Summary and acknowledgements

Fact Sheet 1 – Mental Health at Work: Making the Case
This fact sheet explains why mental health in the work place is so important, and explores the costs to employers, individuals and the economy of failing to tackle mental health issues at work. It provides a snapshot of London in terms of its population, employment patterns (including the employment of people with mental health problems in London) and the scale of mental health problems in the capital.

Fact Sheet 2 – About mental health and mental illness
This fact sheet aims to dispel some of the common myths about mental illness and to provide information about a range of diagnoses that people within your workplace may experience at some time in their lives. A number of action points are provided to help you plan ahead to ensure your organisation has the knowledge, skills and support mechanisms in place to promote mental well being and deal with mental health issues at work, and to know how to respond appropriately when staff become mentally distressed or experience a mental illness.

Fact sheet 2 explores what we mean by good mental health and explains some common and more severe mental illnesses, including information about prevalence, common signs and symptoms and possible treatment options.

Fact Sheet 3- Aiming for a Mentally Healthy Environment
This fact sheet explains a range of factors that are known to have an impact on mental health in the workplace and describes the possible effect on employees. Each determinant for mental health is matched with an action plan for good practice, providing you with a number of measures that you can take together with your staff to promote a mentally healthy environment at work.

Fact Sheet 4 – Creating a Mentally Healthy Workplace
This fact sheet explores a number of ways that you as an employer can contribute to a mentally healthy workplace by cultivating an organisation culture that is open to mental health issues, values diversity, tackles all discrimination at work and promotes communication across the organisation. It explains the advantages of developing a strategy for work–life balance, and explores ways of achieving this. Finally, it assesses your legal responsibilities towards mental health at work.

Fact Sheet 5 – Positive Recruitment Practice
This fact sheet aims to provide information and advice about positive recruitment practice for your workplace. This includes information which relates to the positive practice of supporting people with mental health problems to apply, to be appointed and to be supported in your workplace.

Fact Sheet 6 – Positive Retention Practice
This fact sheet aims to provide information and advice about positive retention policies and practice for your workplace. This includes information which relates to the positive practice of supporting people with mental health problems or people who may be experiencing a period of mental distress to retain their jobs and continue to contribute positively in your organisation.

Fact Sheet 7 – Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures

This fact sheet aims to provide information and advice about workplace rules and regulations, disciplinary, grievance and dismissal procedures. This includes information relating to the practice of supporting people with mental health problems through these procedures, informing colleagues and ensuring as positive an outcome as possible for individuals and the organisation.

Fact Sheet 8 – Rights, Roles and Responsibilities

This fact sheet aims to provide information and advice about employees and employers rights, roles and responsibilities within the workplace. Some rights are considered in more detail as they may have more relevance to people with mental health problems or they may be used to support the mental health of all employees. This includes information for human resources professionals, occupational health professionals and managers to support people with mental health problems effectively in the workplace.

Fact Sheet 9 – Useful organisations and resources

These fact sheets were written by mentality.

For further information and a downloadable version of the fact sheets see www.london.gov.uk or contact the Greater London Authority on 020 7983 4100.

1. Mental health at work: making the case

About this fact sheet

This fact sheet explains why mental health in the work place is so important, and explores the costs to employers, individuals and the economy of failing to tackle mental health issues at work. It provides a snapshot of London in terms of its population, employment patterns (including the employment of people with mental health problems in London) and the scale of mental health problems in the capital.

Why is mental health in the workplace so important?

Good management of mental health in the workplace means good business. Everyone has mental health needs and one in four people will experience some kind of mental health problem in the course of a year. Over 25 million people in the UK spend a large part of their lives at work and therefore it is clear that a mentally healthy workplace and a supportive work environment will benefit staff and employers alike. Failing to deal effectively with mental health issues in the workplace can be costly for employers, individuals and the overall economy. It can lead to a lot of people being excluded unnecessarily from the labour market, their skills being lost to business, and individuals in work not contributing their best.

What's in it for employers?

For employers, finding ways to protect the mental health of all staff, to look after staff experiencing mental health difficulties, and to support people returning to work after a mental illness can make great business sense because it contributes to:

- More effective recruitment of staff, drawing from a wider pool
- Better staff retention
- Reduced staff absences and associated savings
- Better working conditions for all staff
- Compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act
- Enhanced reputation as an employer

In a survey of 800 companies carried out by the Confederation of British Industries, 98 per cent of respondents said they thought the mental health of employees should be an organisation concern.[1] The majority (81 per cent) considered that the mental health of staff should be part of a company policy, and yet less than one in ten of those companies had an official policy about mental health.[2]

Mental health – how big is the problem?

Work-related stress is estimated to be the biggest occupational health problem in the UK, after musculoskeletal disorders such as back problems. Nearly three in every ten employees will have a mental health problem in any one year. Mental health problems account for the loss of over 91 million working days each year, and half of all days lost through mental ill health are due to anxiety and stress conditions.

Promoting mental health in the workplace and giving consideration to employees with mental health problems makes good business sense as mental ill health among the workforce costs British industry a substantial amount of money.

- 2.2 million people suffer from ill health (physical and mental) due to, or made worse by work[3]
- The cost of sickness absence attributable to mental health problems was estimated to be £4 billion annually in the UK in 2001 (the equivalent of £3.9 billion in England in 2002/03).[4]
- Lost employment constitutes 37 per cent of the total cost of mental ill-health in England (£11.8 billion).
- The CBI estimates that 30 times as many days are lost from mental ill-health as from industrial disputes.
- In addition to sickness absence, ineffective working and poor interpersonal relations can substantially reduce productivity.
- Increased staff turnover leads to increased recruitment costs.
- Administrative as well as personal costs are involved in covering for absent employees.
- The cost of staff taking early retirement or medical severance on health grounds.
- A survey[5] indicated that changes in UK work patterns have resulted in a 90 per cent increase in claims for compensation arising from mental health problems over the last five years.

How individuals can benefit
Paying attention to mental health issues at work can benefit individuals in a number of ways. It will promote a working environment that protects the mental well being of all staff; ensure staff receive the support they need if they develop a mental health problem while in employment; and help individuals to get back to work after a period of absence due to a mental illness.
An Industrial Society survey[6] showed:
- Only about 13 per cent of people with mental health problems are in employment, compared with around 33 per cent of people with other long-term health problems.
- 70 per cent of people with mental health problems have been put off applying for jobs for fear of unfair treatment.
- 30 per cent of people with mental health problems felt they had been dismissed or 'forced to resign' because of discrimination .

How work benefits people with mental health problems
Most people with mental health problems want to work, both in paid and voluntary jobs. As many as 90 per cent of unemployed people with mental health problems would like to work.[7] Work has been shown to have a beneficial effect on mental health[8], while unemployment has been found to adversely affect mental health.[9] People with mental health problems who are employed report that work is both a distraction from symptoms and a way of managing them. It helps them structure their time and avoid boredom, increase financial security, feel productive and normal, improve their self esteem and socialise with others.[10] Use of support services and periods of ill-health decline when a person is at work.[11]

People with mental health problems are more likely to become unemployed, establishing a downward spiral of job loss, deterioration in mental health and consequent decreased chances of gaining employment.[12] The effects of mental illness and job loss on an individual result in financial costs associated with loss of current and potential income, costs of treatment and medication, as well as psychosocial costs resulting from social exclusion, stigma and costs to carers and family members.[13]

Increased length of time off work has an increasingly negative effect on mental health and decreases the likelihood of ever returning to work. After six months off there is a 50 per cent chance of ever returning to work, after 12 months there is 25 per cent chance of return, and after two years the chance of return is practically nil.[14]

How work can have a negative impact on mental health

Although work is largely positive it can also have a negative impact on mental health. Many jobs or particular tasks cause stress to individuals[15] and unmanaged job stress can exacerbate mental illness[16]. Approximately two out of three people with a mental illness believe that unrealistic workloads, high expectations, long hours and bad management caused or exacerbated their mental health problems.[17] Another one in three felt that unhealthy working conditions, the work culture or bullying at work had caused or contributed to their mental health problem. Work-related and environmental factors can also contribute to increased stress and mental ill-health for the general population.[18]

Mental health in London

With a population of 7 million, London is the largest city in western Europe and approximately a further million people commute to London each working day.[19] The gross domestic product per head of population is 30 per cent higher than the UK average[20] and the average household income is also higher by similar levels However, there is a large variation in weekly income and London has some of the poorest areas in the country and higher unemployment.

