		

CONTROL

	Control	Answer				
		Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
1	I can decide when to take a break	1	2	3	4	5
2	I have a say in my own work speed	1	2	3	4	5
3	I have a choice in deciding how I do my work	1	2	3	4	5
4	I have a choice in deciding what I do at work	1	2	3	4	5
5	I have some say over the way I work	1	2	3	4	5
6	My working time can be flexible	1	2	3	4	5

My Score for Control	

Score	Colour	What Next?
24-30	GREEN	Indicates there are no significant issues requiring immediate Action. However, consider individual options, and/or consult line management, with the aim of continual improvement, and continue to monitor the situation for relevant changes
13-23	AMBER	Indicates potential for improvement. Consider what can be done individually; discuss any issues/concerns identified with line manager(s), and/or other employee representative(s), and/or seek advice from employee counselling/health and safety
6-12	RED	Indicates action required. Look at what needs to be done individually, consult with line managers as appropriate, and/or make an appointment with Employee Counselling. Use the self-assessment questionnaire as evidence of potential problem areas

	Control	Possible Actions / Notes
1		
2		
3		
4		

5		
6		

MANAGERS SUPPORT

	Managers Support	Answer				
		Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
1	I am given supportive feedback on the work I do	1	2	3	4	5
2	I can rely on my line manager to help me out with a work problem	1	2	3	4	5
3	I can talk to my line manager about something that has upset or annoyed me about work	1	2	3	4	5
4	I am supported through emotionally demanding work	1	2	3	4	5
5	My line manager encourages me at work	1	2	3	4	5

My Score for Managers Support	

Score	Colour	What Next?
20-25	GREEN	Indicates there are no significant issues requiring immediate Action. However, consider individual options, and/or consult line management, with the aim of continual improvement, and continue to monitor the situation for relevant changes
11-19	AMBER	Indicates potential for improvement. Consider what can be done individually; discuss any issues/concerns identified with line manager(s), and/or other employee representative(s), and/or seek advice from employee counselling/health and safety
5-10	RED	Indicates action required. Look at what needs to be done individually, consult with line managers as appropriate, and/or make an appointment with Employee Counselling. Use the self-assessment questionnaire as evidence of potential problem areas

	Managers Support	Possible Actions / Notes
1		
2		
3		

4		
5		

PEER SUPPORT

	Peer Support	Answer				
		Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
1	If work gets difficult, my colleagues will help me	1	2	3	4	5
2	I get help and support I need from colleagues	1	2	3	4	5
3	I receive the respect at work I deserve from my colleagues	1	2	3	4	5
4	My colleagues are willing to listen to my work related problems	1	2	3	4	5

My Score for Peer Support	

Score	Colour	What Next?
16-20	GREEN	Indicates there are no significant issues requiring immediate Action. However, consider individual options, and/or consult line management, with the aim of continual improvement, and continue to monitor the situation for relevant changes
9-15	AMBER	Indicates potential for improvement. Consider what can be done individually; discuss any issues/concerns identified with line manager(s), and/or other employee representative(s), and/or seek advice from employee counselling/health and safety
4-8	RED	Indicates action required. Look at what needs to be done individually, consult with line managers as appropriate, and/or make an appointment with Employee Counselling. Use the self-assessment questionnaire as evidence of potential problem areas

	Peer Support	Possible Actions / Notes
1		
2		
3		
4		

5		

RELATIONSHIPS

	Relationships	Answer				
		Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
1	I am subject to personal harassment* in the form of unkind words or behaviour	5	4	3	2	1
2	There is friction or anger between colleagues	5	4	3	2	1
3	I am subject to bullying* at work	5	4	3	2	1
4	Relationships at work are strained	5	4	3	2	1

My Score for Relationships	

Score	Colour	What Next?
16-20	GREEN	Indicates there are no significant issues requiring immediate Action. However, consider individual options, and/or consult line management, with the aim of continual improvement, and continue to monitor the situation for relevant changes
9-15	AMBER	Indicates potential for improvement. Consider what can be done individually; discuss any issues/concerns identified with line manager(s), and/or other employee representative(s), and/or seek advice from employee counselling/health and safety
4-8	RED	Indicates action required. Look at what needs to be done individually, consult with line managers as appropriate, and/or make an appointment with Employee Counselling. Use the self-assessment questionnaire as evidence of potential problem areas

	Relationships	Possible Actions / Notes
1		
2		
3		

4		

Important:

- Harassment/Bullying

It is the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust's policy to provide employment equality to all. Where any individual feels that they are being "bullied and/or harassed" they should report such to relevant line management as soon as is practicable, regardless of any score achieved in this self-assessment, who should in turn initiate due process as set out by Human Resources.

