PROCEDURE FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF WORKRELATED STRESS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy No</th>
<th>HR 038</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date Ratified</td>
<td>January 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Next Review Date</td>
<td>January 2014</td>
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Policy Statement / Key Objectives:
To ensure that there is a consistent approach across the Trust for the management of work-related stress, and access to support systems if required

Accountable Director: Director of Workforce and Organisational Development

Policy Author: Human Resources
# Executive Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Procedure for the Management of Work related Stress</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Applicable to</td>
<td>All Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Policy Issues</td>
<td>Provides definitions of stress, Duties of Staff, Process for identifying and assessing risk associated with stress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date Issued</td>
<td>TBC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dates Policy reviewed</td>
<td>January 2011</td>
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<tr>
<td>Next review due date</td>
<td>January 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy written by</td>
<td>Head of Risk Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultation</td>
<td>Stress Management Task Group, Health and Safety Committee, Health and Safety Executive, Senior Management Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy reviewed by:</td>
<td>Human Resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead responsible for policy</td>
<td>Head of Risk Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring arrangements</td>
<td>The Health and Well-Being Group will be responsible for monitoring compliance with this procedure by reviewing sickness and absence reports, incident reports and risk assessments. The Health and Well-being Group will provide reports to Health and Safety Committee of assurance with this Procedure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approved by</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authorised by</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>Signature</td>
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1.0 Introduction

Work-related stress is a major cause of occupational ill health. The consequences of work related stress include high levels of sickness absence, high staff turnover and poor performance. The Health & Safety Executive (HSE) reports that about 1 in 5 people say they find their work very, or extremely, stressful.

Lancashire Care NHS Foundation Trust (LCFT) is committed to protecting the health, safety and welfare of its employees and recognises that workplace stress is a health and safety issue. The Trust acknowledges the importance of identifying and reducing workplace stressors, and supporting staff who may suffer from work-related stress. By having robust procedures in place for managing work-related stress the Trust will help its employees to pro-actively and re-actively manage the issue of stress sensibly, and minimise the impact of work-related stress within the Trust.

This procedure applies to LCFT employees and bank staff only.

2.0 Purpose

The procedure is to ensure that the Trust meets its moral, ethical and legal obligations by identifying, managing and reducing work-related stress. It is also generally accepted that there is an increase in benefits/efficiency for organisations in reducing work-related stress. This procedure will address the following issues.

2.1 Moral and ethical issues

There is now convincing evidence that prolonged periods of stress, including work-related stress, have an adverse effect on health.

Research provides strong links between stress and:

- Physical effects, such as heart disease, back pain, headaches, gastrointestinal disturbances or various minor illnesses
- Psychological effects, such as anxiety and depression

2.2 Business benefits of handling LCFT stress

Research has shown work related stress to have adverse effects for organisations in terms of:

- Employee commitment to work
- Staff performance and productivity
- Staff turnover and intention to leave
- Attendance levels
- Staff recruitment and retention
- Customer satisfaction
- Organisational image and reputation
• Potential litigation

2.3 Legal obligations

Under the Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, the Trust has a legal obligation to assess the risk of stress-related ill health arising from work activities. In addition, the Health and Safety at Work Act etc. 1974 provides that the Trust is required to take measures to control the risks.

3.0 Definitions

3.1 Stress

The Health and Safety Executive defines stress as “the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them”. This makes an important distinction between pressure, which can be a positive state if managed correctly, and stress that always has a negative effect and can be detrimental to health.

3.2 Minority Stress

Minority stress is derived from membership of a low status minority group. Minority stress arises not only from negative events but also from the totality of the minority person's experience in a dominant society. At the centre of the experience is the incongruence between the minority person's culture, needs, experience and societal structures. Other dimensions of Minority Stress are perceived stigma and personal experience of prejudice and discrimination. Each of these impacts upon psychological adjustment. (adapted from Williamson, 2000)

4.0 Principles

The Health and Safety Executive have produced Management Standards for Work Related Stress (MSWRS) which identifies six key potential stressors at work. If these are managed pro-actively it can help to reduce stress.