The capital has higher levels of serious mental illness than any other city in the UK. The capital has the highest rates of factors known to increase the risk of mental illness, including unemployment, and the proportion of the population aged 15 – 30 (the highest risk years for psychotic illness). The NHS in London spends £7 billion per year, making up six per cent of the London economy compared with 14 per cent by the wholesale and retail trade and just four per cent by education. Over a billion of this NHS spend in London goes on mental health. Each borough has more than 4,500 NHS staff, as well as social services and social care staff.[21]

NHS mental health services use a measurement known as the 'Mental Illness Needs Index' (MINI) which is based on a number of indicators with an established association with rates of mental illness, including social isolation, poverty, unemployment, sickness and quality of housing. In London, ten boroughs have below the English average MINI score, one is on the average, and 22 are above average (a high score indicates an area with greater need for mental health service provision).[22]

Employment in London

In 2002, the unemployment rate in both London and the UK increased for the first time since 1993, and both unemployment and long-term unemployment remain higher in London than for the rest of the country. There is considerable variation in unemployment rates in different London boroughs, with a range from two per cent in Havering to 12 per cent in Tower Hamlets. In Inner London boroughs, 42.5 per cent of unemployed persons have been so for more than six months, and in outer London the figure is 32.8 per cent. There has been a slight increase in unemployment among 16 – 24 year olds, and over one quarter of male teenagers in London continue to be unemployed.[23]

The NHS is a bigger employer by far than any individual company, employing 140,000 people in London - an average of over 4,000 jobs per London borough, or 7,000 including contract staff. The number of NHS jobs is highest in the most deprived London boroughs. The total number of jobs dependent on the NHS and other health providers is between 350,000 and 400,000 – around ten per cent of London's four million jobs.[24]

Employment of people with mental health problems

People with mental health problems are one of the groups with especially high unemployment rates (18 per cent)[25] and are less likely to be employed than any other group of disabled people. In the UK in 2001, people with mental health problems (including common and severe disorders) were almost three times more likely to be unemployed than all other disabled people.[26] Over a half a million people of working age with mental health-related disability or impairment are 'economically inactive' –that is, not seeking work or permanently sick. Many people with mental health problems may not wish to work for a variety of reasons, but a large number do.

Disabled Londoners have an unemployment rate nearly twice as high as non-disabled people, and between 1979 and 1997 this situation deteriorated. In 2001/02, 11 per cent of disabled Londoners were unemployed, compared to 6.2 per cent of non-disabled Londoners. A survey of one London borough[27] found that only 20 per cent of responding employers would consider employing a disabled person.

For people with mental health problems, as for other disabled people, unemployment lasts longer – 34.8 per cent disabled unemployed people have been so for more than a year, compared to 20.5 per cent of non-disabled people. Long-term unemployment can have adverse health effects and can contribute to a vicious circle for people who already have long-term illness.

Factors affecting the employment chances of disabled people include age, gender, marital status, education, qualifications, region and industry. Controlling for factors like education, the gap between disabled and non-disabled people lessens, but the unexplained difference increases, especially for people with mental health problems. According to the former DfEE [28], [29], the most common type of discrimination, for all disabled people, is the assumption by the employer that they would not be able to do the job as well as a non-disabled person.

Each year, about three per cent of people in work become disabled, with more than half remaining disabled for more than a year. After five years, 64 per cent of disabled people are still in employment, compared with 78 per cent of the non-disabled group, and many of those who leave work report that they are dismissed or pressured into resigning.[30] Factors leading people with mental health problems to leave work could include financial reasons, pressure from their employer or poor health. It is too early to assess the possible effects of the Disability Discrimination Act (1995) on the employment chances of people with mental health problems. There is evidence that employers can help retain their staff by making a number of adjustments such as physical adaptations, allowing a slower pace of work, flexible working conditions and creating a less stressful environment.[31]

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2. About mental health and mental illness

About this fact sheet

The fact sheet explores what we mean by good mental health and explains some common and more severe mental illnesses, with brief information about prevalence, common signs and symptoms and possible treatment options. It aims to dispel some of the common myths about mental illness and to provide information about a range of mental health issues that people within your workplace may experience at some time in their lives. A number of action points are suggested to help you plan ahead to ensure your organisation has the knowledge, skills and support mechanisms in place to promote mental well being and deal with mental health issues at work, and to know how to respond appropriately when staff become mentally distressed or experience a mental illness.

What do we mean by good mental health?

An individual with good mental health can be defined as someone who functions well and is able to cope with and enjoy work, family and social relationships. Mental health is an issue for everyone. It is estimated that one in four people in the UK will experience some kind of mental health problem in the course of a year.[1] A company with 1000 employees can expect between 200 and 300 people to experience depression or anxiety in any year.[2] Like physical health, we need to take our mental well being seriously and make a conscious effort to protect it, whether or not we currently have mental health problems. It is accepted that a healthy workplace environment can promote mental well being and this has an effect on work performance overall. More employers are beginning to recognise that they have a responsibility in this.

Dispelling some myths about mental illness:

There are many misconceptions about mental health problems, often fuelled by sensationalist media coverage. Research carried out by the Royal College of Psychiatrists in 1998[3] revealed that 30 per cent of employers interviewed would not, under any circumstances, consider employing people who had experienced mental health problems. This is a reflection of the large scale lack of knowledge and understanding about mental illness.

Myth: All people with mental health problems are violent.

Reality: Mental illness is not a predictor of violence. With rare exceptions, the vast majority of people who have been diagnosed as having a mental health problem are not violent or aggressive in the workplace. Only one per cent of violent crimes committed against the person are by people assessed as having a mental disorder.[4] People with schizophrenia are 100 times more likely to harm themselves than to harm others, with a suicide rate of six –ten per cent[5] and they are more likely to be victimised as a result of their mental health.

Myth: Having a mental health problem will affect a person's ability to work reliably. (This is illustrated by a research study which found that a person with depression had significantly reduced chances of employment compared to someone with diabetes because of concerns about poor work performance.[6])

Reality: There is no reason to expect a person with mental health problems to be less reliable than anyone else. Some people's reliability will depend on the reasonable adjustments made - for example, someone who has problems with timekeeping may become a more reliable employee when flexible working hours are agreed.

Myth: Someone with a mental health problem is going to take lots of time off sick.

Reality: People may need time off with mental distress – but this is not always the case. In fact, people with a diagnosis of a severe mental illness may have excellent sickness records, and employment can contribute to their recovery and staying well. One supported employment programme within a mental health trust reports better sickness rates among people with a diagnosis of mental illness (3.8 per cent) than those of the rest of the organisation (5.8 per cent).[7] People with mental illness are often far more conscientious and motivated to 'do well' than others.[8]

Myth: People with a mental health problem are not going to be able to cope with the pressures and hold down a responsible job.

Reality: It would be incorrect to assume a person with mental health problems will not cope with a lot of responsibility. For many people, having a mental illness will have no effect on job performance; for others, it may only affect work temporarily. As with any employee, you need to explore strategies for managing work pressures and help them put these into practice. Be clear about the demands of the job and the support the organisation can provide.

Myth: Mental health problems are permanent and untreatable.

Reality: Studies over a significant period show that the majority of people with a mental health problem lead stable and productive lives.

Good practice in dealing with mental health issues at work
Identifying problems early

At an organisation-wide level, stress may manifest itself in a number of ways and the earlier you identify the problem, the sooner you can take action.

The signs may include:
- poor staff attitudes and behaviour;
- loss of motivation;
- poor relationships at work;
- reduced productivity;
- increases in sickness absence;
- increased accident rate;
- increased staff turnover or transfer requests.

At an individual level, anyone can become upset or distressed at work, whether or not they have a diagnosis of mental illness. Managers need to know how to respond to individual employees who are going through stressful times.

We all have off days, bring worries into work from home, get angry or feel down from time to time. A pattern that continues for some time may indicate an underlying mental health problem and managers and staff need to be aware and sensitive to a colleague who consistently shows any of the following changes, and intervene appropriately:
- absenteeism;
- a significant change in mood;
- an unusual deterioration in their standard of work, reduced productivity, bad decisions or indecision;

- poor morale or lack of co-operation;
- uncharacteristic accidents;
- frequent complaints of tiredness, aches and pains;
- alcohol or drug abuse.