ROLE

	Role	Answer				
		Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
1	I am clear what is expected of me at work	1	2	3	4	5
2	I know how to go about getting my job done	1	2	3	4	5
3	I am clear what my duties and responsibilities are	1	2	3	4	5
4	I am clear about the goals and objectives for my department	1	2	3	4	5
5	I understand how my work fits into the overall aim of the organisation	1	2	3	4	5

My Score for Role	

Score	Colour	What Next?
20-25	GREEN	Indicates there are no significant issues requiring immediate Action. However, consider individual options, and/or consult line management, with the aim of continual improvement, and continue to monitor the situation for relevant changes
11-19	AMBER	Indicates potential for improvement. Consider what can be done individually; discuss any issues/concerns identified with line manager(s), and/or other employee representative(s), and/or seek advice from employee counselling/health and safety
5-10	RED	Indicates action required. Look at what needs to be done individually, consult with line managers as appropriate, and/or make an appointment with Employee Counselling. Use the self-assessment questionnaire as evidence of potential problem areas

	Role	Possible Actions / Notes
1		

2		
3		
4		
5		

CHANGE

	Change	Answer				
		Never	**Seldom**	**Sometimes**	**Often**	**Always**
1	I have sufficient opportunities to question managers about change at work	1	2	3	4	5
2	Staff are always consulted about change at work	1	2	3	4	5
3	When changes are made at work, I am clear how they will work out in practice	1	2	3	4	5

My Score for Change	

Score	Colour	What Next?
12-15	**GREEN**	Indicates there are no significant issues requiring immediate Action. However, consider individual options, and/or consult line management, with the aim of continual improvement, and continue to monitor the situation for relevant changes
7-11	**AMBER**	Indicates potential for improvement. Consider what can be done individually; discuss any issues/concerns identified with line manager(s), and/or other employee representative(s), and/or seek advice from employee counselling/health and safety
3-6	**RED**	Indicates action required. Look at what needs to be done individually, consult with line managers as appropriate, and/or make an appointment with Employee Counselling. Use the self-assessment questionnaire as evidence of potential problem areas

	Change	Possible Actions / Notes
1		

2		
3		
4		
5		

Appendix 5

Recognising and Responding to Stressors: Talking Toolkit

USING THE TOOLKIT

When should I use the Recognising and Responding to Stress Talking Toolkit?

Refer to:

Appendix 1 Flowchart: Process for Service Areas/Group to develop a team stress general risk assessment.

If any of the Stress Indicator Tool standards are amber or red the Talking Toolkit MUST be completed with Service Area/group/staff.

Appendix 2 Flowcharts: Process for Individual staff member (2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5) in considering when to use the 'Talking Toolkit' with your member of staff or your team.

Preventing: The 'Recognising and Responding to Stressors: Talking Toolkit' is ideally used in a preventative manner, to facilitate exploratory conversations with either individuals or teams as a whole, relating to stressors within the workplace.

Supporting: The Talking Toolkit is also likely to be helpful when symptoms of stress are emerging or appear to be increasing, again within individuals or the wider team. The toolkit acts as a resource to support the identification of stressors, and to inform action planning in order to resolve those stressors. Time-scales within which progress in areas of concern are reviewed should also be agreed.

Responding: Where an individual or team is experiencing heightened levels of distress and/or stress, including situations where this has led to a period of absence, the toolkit may be helpful to support the resolution of difficult circumstances.

It is suggested that managers hold it in mind as a potential resource, basing the decision to use it on the circumstances of the situation. For example, if an individual is describing significant levels of stress or distress, they may not feel able to engage with this resource. It may be more helpful in these circumstances to mention it as something that can be looked at once they have had some time to recover, potentially even on their return to work. For others, it may be a resource that could serve to facilitate recovery and resolution of issues.