This procedure is based upon the MSWRS and is a pragmatic, methodical approach to pro-actively managing work-related stress.

The six stressors identified are:

• Demands – includes issues like workload, work partners and the work environment
• Control – how much of a say a person has in the way they do their work
• Support – Includes the encouragement and resources provided by the organisation, line manager and colleagues
**Relationships** – Includes promoting 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.

These are covered in more detail in appendix 1.

## 5.0 Duties

### 5.1 All employees

All employees have a duty to take care of their own health and safety at work. They must:

- Familiarise themselves with the Trust’s procedure for management of stress
- Raise any issues of concern with their appropriate line manager, health and safety representative or occupational health
- Accept opportunities for counselling when recommended
- Be aware of the MSWRS and how these assist the Trust to pro-actively manage work place stressors
- Be alert to the signs of stressors in colleagues and encourage individuals to seek support in line with this procedure, e.g. from their line manager, health & safety representative or occupational health.

### 5.2 Line managers

All line managers must:

- Undertake a Stress Risk Assessment with a member of staff, where work-related stress has been identified
- Conduct and implement recommendations of risk assessments within their area of responsibility
- Manage implementation of the any actions or specific interventions
- Ensure good communication between management and staff, particularly where there are organisational and procedural changes
- Ensure staff are fully trained to discharge their duties
- Ensure staff are provided with meaningful developmental opportunities
- Monitor workloads to ensure that people are not over loaded
- Ensure that they have an understanding of how discrimination has an effect on the stress levels of staff from minority groups
- Monitor working hours and overtime to ensure that staff are not over working and monitor holidays to ensure that staff are taking their full entitlement
- Attend training in good management practise and health and safety as requested
- Ensure that staff are treated with dignity
- Be vigilant and offer additional support to a member of staff who is experiencing stress outside work, e.g. bereavement or separation
• Manage sickness in line with the Trust’s Managing Attendance Policy

5.3 **Occupational Health**

Lancashire Care Foundation Trust’s Occupational Health Provider will support this procedure by providing support and advice to managers and staff on issues relating to stress management. This will include:

• Support to individuals who have been off sick with stress and advise them and their managers on a planned return to work
• Referring staff to counsellors or to other specialist agencies as and when required
• Monitoring and reviewing the effectiveness of measures to reduce stress
• Informing the Trust and the Health & Safety Committee of any changes and developments in the field of stress at work

5.4 **Human Resources (HR) Department:**

The HR Department must:

• Assist in monitoring the effectiveness of measures to address stress by collating sickness and absence statistics and providing the information to the Health & Safety Committee, Executive Management Team, (EMT) Governance, Network Governance Groups and Health & Safety Representatives
• Raise awareness with managers and staff of the issues relating to stress and how to deal with them.
• Provide support to managers and individuals and encourage referral to occupational health or counselling when appropriate

5.5 **Staff Side Representatives:**

Staff Side Representatives must:

• Inform and advise their members on the content of this procedure
• Advise their members about the support that is available throughout the Trust to assist their members

5.6 **Health and Safety Representatives**

Health and Safety representatives must be:

• Consulted on any changes to work practises or work design that could precipitate stress
• Able to consult with union members on the issue of stress, including any workplace surveys
• Involved in the workplace stress risk assessment process
• Allowed access to collective and anonymous sickness and absence data from HR
• Provided with paid time away from normal duties to attend any relevant training relating to workplace stress
• Allowed to conduct joint audits and inspections of the workplace to ensure that environmental stressors are properly controlled
• At the forefront and have a pivotal role in the implementation of the MSWRS

5.7 **Executive Directors / Director of Nursing**

The Director of Nursing, as the Executive Director with responsibility for Health & Safety, is responsible for overseeing the implementation of this procedure. The Director of Nursing will provide assurance to the EMT Governance and Trust Board that the procedure is being implemented and that performance management targets are being monitored.

5.8 **Director of HR**

The Director of HR will provide statistical analysis of sickness absence to EMT Governance and the Trust Board on a monthly basis.