Planning ahead:
- Have a clear and credible equal opportunities policy on mental health so that staff feel safe about disclosing problems.
- Positively encourage staff to manage their own well being at work and provide them with training and advice in how to avoid, reduce or manage stress.
- Train managers and supervisors to be more skilled in dealing with distress, and in using supervision to best effect.
- Ensure managers are effective at identifying, intervening and providing support for mental distress at an early stage.
- Consider different support systems that could be put in place in your organisation, including peer support, Employee Assistance Programmes, information about local support agencies.
- Make adjustments for individuals that allow them to develop and use their own support systems, such as flexible hours to attend a support group.
- Be alert to signs of mental distress, but do not attempt to diagnose or treat it.
- Know where and how to signpost people towards self help groups and professional help.
- Once a member of staff has experienced mental health difficulties at work, try to agree with them action to be taken when and if problems occur again. This may include taking medication early on, or handing over some responsibilities to someone else temporarily.

When someone becomes distressed at work:
- Ask the person how you can help and what they would find useful, for example someone to talk to, time to be on their own.
- Ask if there is anyone they would like contacted, for example, someone from home, a colleague.
- Make space for the person to be distressed in private, to express emotions, let off steam or calm down.
- When the person is able to, explore whether work is a factor in their distress, reassure them that they will not be penalised because of their mental health problem, and make sure they know what kinds of support the organisation can offer.
- Once the person has recovered sufficiently, they may want to carry on working, or it may be appropriate to suggest they take some time out or go home early from work.
- Discuss with them the possibility of them seeking professional help. Encourage them to get help from the welfare officer or occupational health department at work, their general practitioner or other health professional.
- Rarely, someone may be in crisis. Where possible, contact the person of their choice. If this is not possible, you could ring the duty social worker at your local social services for advice or intervention.

Finding out about different mental illnesses
Mental illness is an umbrella term covering a wide range of conditions. There are many sources of more detailed information available, some of which are identified for you in Fact Sheet 9. For ease of reference, brief information about a range of mental health conditions is provided below.

Stress
What is stress?
Stress is a psychological state which is part of and reflects a wider process of interaction between individuals, their work and non-work environments.[9] It is people's natural reaction to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them.[10] If stress is excessive and goes on for some time, it can lead to mental and physical ill health such as depression, anxiety and heart disease.

Stress is the root cause of a lot of mental ill-health, especially anxiety and depression. Anyone can experience stress at work, depending on the demands of their job, the conditions in which they work, and their individual susceptibility, which can be increased by problems outside work. The most highly rated causes of stress at work are: time pressures/deadlines, 60 per cent; work overload, 54 per cent; threat of job losses, 52 per cent; lack of consultation or communication, 51 per cent and under-staffing, 46 per cent.[11]

Prevalence
Work related stress is estimated to be the biggest occupational health problem in the UK, after musculoskeletal disorders such as back problems.

In a recent survey of 270 company line managers, 88 per cent claimed a moderate or high level of stress in their work, and 39 per cent claimed this had got worse in the last year. 52 per cent said they knew someone who had suffered stress severe enough to stop them working and require long-term medical treatment.[12]

Signs and symptoms
Stress can affect the way individuals think, feel and behave, for example it can lead to increased anxiety and irritability, impaired sleep and concentration, verbal or physical aggression, reduced attention span and impaired memory. It can also produce changes in physiological functions such as raised heart rate, gastrointestinal and skin conditions, headache and lowered resistance to infection. Individuals may also show a tendency to consume more alcohol, smoke more and use excessive caffeine. Individuals who are exposed to prolonged stress can become increasingly vulnerable to mental health problems, for example anxiety and depression, drug and alcohol abuse and psychological dependence.

Treatment options
Early recognition of signs of stress is crucial in dealing with the problem and preventing it becoming more serious. Most people make a full recovery, often without needing to take any time off work. Individuals should be encouraged to seek help from their GP or workplace occupational health service. Efforts should be made to remove or reduce further sources of stress at work, and to support the individual through any short-term crisis.

Counselling can be an invaluable help in assisting recovery and rehabilitation. There are a wide variety of skills training options including assertiveness training, time management skills and relaxation techniques. Physical activity can also help reduce stress levels.

Anxiety

What is anxiety?

We all feel anxious and uneasy at times, and anxiety is a normal experience arising in response to stress or uncertainty. It only becomes a clinical problem when it is too severe for the person to handle and stops them from coping with everyday life, including work. This is when symptoms are more intense or long-lasting and interfere with a person's concentration.

There are a number of different types of anxiety. Some people suffer from anxiety all the time – this is called generalised anxiety. People with phobias may experience extreme fear of a particular object or place affecting their way of life. In Obsessive-compulsive disorder certain words or ideas keep coming to mind automatically, leading people to repeat things over and over to get rid of these thoughts. For people with panic attacks, symptoms of anxiety may come out of the blue. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder may occur after an unusually frightening or horrifying experience, for example seeing someone killed, losing your home or family.

Prevalence

Anxiety disorders are quite common, affecting five per cent of the population at any one time, with more women affected than men.

Signs and symptoms

Anxiety affects the way we feel, think and behave and the way our bodies work. The external signs of anxiety include physical changes such as sweating, a racing heart, palpitations or rapid breathing, caused by an increase in adrenaline, the substance released by the body to help it get ready to deal with danger or escape from something. Severe anxiety happens when the body over-reacts and responds to something that is not really dangerous. This can happen when a person is under stress or when they start thinking about past difficulties and experiences.

Treatment options

A significant number of people who experience anxiety are able to return to work. Recovery can be greatly helped by the support received from people at home and at work – support from managers and colleagues can play an important role.

The aim of any treatment is to try to help someone reduce the symptoms of anxiety to an acceptable level, so that they no longer interfere with day-to-day living. Self-help can be very useful and people can help themselves by learning to relax, taking exercise, and learning more about their symptoms.

People may need to seek professional help from their GP, who may refer them to a mental health worker or counsellor. Talking therapies may include cognitive-behavioural therapy, psychotherapy or counselling. Anxiety Management Groups or classes may be available at the local surgery or health centre. Occasionally, medication is prescribed for short-term relief and support –an anti-depressant may be prescribed in combination with non-drug treatments; or a tranquilliser may be used (with caution because of the risk of long-term dependence).

Depression

What is depression?

Depression is used to describe a range of moods, from the low spirits we all experience occasionally, to a severe problem that interferes with everyday life. Everyone may feel fed up, miserable or sad at

times, particularly after a deeply distressing occasion such as the death of someone close. Usually this kind of sadness passes with time, but occasionally it may carry on or seem to get out of proportion. Sometimes, depression just comes out of the blue without any obvious reason. Depression is only a significant problem if it lasts more than two weeks. If it persists, it can dominate every aspect of the day.

Prevalence

Depression is one of the most common mental disorders and affects 20 per cent of women and 10 per cent of men at some point during their lives.[13] One in twenty of all adults are estimated to be experiencing depression at any one time, and it is the third leading cause of death among 15 -24 year olds. One in twenty workers suffers from a depressive illness, and 52 per cent feel the need to conceal their illness for fear of losing their job.[14] Twice as many women as men develop depression.[15]

Signs and symptoms

People with depression usually have a number of symptoms, often including low mood, loss of interest and enjoyment in life, feelings of worthlessness and guilt, tearfulness, poor concentration, reduced energy, reduced or increased appetite and weight, sleep problems and anxiety. From the outside, a person may seem lazy, difficult or disinterested, but this is not the case. They need help and support - recognising and treating depression as an illness can shorten its duration and reduce the risk of relationship breakdown, sickness, accidents, alcohol and drug misuse, job loss and suicide.

Treatment options

A depressive illness is serious but can be treated. Over 80 per cent of people with the most severe depressions can be helped quickly, 50 per cent will recover with only minor relapses and 25 per cent will recover completely. Recognising that someone is experiencing depression and supporting them to seek help and treatment will speed their return to normal performance at work, as well as reducing needless distress. People need to seek professional help from their GP, who may refer them to a mental health worker or counsellor. Effective treatments include talking therapies such as cognitive-behavioural therapy, psychotherapy or counselling, either alone or together with anti-depressant medication.

Bi-polar Affective Disorder
What is Bi-polar Affective Disorder?