STARTING THE CONVERSATION

The toolkit has templates for six different conversations.

Each of these has a different theme designed to help start conversations about issues, which may be causing work-related stress or issues which could be potential future causes, if they are not managed properly.

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, 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.

If you are a manager holding these conversations with your team:

- Consider the six conversations and how to effectively explore these topics with your team members.
- Ensure everyone can attend and take part in the discussions.
- Recognise that it take times to build trust with your teams.
- Be open about the situation.
- Be clear about the follow up actions and agree these as far as possible with the team.
- Be realistic about what changes you can influence directly (eg team culture).
- Be clear what issues need to be fed into and addressed at organisational level.
- It is important to listen to what is being said rather than trying to offer excuses or explanations.
- Any action points and solutions should be agreed together.
- The important thing is to start talking and to start planning.
- Explain the process including the approach and use of the talking tool kit and completion of the general risk assessment.

HAVING THE CONVERSATION WITH INDIVIDUALS OR TEAM: GUIDANCE FOR MANAGERS

STEP ONE: PREPARATION

- Familiarise yourself with the 'Recognising and Responding to Stress Talking Toolkit.'
- Familiarise yourself with the individual's or team circumstances and consider the timeliness of the conversation based on these circumstances.
- If it feels like the Toolkit will be a helpful resource at this time and the member of staff or team are agreeable, consider the following:
    - Are there any specific actions you need to take in advance of the meeting?
    - Is there any information or advice you need to gather?
    - Is there any information that may need to be shared with the individual (e.g. a copy of the Talking Toolkit)?

- You may find it helpful to make notes for guidance during the conversation.
- Take time to acknowledge how you are thinking and feeling about the conversation. In particular, it can be helpful to notice any thoughts or feelings that may impact unhelpfully on the way in which you approach the conversation.
- Consider where you would like this conversation to bring you and your member of staff.
- What actions could you take to help you reach a helpful outcome?

STEP TWO: HAVING THE CONVERSATION

- Consider the time and venue of meeting to allow for privacy, absence of interruptions and sufficient time to allow this conversation the attention it requires.
- Follow guidance from the policy regarding steps to take and key items to cover within the conversation.
- There may be occasions where the member of staff feels it would be useful to bring another individual along for support. It would be helpful to take a few moments at the beginning of the conversation to clarify roles and agree how best to make use of the time together.
- Try to remain focused on the issues at hand, using the questions as prompts.
- Try to remember your hopes for the conversation and consider whether your actions are bringing you closer to or further away from this point.
- Be mindful of your member of staff and consider what may be happening from their perspective.
- It may be helpful to take a break at a certain point, particularly if this is a difficult conversation.
- If you need to arrange another meeting to complete the action plan, arrange a date to do so at the earliest convenience.

STEP THREE: FOLLOWING THE CONVERSATION

- Take time to acknowledge how you are thinking and feeling after the conversation. You may find it helpful to talk with your own manager, trusted colleague or trade union representative.
- Follow up on any actions allocated to you as part of the conversation and in line with policy.

- Arrange follow-up contact with your members of staff within the agreed time-frame.

HAVING THE CONVERSATION: GUIDANCE FOR STAFF

STEP ONE: PREPARATION

- Read through the 'Recognising and Responding to Stressors' Toolkit.
- Make notes of key points you wish to mention during the conversation.
- Speak with a colleague who has been through the process previously.
- Ask for support from someone as part of your preparation (e.g. from HR, Occupational Health, Trade Union Representative, fellow trusted work colleague).
- If for any reason, you feel uncomfortable having this conversation with your direct line manager, another manager from your line management structure can be approached.
- Remember that the purpose of the conversation is to help identify any particular issues that may be causing you stress and to try to identify potential solutions or supports.

STEP TWO: HAVING THE CONVERSATION

- Bring along any notes that may be useful.
- If you feel you need to take a break, don't be afraid to ask for one.
- If you need to arrange another meeting to complete the action plan, arrange a date to do so at the earliest convenience.

STEP THREE: FOLLOWING THE CONVERSATION

- Take time to acknowledge how you are thinking and feeling after the conversation.
- You may find it helpful to talk with your own manager or trusted colleague.
- Follow up on any actions allocated to you as part of the conversation and in line with policy.