5.9 **Responsibilities of Committees**

5.9.1 **Trust Board**

The Trust Board will receive assurance that this procedure is being implemented and monitored via the Director of Nursing from EMT Governance.

5.9.2 **EMT Governance**

The Director of Nursing will provide EMT Governance with assurance from the Health and Safety Committee, via a report and minutes, of progress in achieving the performance management targets detailed in section 10.

5.9.3 **Health and Safety Committee**

The Health and Safety Committee is the nominated committee that will perform a pivotal role in ensuring that this procedure is implemented.

Stress management is a standing agenda item on the Health and Safety Committee.

The Health and Safety Committee will

• Receive update quarterly reports from the Health and Well-being Group to ensure compliance with this procedure
• Review the stress management procedure and recommend its approval to EMT Governance and Senior Management Network
• Policy assurance to EMT Governance of compliance with this procedure
5.9.4 Health and Well-Being Group

The Health and Well-Being Group is responsible for completing specific work relating to stress management, as part of the Trust’s overall health and well-being strategy and initiatives. Duties involve:

- Providing a quarterly report to the Health and Safety Committee of compliance with this procedure
- Developing and monitoring an action plan to address issues of non-compliance

6.0 Process for Identifying Stressors and Risk Assessments

To identify workplace stressors the Management Standards for Work Related Stress (see Appendix 1) must be used as an aide memoir for completing the risk assessment.

Managers may also wish to use the HSE Management Standards Indicator Tool (available on the HSE web site http://www.hse.gov.uk and on the Trust’s intranet). Line Managers are responsible for undertaking of risk assessments of their workplace at least every two years or when issues of work related stress are highlighted.

A Stress Risk Assessment Tool provided by our current Occupational Health Provider is also available on the Trust Intranet pages. This is to be used by managers to conduct stress risk assessments in conjunction with staff, where staff have reported workplace stress, or cases of stress have been identified by our Occupational Health provider.

6.1 Steps to risk assessment

Step 1 – Identifying the hazards

By using the MSWRS, hazards can be identified from the following:

- Demands
- Control
- Support
- Relationship
- Role
- Change

Step 2 – Decide who may be harmed and how.

By reviewing existing data available, managers will be able to identify where stress may be an issue within the Trust.
Where an individual employee reports work-related stress, or where occupational health identify stress as a cause of absence or poor performance, managers are required to undertake a stress risk assessment with the employee (a Stress Risk Assessment tool can be accessed from the HR section of the Trust intranet pages).

Data may be available from:

- Sickness and absence statistics
- Return to work interviews
- Occupational Health Departments
- Staff turnover rates
- Supervision or appraisals
- Staff survey
- Health & Safety Representatives

Focus groups or team meetings may also help managers to identify current stressors. Focus groups will provide an opportunity to explore issues in depth or may be useful to find out what specific groups of staff think about their work.

**Step 3 – Evaluate the risk and develop solutions**

Appropriate action plans must also be developed to manage risk. There must be consultation with employees about any problems that have been identified and actions put in place to deal with them. Support can be offered from Occupational Health, Human resources and the Risk Management Team.

**Step 4 – Record the findings**

All identified risks and associated action plans must be recorded on the Datix Risk Management system, as required by Risk Assessment Procedure.

**Step 5 – Monitor and review**

To ensure the effective management of risks associated with workplace stress, risks and relevant action plans must be reviewed and monitored by the Network Governance Groups/Locality Risk Groups must in accordance with the Trust’s Risk Management procedures. Risks graded between 15-25 which may require a corporate response, will be monitored by EMT Governance.

Network Governance / Locality Risk Management Groups will be responsible for reviewing risks associated with stress. The Health & Safety Committee will monitor the risks.