Bi-polar disorder is a disorder affecting a person's moods. We all experience mood changes, but in someone with bi-polar disorder these changes can be more extreme and sometimes unpredictable. Most often there is a high (manic) period alternating with a low (depressed) period. There is usually a period of stable mood in between. Each person's symptoms are unique so it is difficult to generalise about how an illness will affect someone – many of the wide range of characteristics people tend to associate with the illness may not apply to the person you employ.

Prevalence

About one in one hundred of the general population are likely to develop bi-polar disorder.[16] Of people who suffer from serious depression, about one in ten will also have periods when they are elated and overactive. Men and women are equally affected by bi-polar disorder, and it tends to run in families.

Signs and symptoms

Some typical symptoms might include periods of deep depression, lack of energy, life no longer seeming worthwhile, and periods of elation and hypomania which are associated with excessive activity. People may display disturbing behaviour, for example rapid, loud or incessant conversation, nonsensical arguments, delusions, over-confidence and lack of common-sense and self-awareness. There may also be disturbed sleep and eating patterns, and overspending.

Treatment options

Bi-polar disorder can be managed successfully with support, medication and other forms of treatment. Many people with bi-polar disorder can go for years without any signs of elation or depression, and many make a full recovery. Early diagnosis and treatment can limit the intensity and duration of an attack.

Medications are the main form of treatment for this illness. The manic phase can be controlled with major tranquillisers; anti-depressants can lift depression; preventative medication can eliminate mood swings and is often prescribed on a long-term basis. Psychotherapy may be suggested when the person is well to help them come to terms with what has happened.

Schizophrenia

What is schizophrenia?

Schizophrenia is a term used by mental health professionals to describe a condition where thoughts, beliefs, feelings and experiences are severely disrupted. Some people do not believe it is helpful to use one label to describe a wide range of different experiences. Schizophrenia does not necessarily affect an individual for life. Roughly a quarter of people diagnosed will recover completely, two-thirds will have multiple episodes and ten to fifteen per cent will experience more enduring problems. Some people may continue to have symptoms for the rest of their lives, but they may become less severe over time. Many people with schizophrenia lead full and fulfilling lives that include having relationships, children, work and study.

Prevalence

About one in a hundred people in the UK will experience an episode of schizophrenia. It affects both men and women equally but men often experience the condition at an earlier age.

Signs and symptoms

Symptoms usually start in the late teens or early twenties, and the diagnosis is usually given to people between the ages of 16 -35 years, but it can be much later.

There is a range of symptoms that can start gradually or rapidly, may follow a period of stress or be triggered by a major life event, or may just occur without warning. Symptoms include hallucinations (unusual or unexplained sensations that are heard or seen), a change in patterns of thinking, delusions (strongly held beliefs which are out of keeping with your background and your usual way of thinking), loss of interest in things and lack of motivation.

Violence is rarely associated with schizophrenia and if anything people tend to be more timid and over-sensitive rather than aggressive or violent.

Treatment options

There is no immediate cure for schizophrenia, but a variety of approaches include medication, talking treatments, complimentary therapies, crisis support and various forms of self-help and a combination can be most helpful. Medication includes antipsychotic drugs (typical drugs and the newer atypical drugs); antidepressants; mood stabilisers and sedatives or other tranquillisers.

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3. Aiming to create a mentally healthy workplace

About this fact sheet
This fact sheet explores a number of ways that you as an employer can contribute to a mentally healthy workplace by cultivating an organisational culture that is open to mental health issues, values diversity, tackles all discrimination at work and promotes communication across the organisation. It explains the advantages of developing a strategy for work-life balance, and explores ways of achieving this. Finally, it assesses your legal responsibilities towards mental health at work.

Why aim to be a mentally healthy employer?
Valuing the workforce
Your workforce is your greatest asset and resource. There are a variety of ways that employers can demonstrate the value they place on their staff, and steps they can take to ensure the workforce is efficient and effective. While pay is an obvious way of rewarding people, there are many other ways to motivate and get the best from people while promoting their well-being.

Becoming an employer of choice
Benefits to creating a mentally healthy workplace culture and to being an employer known to value and support staff include the following:

● The impact on individual employees can be great, including improved physical and mental health, increased self esteem and confidence, financial gain and improved relationships at work
● Employers can contribute to reducing the human cost to individuals and their families of work-related mental health problems
● Organisations benefit from better staff retention, more effective recruitment, reduction of staff absence, improved working environment for all staff, and an enhanced reputation as an employer
● Addressing mental health issues in the workplace is a good practice issue, and an important element of any overall strategy to become an employer of choice
● Better compliance with good employment practice and legislation – discrimination against people with mental health problems is wrong and in some cases illegal.

Meeting legal responsibilities
There is no single or specific law governing workplace stress and mental health problems at work. However, organisations and managers have to abide by the following:

Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
Under this Act employers have a duty to ensure, as far as possible, the Health, Safety and Welfare at work of all their employees including:
'The provision and maintenance of a working environment for his employees that is, so far as is reasonably practicable, safe, without risks to health, and adequate as regards facilities and arrangements for their welfare at work.'
This means there is a duty in law to make sure your employees are not made ill by their work, and the risks to health include risks to mental health.

Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
This requires employers to assess the nature and scale of risks to health in the workplace and put adequate control measures in place. You have a 'duty of care' which includes the mental health of your workforce, and this is significant in the context of exponentially rising levels of workplace stress, which is often the first step towards developing more serious mental health problems. Risk assessment includes identifying hazards, including those with the potential to harm mental health, and evaluating the risks involved.[1]

Good practice action plan:
- Carry out a risk assessment for stress, identifying pressures at work that could cause high and long-lasting levels of stress.
- Decide who might be harmed by these, and whether you are doing enough to prevent that harm.
- Take reasonable steps to deal with the pressures.
- Make sure you involve your employees and Trade Union safety representatives at every stage of the assessment process – they will have good ideas you can use.
- Respect the confidentiality of your staff and explain what you intend to do with information collected through risk assessment.

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA)
There is widespread lack of business awareness that the DDA applies as much to people with mental ill health as it does to those with a physical disability. It is now illegal for organisations to fail to recognise the mental health needs of their staff. The DDA applies to all employment matters including recruitment, training, performance management, protection from harassment, promotion and dismissal. It is unlawful for employers (of 15 or more people) to discriminate against a person with a disability, by treating them less favourably than someone else. The exclusion of small employers will be removed in 2004 when the DDA will apply to all employers regardless of size.

Disability is defined as a 'physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.' The definition of 'disability' under the DDA applies to people with long term mental health problems which have lasted or are likely to last up to 12 months. The Act prohibits discrimination against a person with such a disability in connection with employment.

Employers have a duty to make a 'reasonable adjustment' that could assist a person with a disability to do a job, and these need to be considered in terms of people with mental health problems. People with mental health problems are not a homogenous group, and many will need no adjustment at all, especially if they are given control over how and when they do their job. The most important single adjustment needed in the workplace is often related to attitudes and assumptions towards mental health.

Good practice action plan:
- Include information about mental health problems in training for line managers and human resource specialists and for all employees.
- Ensure everyone in the organisation knows that your equal opportunity and disability policies cover people with mental health problems.
- Make adjustments for people with mental health problems - these could include altering working hours, providing additional supervision and support, or allowing absence during working hours for assessment, treatment or rehabilitation.

Organisational culture
The culture of your organisation is a key factor affecting the mental health of your workforce. Your organisation's mission, management style, philosophy and values need to be congruent with the promotion of mental well-being and must be backed up by management action and support.

Organisational culture helps convey a sense of identity to staff, encourages commitment to the organisation and enhances stability. It shapes the attitudes and behaviours of individual employees and staff groups and thereby impacts on the organisation's performance and effectiveness. The culture of an organisation develops over a number of years and may become deeply rooted in the attitudes and values held by employees, and therefore culture change can be a difficult and lengthy process to achieve. However, there are good business reasons for reviewing the culture of your organisation and introducing necessary changes.

Developing a culture of openness to mental health issues
There is a culture change underway among all types of organisation to address the issue of mental health in the workplace, raise awareness of the issues and reduce stigma and discrimination. An open culture is one in which mental health problems can be discussed in the same way as physical illness or accident. Staff need to feel that it is safe for them to do so without fear of losing their job, being isolated or bullied. Since up to 30 per cent of an existing workforce is likely to have a mental health problem at any one time, a culture of openness is vital so that current and potential employees feel able to disclose possible mental health problems.