THIS POLICY IS ONLY VALID IF READ / DOWNLOADED FROM THE CORPORATE POLICIES LIBRARY ON THE LOOP

THIS POLICY IS ONLY VALID IF READ / DOWNLOADED FROM THE CORPORATE POLICIES LIBRARY ON THE LOOP

CONVERSATION ONE: DEMANDS

How your staff should feel:

- They are able to cope with the demands of their job.
- They are provided with achievable demands in relation to the hours they work. Their skills and abilities are matched to the demands of their job.
- Concerns about their work environment are addressed.

Go through the following questions with your employee or team:

Question1: Does your workload feel achievable? Think about which tasks take up the most time and how your organisation, team or department copes at busy times.
Question 2: Do you feel the priorities/deadlines you are given are realistic? Do you often have conflicting priorities?
Question 3: Have you got the necessary skills, experience and training to carry out the core functions of your job?
Question 4: What improvements or support could be put in place to help with any of the issues you have talked about? Think about you, your manager, your department, your organisation or trust.

CONVERSATION ONE: DEMANDS

Working patterns:

- Allow/ encourage regular breaks, especially when the work is complex or emotionally demanding.
- Consider how flexible working can be used to enable staff to balance their work and personal commitments, while meeting the needs of services.

Working patterns:

- Allow/ encourage regular breaks, especially when the work is complex or emotionally demanding.
- Consider how flexible working can be used to enable staff to balance their work and personal commitments, while meeting the needs of services.

Workload:

- Hold regular meetings, both with individuals (to consider individual issues, e.g. disabilities and reasonable adjustments) and as a team, to discuss anticipated workloads and staffing arrangements.
- Provide training to help employees prioritise. Listen to feedback on how employees feel they can better manage workloads.
- Develop systems to notify employees of unplanned tight deadlines and any exceptional need to work long hours.
- Develop systems to monitor staff overtime and bank shifts.
- Identify blocks of time to allow for genuine collaborative planning between managers and staff.
- If you are a team leader or supervisor, understand the team's current workload when discussing the allocation of additional tasks.
- If you are a team leader or supervisor, ensure you and your team have a clear understanding of escalation procedures where staff or patient safety is at risk.
- Encourage flexible working.

Environment:

- Assess the risk and impact of other potential hazards and take steps to deal with them by consulting with employees and others. For example, making arrangements not to be alone with previously aggressive patients, or community nurses going to do visits do so in twos.
- Provide training to help employees deal with and defuse difficult situations.
- Take steps to reduce unwanted distraction, disturbance and noise levels.
- Review systems and procedures, e.g. queuing, triaging policies.

Agreed action plan:

Set a date to revisit these proposed changes: _____

CONVERSATION TWO: CONTROL

How your staff should feel:

- They are consulted over the way their work is organised and undertaken, eg through regular meetings, one-to ones, performance reviews.
- They have regular opportunities for discussion and input at the start of projects or new pieces of work.
- They are encouraged to use their skills and initiative to do their work.
- They are consulted over things affecting their work.
- They are encouraged to develop new skills and undertake new and challenging pieces of work.
- Efforts are appreciated and acknowledged.

Go through the following questions with your employee or team:

Question 1: Do you feel involved in how decisions about your job are made? Think about whether you feel listened to, trusted and valued - how you are consulted and given opportunities for input?
Question 2: Do you feel your skills are used to good effect? How could your existing skills be used more effectively?
Question 3: Do you feel you have a say in how your work is organised and undertaken?

Question 4: What improvements or support could be put in place to help with any of the issues you have talked about? Think about you, your manager, your department, your organisation.
Set a date to revisit these proposed changes:

CONVERSATION TWO: CONTROL

Communication:

- Help employees to have a say about the way their work is organised and undertaken, for example at project meetings, one-to-ones and performance reviews.
- Hold regular discussion forums during the planning stage of any changes to work to talk about the anticipated methods of working. Allocate responsibilities to teams rather than individuals to take projects forward. Allow employees to have some control over the pace of their work.
- Talk about training needs. Involve a range of staff members in any projects or change initiatives.