**7.0 Information to Staff**

The Trusts’ Work Related Stress Management Strategy outlines a communication plan to provide information to staff regarding work related stress.
The key features of this plan are:

- Staff will receive information via induction programmes and the mandatory training work book
- Trust wide weekly bulletin will be sent to all staff providing details of the strategy and procedure
- Links to the HSE Stress Management web pages will be made via the Risk Management intranet pages

8.0 Arrangements for Counselling

To ensure that staff have adequate support when affected by work-related stress, access to confidential counselling services is available via the Occupational Health Provider. Staff may be referred by their line manager, or may self-refer. Contacts details for the Trust’s current Occupational Health provider can be found on the Trust’s Occupational Health intranet page.

Where a member of staff reports work-related stress, managers are required to refer the individual to the Trust’s Occupational Health Service.

In addition, staff may access the Trust’s independent Employee Assistance Programme. Details can be obtained from the Human Resources Department.

9.0 Equality Impact Assessment

Appendix 2 provides an equality impact assessment of this procedure.

10.0 Standards/Key Performance Indicators

To ensure that this procedure is effectively implemented across the Trust the following key performance indicators have been identified.

- Trust Board approval of the Stress Management Strategy.
- Steering group to manage and drive this strategy forward on an annual basis
- A project plan that will identify key stages and performance indicators for the implementation of the strategy and this procedure. This project plan will meet the requirements of HSG 218 and the NHSLA Risk Management Standards
- Develop and implement a communication strategy which will support implementation
- In line with the requirements of HSG 218 all Networks must complete a risk assessment of work-related stress as required by this procedure. This will identify workplace stressors and completion of risk assessments
- Introduce a Competency Framework for Managers to manage stress at work as identified in HSG 218.
11.0 Monitoring

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Format / Timescale</th>
<th>How</th>
<th>Whom</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Duties</td>
<td>Quarterly reports to Health and safety Committee</td>
<td>Review of minutes of meetings Risk Assessment</td>
<td>Health and Well-Being Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process for identification of work place stressors</td>
<td>Quarterly</td>
<td>Review of sickness and absence statistics / Incidents / Risk Assessments</td>
<td>Health and Well-Being Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk Assessments</td>
<td>Quarterly</td>
<td>Review of risk assessments included on the risk register</td>
<td>Health and Well-Being Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arrangements for counselling</td>
<td>Annually</td>
<td>Details of referrals to Occupational Health Services</td>
<td>Health and Well-Being Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to information</td>
<td>Quarterly</td>
<td>Monitoring of communication plan</td>
<td>Health and Well-Being Group</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To monitor compliance with the above the Health and Well-Being Group will provide quarterly reports to the Health & Safety Committee and Network Governance Groups.

The Health and Well-Being Group group will be responsible for developing and monitoring action plans to address non-compliance with this procedure and will provide quarterly reports to the Health & Safety Committee. EMT Governance will receive assurance from the Health & Safety committee that this procedure is being implemented.

12.0 Other Related Documents

- Risk Management Strategy
- Procedure for Risk Assessments
- Managing Attendance Policy
- Equality and Diversity documentation
- K.S.F. outlines
- Policy for Strategy and Mandatory Training
- Mandatory Training Workbook
- Work Related Stress Management Strategy

13.0 Useful References


4. Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999

5. Health & Safety at Work etc Act 1974


Appendix 1

The Management Standards
For Work-related Stress

The Management Standards for Work-Related Stress, published by the Health and Safety Executive, define the characteristics, or culture, of an organisation where the risks from work-related stress are being effectively managed and controlled.

The management standards describe the primary sources of stress at work:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demands</th>
<th>Control</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Including issues like workload, work patterns and the work environment</td>
<td>How much say the person has in the way they do their work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The standard is that:</td>
<td>The standard is that:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- employees indicate that they are able to cope with the demands of their job; and</td>
<td>- employees indicate that they are able to have a say about the way they do their work; and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns</td>
<td>- systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What should be happening/states to be achieved:</td>
<td>What should be happening/states to be achieved:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- the organisation provides employees with adequate and achievable demands in relation to the agreed hours of work;</td>
<td>- where possible, employees have control over their pace of work;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- people’s skills and abilities are matched to the job demands;</td>
<td>- employees are encouraged to use their skills and initiative to do their work;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- jobs are designed to be within the capabilities of employees; and</td>
<td>- where possible, employees are encouraged to develop new skills to help them undertake new and challenging pieces of work;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- employees’ concerns about their work environment are addressed</td>
<td>- the organisation encourages employees to develop their skills;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- employees have a say over when breaks can be taken; and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- employees are consulted over their work patterns.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- systems are in place to enable and encourage managers to deal with unacceptable behaviour; and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- systems are in place to enable and encourage employees to report unacceptable behaviour.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Support