Because of stigma and fear of discrimination, job applicants and employees are often unwilling to reveal that they have, or have had, a mental health problem. If there is a clear culture of openness towards mental health problems and a willingness to make reasonable adjustments for all disabled applicants and employees, people with mental health problems will be much more likely to trust their employer and colleagues and be open about any problems they have. Acceptance is morale boosting; fear of being found out can be stressful and sap confidence.

The Mind Out for Mental Health campaign research[2] found:
- 74% of job applicants did not disclose mental ill health in application forms
- 47% of people with mental ill health experienced discrimination at work
- 52% of workers concealed mental ill health for fear of losing their job.

Some of the advantages of early disclosure are that:
- Employers are aware of problems and potential risk early
- Staff can seek help, support and work adjustments without fearing that disclosure will result in them losing their job
- It is less likely that the mental health problem will deteriorate or relapse
- Where appropriate, medical reports can be obtained at recruitment stage to reassure the employer on the issue of risk and associated factors.

Facilitating an environment that generates positive attitudes to potential mental well-being issues can help reduce stigma for individuals who may experience mental health problems.[3] Developing a culture of openness means you are committed to not discriminate against member of staff suffering from mental ill health, and that you will actively support them during absence and assist their return to work. You also need to demonstrate that discrimination could be a disciplinary offence.

Another way to generate positive attitudes towards the management of mental well-being in the workplace is to develop a culture that values and promotes diversity in the workforce. This is essential for ensuring that individual employees do not suffer because of unfair treatment and that the organisation can fully utilise the skills and capabilities of all employees.

Good practice action plan:
- Make a commitment as an employer to not discriminate against any member of the workforce experiencing mental ill health.
- Actively seek to understand and support any member of staff if they are suffering from mental health problems during absence and assist in their return to work.
- Show that discrimination could be a disciplinary offence.
- Ensure that the workforce can openly discuss with others in the organisation how they feel if they have a mental health problem in the same way that they could if they had a physical illness.
- Provide support at staff, management and director level for anyone who is beginning to experience or already has mental health problems.
- Encourage diversity in your workforce through the development and consistent implementation of equal opportunities policies.

Work-Life balance

It is important to promote a culture that facilitates the ability to balance the demands of work and non-work life through a range of family-friendly policies. Employers of all sizes are adopting different patterns of flexible working to improve their competitiveness in the modern economy. Flexible working has benefits for both employers and employees.[4] It may particularly suit working parents who juggle meeting their work responsibilities with raising children, but can be equally valuable for staff who have other needs or commitments outside work. Acceptance that there may be conflict between home and work can help alleviate some of the pressures for employees and avoid problems such as absenteeism due to conflicting demands in their life.

Work-life balance means having a measure of control over when, where or how you work and being able to enjoy a better quality of life. Work-life balance is achieved when an individual's right to a fulfilled life inside and outside paid work is accepted and respected as the norm, to the mutual benefit of the individual, the organisation and society.[5]

Opportunities for work-life balance can contribute to staff being more satisfied at work, more focussed, productive, co-operative and better at managing their time. It can help promote the mental and physical health of employees by reducing stress, facilitating childcare or eldercare arrangements and making these more affordable, promoting a better quality of life and creating more time for leisure and social activities. A good organisational work-life strategy can also provide for some of the necessary adjustments that might be needed by current or potential employees with a mental health problem, making it possible for them to work more effectively.

A work-life strategy balances the needs of both employers and employees.
Promoting employment conditions that enable a good work-life balance will help you achieve some or all of the following goals[6]:
- Increased productivity
- Improved recruitment and retention
- Lower rates of absenteeism

- Reduced overheads
- An improved customer experience
- A more motivated, satisfied and equitable workforce.

Your work-life strategy should contain a range of tried and tested approaches – you need to adopt the pattern and mix that best matches your workplace and the needs of your staff as outlined in the following sections.

Flexible working patterns

When staff are able to adopt a flexible work pattern that best suits their needs and other commitments, they are likely to be most productive and least stressed.[7] The following working patterns have been used extensively by employers:

- Flexitime – variable start and finish times.
- Compressed workweek – working full-time hours in four days.
- Part-time working – working less than the full-time contractual hours.
- Job sharing – where two people split one job.
- Annualised hours – allows flexible working patterns throughout the year.
- Teleworking or home working – working remotely or from home.
- Term-time working – working only during school terms.[8]

Personal work-life balance

Individual development plans and appraisals allow organisations to review work-life balance on an individual basis, to plan ahead for busy periods and make adjustments to working patterns where an individual has a particular need, before problems arise. When staff are experiencing a mental health problem or are returning to work after illness, this can enable them to work when they might not otherwise be able to.

Shift working

Shift work is a necessary part of many organisations, and can have benefits and disadvantages for employees. It can provide people with the opportunity to reduce working time, for example by choosing how many shifts they work, and can allow them to combine work with studying, domestic responsibilities, leisure activities or more free time. On the down side, shift working may be counter to the natural cycle of human behaviour and have an impact on sleep patterns, food intake and fatigue, potentially increasing stress and affecting performance.

Leave options

In addition to statutory minimum requirements relating to holiday leave, parental leave, dependants leave, you can opt to offer enhanced leave such as paid paternity leave, career breaks for carers, study leave, or additional holiday leave in lieu of pay or other employee benefits.[9] These options can make your employees feel valued and may contribute to the retention of valued members of staff.

Good practice action plan:

- Develop a work-life strategy that meets your organisational needs and gives staff a number of options for work patterns to optimise their productivity and well-being.
- Where shift work is involved, be aware of how night shifts can disrupt family and social life and give staff their preference for shift work since some people will adjust better to the potential stress and motivational issues.
- Ensure that the constraints of shift working do not restrict personal development and opportunities for career progression.

Cross-organisational communication

Consulting and listening to staff can make them feel more secure and value.[10] This is especially important during times of organisational change, when uncertainty and worry results in poor morale, performance, mental ill health and sometimes resignation. Provide openness and reassurance to allow the workforce to communicate their views and as far as possible allow their views to be reflected in decisions and planning for change. Regular feedback to staff and regular staff briefings can be a strong communication tool.

Good practice action plan:

- Ensure good two-way communication, especially at times of change. Don't be afraid to listen to your staff.
- Encourage managers to have an open and understanding attitude to what people say to them about the pressures of their work or other problems.

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4. Practical considerations in achieving a mentally healthy work environment

About this fact sheet
This fact sheet explains a range of factors that are known to have an impact on mental health in the workplace and describes the possible effect on employees. Each determinant for mental health is matched with an action plan for good practice, providing you with a number of measures that you can take together with your staff to promote a mentally healthy environment at work.

What makes a mentally healthy workplace?
Many factors in the workplace influence the mental health of individual employees, particular sections or departments and organisations as a whole. Understanding and addressing the factors which affect how people think and feel at work is not a simple task, but it has a wide range of benefits.

'Employers have a key role to play in safeguarding the mental health of their workforce, both by providing a supportive working environment and by encouraging the use of the workplace to provide health education and health promotion activities.'[1]

Many of the factors that influence the physical and mental health of staff are psychosocial and relate to the style of management and working culture within an organisation.[2,3,4,5,6]. Mental health issues therefore need to be addressed systematically at an organisational as well as an individual level.

Overall, working has a positive impact on people's mental health. In addition to financial benefits, work is an important source of support, providing social and information networks, a sense of purpose and personal identity. Addressing mental health issues in the workplace can help strengthen the positive, protective factors of employment and reduce the risk factors for mental health problems. While there are many different causes of and catalysts for mental health problems, a positive working environment and appropriate support at work can have a significant impact on the mental health of all employees.
It can reduce stress related sickness absence and improve long-term outcomes for employees experiencing mental distress.

Job control and decision making latitude
Job control refers to how much say a person has over the job they do and the tasks within it. Low job control and decision making latitude is a risk factor for mental health. Having control over work reduces risks of sickness absence.[7] Evidence shows that lack of control over your job and the tasks you perform can have a negative impact on both your mental and physical health. Low decision making latitude is associated with alcohol dependence, poor mental health, poor health functioning and increased sickness absence.[8,9,10] When staff feel they have no say in the way the organisation is shaped and changed they can experience frustration.