Decisions:

- Talk about the way decisions are made, ensuring staff understand how the organisation, department and team make decisions. Allow and encourage people to participate in decision making, especially where it affects them.

Skills and training:

- Talk about the skills people have and if they believe they are able to use these to good effect.
- Talk about how people would like to use their skills.
- Consider personal development/training plans, where you ask employees to think about the skills they would like to develop. Explore the continuous professional development (CPD) requirements of your team members and how these can be met.

Agreed action plan

Set a date to revisit these proposed changes: _____

CONVERSATION THREE: SUPPORT

How your staff should feel:

- They receive information and support from colleagues and their managers.
- The organisation has systems in place to enable and encourage managers to support their staff and for colleagues to support one another.
- They know what support is available and how to access it.
- They know how to access the resources they need.
- They receive regular and constructive feedback.

Go through the following questions with your employee or team:

Question 1: Do you feel that your team/organisation is a positive place to work and that you are valued? Think about the working environment, the support available and the opportunities to talk about support you may need.
Question 2: Do you know who to talk to and where to go when you need support? Think about where you would go for help if you were experiencing an issue and whether you would feel comfortable doing so.

Question 3: Do you feel there are enough opportunities to discuss any emerging issues or pressures?
Question 4: What improvements or support could be put in place to help with any of the issues you have talked about? Think about you, your manager, your team, your department, your organisation.
Set a date to revisit these proposed changes

CONVERSATION THREE: SUPPORT

Support:

- Hold regular one-to-one and team meetings to talk about any emerging issues or pressures.
- Include work-related stress or pressures as a standing item for meetings with staff and/or performance reviews.
- Consider buddying systems or work shadowing to improve understanding of roles across the team and to foster peer support.
- Find examples of how people would like to receive, or have received, good support from managers or colleagues and share them with others.

Resources:

- Share information on support available to your staff, for example employee assistance programmes, trade union support, occupational health and external organisations.
- Talk about the ways your organisation can provide support if someone is experiencing problems outside work.

Training:

- Regularly consult with people to ensure training is up to date.
- Hold local induction sessions.

Environment:

- Assess the risk of physical violence and verbal abuse by consulting with staff and others, such as the police and charities. Raise awareness of initiatives already in place.
- Provide training to help employees deal with and defuse difficult situations.

Agreed action plan

Set a date to revisit these proposed changes:_____

CONVERSATION FOUR: RELATIONSHIPS

How your staff should feel:

- They are not subjected to unacceptable behaviours such as bullying or harassment at work.
- The organisation promotes positive behaviours at work.
- The organisation has agreed policies and procedures to prevent or resolve unacceptable behaviour.
- The organisation has systems in place to enable and encourage managers to deal with unacceptable behaviour.
- The organisation has systems in place to enable and encourage employees to report unacceptable behaviour, without fear of reprisal.

Go through the following questions with your employee or team:

Question 1: Have you experienced or witnessed unacceptable behaviour at work? Do you feel satisfied with how this was dealt with?

Question 2: Do you feel that honest, open communication is encouraged in your organisation?
Question 3: Do you feel that you know where to go and what to do if you experience or witness unacceptable behaviour? Do you feel confident that steps will be taken to stop this behaviour
Question 4: What improvements or support could be put in place to help with any of the issues you have talked about? Think about you, your manager, your team, your organisation.
Set a date to revisit these proposed changes.

CONVERSATION FOUR: RELATIONSHIPS

1. Have an agreement with employees and senior leaders on which behaviours are unacceptable.

2. Have a written policy for dealing with unacceptable behaviour and procedures for reporting incidents. Regularly communicate these policies and procedures to staff and make sure that they are understood.

3. Have a confidential system or people to report unacceptable behaviour. Encourage good communication and provide training to help, such as listening skills, confidence building and assertiveness.

4. Encourage and provide opportunities for employees to socialise together.

5. Make sure that you are providing the same level of support and communications for staff who work in isolation like lone workers or those in separate locations.

6. Find ways to celebrate personal, team and organisational successes. Ensure manager's role model the values and behaviours of the organisation and develop positive cultures within their own team.