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

The standard is that:

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

What should be happening/states to be achieved:

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

### Relationships

**Includes promoting positive working to avoid conflict and dealing with unacceptable behaviour**

The standard is that:

- employees indicate that they are not subjected to unacceptable behaviours, eg bullying at work; and
- systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns.

What should be happening/states to be achieved:

- the organisation promotes positive behaviours at work to avoid conflict and ensure fairness;
- employees share information relevant to their work;
- the organisation has agreed policies and procedure to prevent or resolve unacceptable behaviour:
  - consultation on changes and provides opportunities for employees to influence proposals:
  - employees are aware of the probable impact of any changes to their jobs. If necessary, employees are given training to support any changes in their jobs;
  - employees are aware of timetables for changes;
  - employees have access to relevant support during changes.
**Role**

**Whether people understand their role within the organisation and whether the organisation ensures that the person does not have conflicting roles**

The standard is that:

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

What should be happening/states to be achieved:

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

**Change**

**How organisational change (large or small) is managed and communicated in the organisation**

The standard is that:

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

What should be happening/states to be achieved:

- the organisation provides employees with timely information to enable them to understand the reasons for proposed changes;
- and the organisation ensures adequate employee
## Appendix 2

### Initial Equality Impact Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department/Function</th>
<th>Human Resources</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Person responsible</td>
<td>TBC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact details</td>
<td>TBC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name of policy/procedure/service to be assessed</td>
<td>Policy &amp; Procedures for the management of work related stress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of assessment</td>
<td>24th November 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is this a new or existing policy/procedure/service?</td>
<td>Revised Procedure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**1. Briefly describe the aims, objectives and purpose of the policy/procedure/service?**
- This procedure provides
  - Definitions of stress
  - Why stress management is important
  - Responsibilities of staff and descriptions of HSE Management Standards
  - Performance Management criteria

**2. Who is intended to benefit?**
- All Staff and Managers

**3. What outcomes are wanted?**
- The Trust will have effective procedures for the management of work related stress

**4. Who are the main stakeholders?**
- All Staff
- Line Managers
- Occupational Health

**5. Who is responsible for implementation?**
- Line Managers
- Human Resources Department
6. Are there concerns that there could be differential impact on the following groups and what existing evidence do you have for this?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Y</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>People from a black or minority ethnic background</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Awareness that monitory stress may be an issue for black or ethnic minority background</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women or men including trans people</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>In terms of the procedure, there are no gender-specific issues in relation to stress. However, it should be noted that staff could suffer stress based on gender stereotypes e.g. child care issues, or where gender change has occurred, the stress associated with the transition. However they will be treated consistently, fairly and sympathetically in line with the policy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People with disabilities or long term health conditions</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Awareness that disability or long-term health conditions may contribute to an individual’s stress.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People with or without a religion or belief</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Awareness that people with or without religious belief may contribute to an individual’s stress.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesbian, gay, bisexual or heterosexual people</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Awareness that sexuality may contribute to an individual’s stress e.g. individuals who have not openly disclosed their sexuality may experience increased levels of stress as a consequence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Older or younger people</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>We are aware as a Trust that staff can make assumptions about peoples abilities based on age.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. Could any differential impact identified above be potentially adverse?

| Y |

8. Have you consulted with those who are likely to be affected?

| Y | The policy has been developed in consultation with staff side. |

9. Should the policy/procedure/service proceed to full impact assessment?

| N |

10. Should the
I understand the impact assessment of this policy/procedure/service is a statutory obligation and take responsibility for the completion of this process.

Names of Assessors: David Attisha / Hayley Branigan

Signature of assessors

Date of assessment

Date of next review