Good practice action plan:
● Ensure there is task variety to avoid monotony– by varying the daily tasks included in a job, or allowing people to be seconded to different roles within the organisation or to another organisation.
● As far as possible, allow staff to have influence over decisions that are made at work at an individual, team and organisational level. Provide opportunities for people to have choice over how they do their work, and to be involved in planning their working day.

- Try to give staff some control over their working environment, for example where they sit, what goes up on the walls. Include staff in decisions about relocation.
- Encourage expressions of views by staff and incorporate them in policies and practice.[11] This is particularly relevant during periods of major organisational change.

Job demands and workload
Job demands are a key factor in determining health at work, with high work demands being associated with worse mental health.[12,13] The higher the work demands- particularly in terms of time and resources to do the job – the more likely people will find it difficult to manage, which may have an impact on mental health. Demands are at the right level when staff are able to cope with volume and complexity of their work. While strategies for controlling job demands may appear to reduce productivity in the short term, improving the mental health of employees will mean a more productive workforce in the longer term.

Good practice action plan:
- Increase managers' sense of control and support – target management first.
- Review work demands and staffing regularly. Managers should conduct workload assessments and find out how people perceive their workload. Information then needs to be fed back to inform future staffing arrangements.
- Follow the recommendations of the Working Time Directive and encourage staff not to work long hours, while maintaining flexibility. Lead by example. Create an organisational climate where excessive hours are discouraged.[15]
- Implement more flexible employment practices. If staff work extended hours one day they should be encouraged to recover the time as soon as possible afterward.
- Encourage staff to take their annual leave and study leave. This should be built into planning, and staff should not be made to feel guilt for attending relevant courses or taking annual leave.
- When planning tasks, consider what ability individuals have and ensure people have the resources to do the job, both in terms of physical resources and skills such as adequate knowledge and training.
- Staff should not be expected to work long hours without a break - ensure people have time to take regular breaks.
- Low work demands can also have a negative effect on mental health. Ensure that staff have enough to do.
- As far as possible, deadline pressures should be reasonable. Try to avoid giving staff tasks to complete at short notice.
- An incessant flow of paperwork and emails needs to be addressed by management at all levels.

Organisational change
Organisational change is associated with an increase in mental health problems and prevalence of smoking.[16] Organisational change has a negative impact on employees' mental health. Research shows that insecure employment status leads to an increase in mental health problems.[17]

Good practice action plan:
Be aware that many staff will experience difficulties during organisational change and will require varying levels of support.
- Ensure the aims and objectives of the change are communicated to employees.
- Keep staff informed of the timetable for change and try to include them in decision making.

- If organisational change leads to a change in staff roles, ensure people have updated job descriptions and that they are made explicitly aware of their new roles.
- Ensure that staff are given any additional support they need during times of organisational change (see Support at Work).

Job role

Role conflict is strongly related to stress.[18] Job roles should describe why individual staff are undertaking their work and how it fits in with the organisation's aims and objectives. Evidence shows that people who are not clear about their role or have conflicting job demands (such as conflicts between personal and professional beliefs, having 'too many hats to wear') are more likely to experience stress.[19]

Good practice action plan:
- Ensure staff have clear and adequately detailed job descriptions.
- Give people clearly defined roles and ensure they have their responsibilities explained to them.
- Provide new staff with a thorough induction to the organisation and their role within it.
- Provide thorough training in effective methods of working for all staff, especially when there are policy and practice changes.
- If staff have too many roles, managers should reduce the number of roles a person has at any one time.
- Where a role may cause conflict between personal and professional beliefs (for example, being asked to do something that conflicts with religious or cultural beliefs) staff should have the opportunity to discuss this.
- Roles between agencies or staff members, for example in multi-disciplinary teams, need to be clear to everyone.
- If there is concern about how a colleague is performing their role, there need to be supportive policies in place to enable their concerns to be acknowledged and addressed.

Support at work

Emotional support at work can have a powerful positive effect on employee health and well being.[20] Support can be particularly effective as a protective factor against high job demands. [21,22] Support at work leads to higher morale in staff. Lack of support, from peers or management, has a negative impact on employees. There is evidence that social support at work has a protective effect, particularly when it is provided by managers to their subordinates.[23]

Good practice action plan:
- Ensure that management are supportive towards staff, and also that they themselves receive adequate training and support.
- Use supervision effectively to manage individual workloads. Appraisals and supervision should be used not only to deal with negative issues, but to provide staff with regular positive feedback.
- A risk management approach to staff should be adopted, particularly in terms of assessing their health and safety needs.[24]
- Support needs to be promoted at all levels within the organisation, including peer support.
- Help staff to develop positive coping skills for difficult situations that may arise, for example coping with violence at work, time management.
- Develop positive leadership by listening to staff and taking on board their concerns and suggestions.

- Demonstrate support by having effective policies in place, for example about bullying, racial/sexual harassment, violence and mental health at work.
- Ensure support is available for any individuals facing complaints and litigation.
- Enable important support to be provided by family and friends by promoting a positive work/life balance.

Effort / reward imbalance

High effort and low reward is universally bad for people's health.[25] An imbalance between effort and reward is associated with increased risk of alcohol dependence (especially for men), psychiatric disorder, extended sickness absence and poor health functioning.

Good practice action plan:
- Ensure staff feel valued.
- Involve staff in addressing issues around effort/reward imbalance and what kinds of benefits or recognition they would value.
- It may not be possible to reduce effort – but increase reward. You do not have to use concrete financial rewards. Other rewards include praising staff for good work, opportunities for promotion.
- Offer praise and positive feedback for good work achieved. A common complaint from staff is that they do not feel appreciated if they work hard.
- Make sure staff are rewarded for working overtime, either with time off in lieu or by paying them.
- Try to ensure that all staff are rewarded in an equitable manner.

Bullying and harassment

Addressing bullying in the workplace can increase job satisfaction and can lead to a more positive working environment for all staff.[26] Support at work acts as a protective factor against bullying. There is a link between bullying and increases in sickness absenteeism of staff.[27] A study of staff in a NHS community trust found 38 per cent of staff reported being bullied, and this led to lower levels of job satisfaction and higher levels of job induced stress, depression and anxiety.[28]

Good practice action plan:
- Ensure support is in place from line management and elsewhere in the management structure. Staff should be able to access someone other than their immediate line manager, who may be the person who is bullying them.
- Develop and act on policies relating to bullying, harassment and violence in the workplace.[29]
- Lay down grievance procedures and proper processes to investigate complaints about bullying, and ensure they are adhered to.
- Develop a workplace culture showing that bullying and harassment of others will not be tolerated. Everyone should be encouraged to challenge unacceptable behaviour.
- Encourage staff to see the benefits of teamwork and offering support to each other.

Communication and staff involvement

Consulting and listening to staff can make them feel more secure and valued.[30] Communication and staff involvement are crucial in an organisation, particularly at times of change. Little or no participation in decision-making and lack of effective communication can cause stress to employees.[31]

Good practice action plan:
- Ensure that staff are consulted and involved in planning and decision making.
- Ensure that the organisation has open, two-way lines of communication.
- Regular feedback is essential at all levels of the organisation.
- Ensure that staff are listened to and their ideas are taken on board.

Training

Training is central to any strategy to address mental health problems at work. It can add to managers' understanding and awareness and so helps them deal with problems by:
- Helping managers address the causes of mental health problems in the workplace.
- Improving general awareness among all staff of mental health issues.
- Reducing stigma and discrimination related to mental health problems caused by a lack of understanding and awareness.

Good practice action plan:
- Ensure that staff at all levels in the organisation have the training they need to carry out their job.
- Provide training for staff at times of change to work practice or when new policies are being introduced.
- Offer training directly on mental health issues to raise awareness among staff of how they can look after their own and others' mental well being, and the help available for people experiencing problems.
- Provide training on time and workload management and on work/life balance.

Workplace mental health policy

Introduce a specific mental health policy and charter to provide a framework for addressing workplace mental health issues, or review equal opportunities and health and safety policies to integrate mental health into them.

Good practice action plan:
- Ensure commitment at a senior level in the organisation.
- Involve staff in developing the policy at every stage.
- Include work organisation and management practice within the policy, taking in the whole work environment rather than simply proposing solutions targeting individuals such as relaxation therapy.
- Make the mental health policy accessible, understandable, relevant and realistic, and include a timetable for action. Ensure that the policy is linked to actual practice.