Agreed action plan

Set a date to revisit these proposed changes:_____

Go through the following questions with your employee or team:

Question 1: Do you feel clear on what your responsibilities are?
Question 2: Are you clear on what your performance objectives are and what success looks like for you, your area/department and the organisation? Do you feel that they are achievable?
Question 3: Do you feel you understand how work is structured in your department and in the wider organisation? Do you know who is doing what and why, and how your role fits in?
Question 4: What improvements or support could be put in place to help with any of the issues you have talked about? Think about you, your manager, your organisation, your profession, your staff /union representative.
Set a date to revisit these proposed changes:

CONVERSATION FIVE: ROLE

How your staff should feel:

- They understand their role and responsibilities.
- The organisation provides information to enable them to understand their role and all of their responsibilities.
- The requirements the organisation places on them are clear.
- They are able to raise concerns about any uncertainties or conflicts they have in their role and responsibilities through the systems that the organisation has in place.

CONVERSATION FIVE: ROLE

New Starters:

- Give all new staff a thorough induction into your organisation and its policies and procedures. Include details of where to get support or who to speak to about stress or mental health issues.

Communication:

- Provide clear work objectives.
- Define work structures clearly so that all team members know who is doing what and why.
- Hold regular one-to-one performance conversations for individual tasks and review regularly.
- Hold regular team meetings to enable staff to discuss any issues.
- Display departmental/organisational targets and objectives.
- Introduce or revise job descriptions with the involvement of staff to ensure the core functions and priorities are clear and that people are clear about what is planned for the coming months.
- Agree specific standards of performance for individual tasks and review regularly.

Role:

- Introduce personal work plans which are aligned to the objectives of the team/organisation.
- Introduce or revise job descriptions to ensure the core functions and priorities are clear.
- Review job descriptions regularly, especially following change, and discuss training/ retraining regularly too.

Agreed action plan

Set a date to revisit these proposed changes:_____

- They understand their role and responsibilities.
- The organisation provides information to enable them to understand their role and all of their responsibilities.
- The requirements the organisation places on them are clear.
- They are able to raise concerns about any uncertainties or conflicts they have in their role and responsibilities through the systems that the organisation has in place.

Go through the following questions with your employee or team:

Question 1: Do you feel that your organisation handles change well?
Question 2: Do you feel you are properly consulted when changes are made which affect you and your role? Do you feel the reasons for the change are explained well?
Question 3: Do you feel that you are involved in the planning process when changes are made?
Question 4: What improvements or support could be put in place to help with any of the issues you have talked about? Think about you, your manager, your organisation, your profession your staff /union representatives.
Set a date to revisit these proposed changes:

CONVERSATION SIX: CHANGE

How your staff should feel

CONVERSATION SIX: CHANGE

Consulting with staff:

- Define and explain key steps of changes being made.
- Consult employees early and throughout the change process.
- Build in engagement and support as key elements of any change process.
- Involve employees in the planning process.
- Provide a system for staff to comment and ask questions before, during and after the change.
- Review how the change will impact on departmental and individual objectives and workloads.
- Include training/retraining needs as part of your change process.

Communication:

- Start communication early and, as far as possible, make it a two-way conversation.
- Explain what the organisation wants to achieve and why it is essential that the change takes place.
- Explain the timescales of changes and how changes will impact directly on staff.
- Have an agreed system for communicating to staff why a change is happening.
- Have agreed methods of communication (such as meetings, notice boards, newsletters, e-mail and feedback forms) and agree their frequency.
- Don't rely on a single communication route – most people may have access to a computer in work but what about those who don't, or those who work off-site or out in the community?
- Make sure that employees are aware of the impact of the change being made on their jobs. Talk about the potential need for (re)training.
- Include people on long - term sickness, maternity/paternity leave or career breaks.