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5. Positive recruitment practice

About this fact sheet
This fact sheet aims to provide information and advice about positive recruitment practice for your workplace. This includes information which relates to the positive practice of supporting people with mental health problems to apply, to be appointed and to be supported in your workplace.

> The success of an organisation depends on having the right staff with the right skills in the right jobs.

Mental health and work
Work has a central role in most people's lives. Work often helps us to define people; the careers people choose tell us something about them. Positive work experiences are directly linked with positive health and unemployment is a risk factor for a number of illnesses including mental health problems.

For people with long-term mental illness the rates of employment are very low.[1] Eight per cent of people with long-term disabilities of working age have a mental health problem and in this group less than one in five (18 per cent) are in employment. This contrasts with some disabled people of whom over half (52 per cent) are in employment.[2]

People with a history of mental illness face enormous problems in the open employment market including the stigma related to their mental illness, a reluctance to employ them and a perceived risk of possible failure.[3] Employers' concerns range from fears of under-performance to concerns about litigation or insurance.

Mental health is relevant to many areas of work and many policies within the workplace. These include equal opportunities policies, health and safety policies, recruitment, retention, training and development and work-life balance programmes.

> **POSITIVE PRACTICE**
> Accepting the relevance of mental health at work is positive for the whole workforce, not just those individuals who may have already experienced a mental health problem.

The ways in which individuals join a company and their experiences of that process are significant in shaping initial attitudes to their employer and expectations of their specific role. Recruitment is a two way process and when effective it enables the most appropriate candidate to flourish and it enables the employer to make the most appropriate appointment.

Disclosure
According to current statistics, one in seven people has a mental health problem at any one time. When considering recruitment processes it is useful to remember that in a recent survey, 74 per cent of people who had experienced a mental health problem did not disclose their health history to employers.[4] This was due to the stigma and discrimination which people previously experienced in the employment market. Therefore it may be the case that members of your current staff have experienced mental health problems and you are unaware of this.

Having experienced a mental health problem does not mean that someone cannot be a valued member of staff, working efficiently and contributing positively to the workplace.

Aiming to recruit the right people

Most employers recognise that their staff are their greatest asset. To be viewed positively, employers need to reflect the diversity of the community which they serve. This diversity will include people with mental health problems. Having a positive approach to recruitment can help to ensure that you are seen as an employer of choice and that you therefore attract and appoint the best candidate for the job.

Recruiting the right employees can be a challenge. Your aim as a competent employer is to bring in good quality new employees by the most objective, cost effective and appropriate method available to you. Recruitment systems should have simple stages to follow whenever there is a vacancy in your workplace. ACAS recommend systems should be:

● efficient – cost effective in methods and sources
● effective – producing suitable candidates to ensure the job is filled appropriately
● fair – ensuring that throughout the process decisions are made on merit alone.[5]

POSITIVE PRACTICE
Employers can encourage applications from those individuals and groups who are under-represented in an organisation. Tokenistic appointments should be avoided but it is appropriate and positive to consider how an individual's life experiences could enhance a specific role.

Equal opportunities

As an employer you have a legal responsibility to ensure that no unlawful discrimination occurs in the recruitment and selection process. Employers are generally required to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 to ensure fair and equal recruitment processes are followed. There are a few exceptions, for example employers with fewer than 15 people, but it is positive practice for all employers to consider these issues. Mental health problems are covered by the Disability Discrimination Act if they have lasted or are expected to last for more than 12 months. People with recurring or episodic conditions are also covered if substantial adverse effects are likely to recur beyond twelve months of the first occurrence. The Act also covers individuals who have recovered and it is therefore unlawful to discriminate against an individual for a past health problem.

POSITIVE PRACTICE
Employers are encouraged to ensure that equal opportunities policies specifically include people with mental health problems. The term 'disability' covers mental health but it may not be understood as such and therefore it would be positive for employers to make their intentions explicit.

Health screening

Some organisations believe that pre-employment health screening is a necessary part of the recruitment process. If your organisation does undertake pre-employment screening you must make sure that it is completed in a non-discriminatory way.

A pre-employment health assessment should aim to ensure that staff are capable of performing the proposed role and that anyone who requires adjustment to the workplace or is at increased risk of developing work related health problems is identified and supported.[6] Disclosure of relevant health

concerns or history should be encouraged by employers. However applicants need to feel that disclosure will not have an adverse impact on their opportunities to be employed or to progress within the organisation. Employers should make it clear that you will not discriminate against people because of past ill health, as diagnosis is not necessarily a reliable indicator for inability to perform at work.

Decisions relating to the employment of people with mental health problems can include a risk assessment by an occupational health professional. This assessment should consider the individual's needs and current health status, the nature of the role and the relevant adjustments which may need to be made by the employer. In many cases no adjustment is required.

POSITIVE PRACTICE
Potential employees should be consulted about the possible adjustments which they feel they would require to support them in their role.

Employees must feel confident that their employer will respect their requests for confidentiality. Adjustments can be made in the workplace but managers and colleagues do not necessarily have to be informed of the precise reasons for it.

Job description and person specification
Every vacancy and position should have an accurate and appropriate job description, where expectations of the role of the successful applicant are made clear. At the time of a new appointment it provides employers an opportunity to review a specific role and the skills required for it. The job description should outline the purpose, tasks and responsibilities. It should make clear the scope of the job and the relevant management or reporting processes for that role.

A person specification allows the organisation to profile the ideal person to fill the job. The job description should be used to consider in more detail the skills and experience required for the role.

The person specification should cover an individual's skills, knowledge, aptitudes, experience, competencies, education and training and relevant personal qualities for the role (e.g. ability to deal positively with customers and clients). Definition of the skills required also need to reflect the style and values of the business (e.g. ability to work as part of a team) as well as the working environment (e.g. ability to work in an open plan office).[7]

POSITIVE PRACTICE
It is vital that the skills, experience and knowledge outlined in the person specification are related precisely to the actual needs of the job, not to an individual or organisational 'wish list'.

Recruitment and selection process
Attracting the right people
The search for suitable candidates can involve a range of methods including:
● Internal notices
● Job Centres – through Jobcentre Plus and New Deal for Employers schemes
● Learning and Skills Councils
● Careers Advisory Services
● Commercial Recruitment Agencies
● Adverts in press – national, regional, local and specific trade press, if appropriate
● Internet

Jobcentre Plus Disability Services can provide a Disability Employment Adviser who advises on:
- employment assessment
- work preparation and employment rehabilitation
- job seeking advice and support
- training advice and information
- job introduction scheme – which pays a grant to the employer
- Workstep – which provides supported job opportunities
- New Deal for Disabled People.

There are also Access to Work Advisers who can provide practical and financial support in the workplace to overcome work related obstacles linked to disability.

Application procedures

Potential applicants should receive all the information they require to enable them to make a decision to apply. This should include: a copy of relevant advertisements description of the business and the brand of the organisation; a full job description and person specification; an indication of the salary available; information related to terms and conditions of employment such as location of workplace, hours of work and annual leave entitlement; and information about the application and selection procedure e.g. closing date for applications, date of possible interview, interview procedure.

Selection process

Selection should be based on identifying the best person for the job. To avoid any possibility of bias the selection process should be undertaken by at least two people in the organisation independently. The selection criteria should be clearly outlined and it should relate to the relevant job description and person specification.

Under the Disability Discrimination Act a disabled applicant's suitability and merits must be assessed as they would be after making reasonable adjustments. Reasonable adjustments will be individual solutions to individual problems and there is no standard adjustment to ensure a mentally healthy environment. Adjustments however could relate to:
- induction and appraisal
- supervision and management
- hours and conditions
- ways of working and support available
- working environment.[8]

Applicants should only be asked for information about their mental health if it is, or it may be, relevant to their ability to do the job. Employers should recognise that applicants with mental health

problems may have gaps in their CVs where they have been unable to work but this should not necessarily count against them. Employers should also recognise that some individuals may be over-qualified for the roles which they apply for but this will be because they may wish to build their confidence or may not wish to take on too much responsibility initially.

Procedures could include:
- allowing people to be supported or accompanied at meetings and interviews
- allowing people to complete their interview individually, rather than in a group situation
- giving people more time to complete tasks or tests if they are not used to the working environment
- giving people the option to complete tests verbally or in writing.[9]

Interviews
Any interview has two main purposes - to provide information to potential employees about the organisation and their potential role within it, and to assess the candidate and his or her suitability for the specific post. Every candidate should be given the same opportunities to demonstrate their competencies and suitability for the position.