Agreed action plan

Set a date to revisit these proposed changes:_____

Appendix 6: Stress, Initiatives and Contacts

Initiative	Who to contact / Further information
Clinical Psychology group support in dealing with a traumatic event at work	Occupational Health
Health for Life training programme to incorporate: smoking cessation, alcohol awareness, stress management, nutrition, exercise, oral health advice, shift working, weight loss OR Mini sessions on each / a selection of these topics	Health Improvement Team Health & Wellbeing sub-group contact – Ben Hanvey
B Well Website	https://bwellbelfast.hscni.net/
Conditions Management Programme for employees with chronic health conditions	Occupational Health
Mindfulness Programmes and Acceptance Commitment Therapy	Occupational Health
HR drop in clinics for staff and managers including advice on sickness absence, HRPTS, Workplace Equality and Improving Working Lives initiatives e.g. Work life balance policies, Special Leave etc.	ASM Resourcing, Inclusion, Equality and Improving Working Lives or Quality Senior HR Officer.
Attendance Management awareness sessions for **staff** i.e. your responsibilities as an employee	Relevant Directorate Lead within Attendance Management or Samantha Whann as Team Leader
Bespoke Attendance Management Training for **managers** & Refresher absence management training for managers – focus on difficult conversations	Relevant Directorate Lead within Attendance Management or Samantha Whann as Team Leader
B Well App	Search for "bwellbelfasttrust" in your App Store
24/7 telephone helpline, short term focused confidential face to face counselling across a range of Trust venues	Staff Care
Here4U initiative with regular activities e.g. – • Aerobics • Boxing • Choir • Circuits • Dance • Football • Guitar lessons • Photography • Pilates • Tai chi • Yoga • Zumba	email Here4u@belfasttrust.hscni.net
Belfast Recovery College This is a mental health recovery training provision which provides a range of courses for service users, families, friends, carers and all Trust staff. The focus is to provide the opportunity to learn together to help increase understanding of each other's journey in promoting recovery.	To book your **FREE** place on a course contact (028) 950 43059 (Mon –Fri between 9.30am-1.30pm) or RecoveryCollege@belfasttrust.hscni.net

Anyone can apply for the courses and they are free so whether you are experiencing illness, are a carer or a staff member working in mental health or you have a special interest in mental health you may find a course that interests you. Courses include: • An Introduction to Understanding Addictions • Embedding Recovery in Day to Day Lives • The Importance of Social Support Networks • Understanding Psychological Therapies • 8-Week Mindfulness Course	
Health & Safety Executive Guidance on managing work related stress	http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/ BRAAT - Stress Standard Trust Policy on Managing Stress, Health & Wellbeing and Appendices Partnered Health & Safety Managers

Appendix 7: Considerations when developing a service area/group/individual stress General Risk Assessment refer to info below

A trained general risk assessor should document the Stress Risk Assessment on a Belfast Trust General Health & Safety Risk Assessment form See resouce 1 in consultation with staff/individual and Trade Union representation.

(Check Learn HSCNI for details on attending an initial 4hr General Risk Assessment workshop or a 2hr refresher for staff who have already attended the 4hr in the last 3 years (refer to statutory/mandatory matrix for further information or speak to your partnered Health & Safety Manager). All risk assessors should attend the above programmes before completing risk assessments.)

To assist in identifying the hazards you could acquire information from a variety of sources. This may include:

Absence statistics/performance appraisals, staff turnover, team meetings, informal discussions with staff and staff surveys.

Check that you are substantively compliant with the key points in the BRAAT Standard on Management of Stress, Health & Wellbeing.

Using the sample stress risk assessment as a basis/guide. See Appendix 8, Resource number 2.

Using the Trusts Management Standards Indicator Tool which asks about working conditions known to be potential causes of work related stress and corresponds to the 6 stressors to identify work related stress issues for staff within your Service or an individual staff member.

Use the Talking Toolkit if risks identified on the indicator tool are amber/red. Develop a Stress General Risk Assessment .HSE also have a copy of the Management Standards. Further information is available from: https://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/standards/downloads.htm

Obtain advice and support from Health & Safety, Occupational Health Service, Human Resources and Trade Union, if required.

Refer staff to the HERE 4 U booklet see Appendix 8 of the Trust Stress Policy. Advise staff of access to the Trusts confidential Counselling service – Staff Care– 0800 731 3674.
General guidance on completing the General Health & Safety Risk Assessment and risk assessment templates is available from the Loop.

Implement action plan if relevant. Monitor and review. Ensure the risk assessment is verbally communicated and sent to staff with records kept.

Follow the advice on the review of Trust Risk Assessments; every 2 years. Consider adding relevant issues to the Risk Register.