The interview should be structured and each should follow the same pattern, including:
- introductions outlining the structure of the interview and testing procedures;
- providing information about the job and the organisation;
- asking structured questions relating to all the relevant areas of the job description and person specification, and avoiding closed questions or leading questions;
- allowing interviewers the opportunity to verify any areas of information in the application;
- allowing candidates to ask questions and raise issues relating to the role;
- informing the candidates of the next stages of the interview process (e.g. when they will hear the outcome).

Interviewers should make notes either during the interview or immediately after it to enable them to compare candidates and to inform their decision making generally. The Data Protection Act 1998 provides that candidates may have access to interview notes in certain circumstances. It is good practice to offer all candidates, both successful and unsuccessful, some feedback on their interview.

Other assessment processes may be involved either as part of the interview or in additional to the interview. Employers should consider whether these processes are appropriate for all candidates or whether adjustments are required. Processes may include:
- candidates making a presentation to the panel;

- candidates completing a written piece of work or practical piece of work (e.g. testing IT skills);
- problem solving or trouble shooting exercises, often found useful to assess positions in which an individual would deal with the general public as customers including customer complaints procedures; and,
- psychometric testing.

Appointment process

Following the interview and assessment, potential employers will usually take up independent references relating to the prospective candidate whom they have chosen. These references should verify any specific information given by the candidate and should request the referee's assessment of the individual and their relevant experience and their ability to carry out the proposed role for which they have applied.

Some organisations and employers employ people for a probationary period to enable both the employer and employee to consider their suitability for the role. The length of a probationary period is discretionary but could be anything from a week to a year.

Contracts

A contract is a legally binding agreement between an employer and employee. The contract will outline the scope of the role and the rate of pay accepted. Most contracts contain:
- express terms, which are specifically agreed;
- implied terms (eg way of working, mutual respect for colleagues etc);
- terms necessary to make the contract workable (eg the driver must have a current driving licence);
- terms incorporated through collective agreements (eg with union consent); and
- terms imposed by law (eg minimum notice period).

POSITIVE PRACTICE

Employers can offer to go through the legal contract with an individual before signing to ensure that they are fully aware of the implications.

Induction

All new members of staff should have a full induction to enable them to become familiar with the job, the surroundings and the colleagues with whom they will work. The recruitment process is the start of the relationship between employer and employee and it is important that the employee is positively encouraged to settle in to ensure that they feel comfortable and at ease and therefore can perform effectively. Employers must also provide induction and training to ensure health and safety on their premises.

New recruits should receive information during their induction which could include:
- information about the organisation, including information about personnel policies and procedures (such as those recommended in other Fact sheets);
- an organisational chart, to enable new recruits to see where there role fits;
- details of terms and conditions of employment, including information about any staff benefits, support and/or welfare services;
- details of their line manager, supervisor or support worker;
- information about additional schemes to support employees within the organisation, such as 'buddying' or mentoring;

- where to find facilities such as first aid rooms;
- details of emergency procedures such as fire exits and evacuation drills.

POSITIVE PRACTICE
Employers should ensure that new members of staff have an appropriate and staggered induction. Individuals need to meet new colleagues both formally and informally, to gain knowledge of the workplace's rules both written and unwritten.

Reviewing recruitment and selection approaches

All employers should periodically review the effectiveness of their recruitment programmes. This review should include analysing recruitment methods and the success of recent recruitment procedures, and relevant information about new members of staff, as well as monitoring general staff turnover.

You may also find it useful when reviewing recruitment and retention to consider broadening your workforce and providing opportunities for placements and training. It is essential that colleagues are supportive of such schemes within the workplace, and you may want to consider starting the process by running or some open forum events to raise awareness and generate interest in new approaches to recruitment.

Getting recruitment right can help employers to appoint and retain the right employees. Positive practice will have a positive impact on the organisational culture – increasing morale, promoting effective management and reducing problems in the workplace.

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6. Positive Retention Practice

About this fact sheet
This fact sheet aims to provide information and advice about positive retention policies and practice for your workplace. This includes information which relates to the positive practice of supporting people with mental health problems or people who may be experiencing a period of mental distress to retain their jobs and continue to contribute positively in your organisation.

Organisational retention
On average, an organisation can currently expect to lose one in five employees a year. The high costs of recruitment, induction and training and the difficulties of attracting suitable staff to replace valued staff members have made the issue of improving retention within workplaces a priority for many employers. Retaining valued staff is far easier when the working environment is positive, where the state of their health and welfare is viewed as a priority and where they are encouraged to be involved, to be flexible and to be supportive.

In a recent survey, employers who had reduced staff turnover were asked to identify the issues they had addressed as part of a positive retention policy. These included:
- positive recruitment practice – the right people in the right jobs
- paying more attention to induction practices
- providing positive career paths, promoting opportunities for interesting and challenging work and giving support for an individual's personal development
- offering more flexible working practices
- putting together an attractive employee benefits package.[1]

Positive indicators for retention for organisations include a healthy working environment and an appropriate retention policy.

Employers should aim to provide a healthy environment where all employees feel supported to develop and utilise their skills and abilities to their full potential. An unhealthy environment will lead to difficulties in recruitment, high absenteeism, low staff morale, reduced productivity and high staff turnover.

Developing a mentally healthy environment at work can promote positive health generally and positive mental health specifically. It can help organisations to be more productive, more efficient, assisting industrial relations and improving their public image.

Healthy workplaces
A healthy workplace is one where the health and well-being of employees is protected and promoted by their employer and where an employee is encouraged to identify and make changes to their working environment and working practices to help them to maintain positive health and well being.

The workplace is one of the key environments which affect our mental health, whether or not we currently have a mental health problem. Although it is difficult to exactly quantify the impact of work on health, self esteem, confidence, personal identity and social recognition it is well recognised that work for the majority of people work is a positive experience which has a positive impact on well

being. It is also well known that the majority of people with mental health problems wish to work. The World Health Organisation recognises the complexities of improving health at work. They identify three prerequisites for employers to deal effectively with employees:

- recognise and accept that the mental health of employees is a legitimate concern
- implement effective anti-discrimination policies in the workplace and
- prevent, treat and rehabilitate where appropriate.[6]

Many employers have recognised the importance of health at work and have implemented changes such as no-smoking areas, policies on alcohol and drug misuse, healthy eating options in canteens and incentives such as reduced gym membership to support staff to become more physically active. Mental health promotion in the workplace has been largely ignored. Some employers have begun to consider the impact of work on the mental health of staff through stress reduction programmes and audits and this is to be welcomed. However stress would be most effectively dealt with in the workplace through a more holistic approach to mental health at work and the effective implementation of a mental health in the workplace policy.

A mentally healthy workplace has been recognised as one which:

- promotes the mental health of all staff
- supports, advises and assists people who are experiencing mental health problems at work and people with mental health problems returning to work
- adopts a positive approach to employing people with a history of mental health problems.[7]

POSITIVE PRACTICE
A healthy workplace is one in which an employee's health and well being and the health and well-being of the workplace as a whole are considered.

Individual retention
Individual employees' views of their work are key to their decisions to remain in or leave that workplace. In a recent survey of staff views on retention respondents were mainly influenced by:

- organisational goal and values
- recognition of work related and personal needs being fulfilled
- level of consultation and involvement in decision making
- flexibility of the workplace and working practice
- levels of job satisfaction
- working relationships – with managers and colleagues
- training and development opportunities.[2]

Positive indicators for retention for individuals include employees finding meaning in their work and feeling supported and motivated to deliver and to achieve.

In a recent survey of professionals working within mental health services reasons employees gave for low retention levels included:

- not being valued within the workplace
- ambiguity of specific job roles and responsibilities, particularly in relation to team working
- professional isolation
- lack of development and progression
- unrealistic or overwhelming workloads

- low staff morale
- low pay
- poor conditions
- poor levels of job satisfaction
- lack of flexibility
- constant organisational or policy/practice changes.[3]

Everyone is different and individuals will have different reasons why they chose to leave your organisation. Exit interviews enable employers to gain a picture of the determinants which may underpin poor retention levels and to ensure that the individual still feels that their opinions are valued.

Retention of people with mental health problems

Everyone has mental health needs and anyone can develop a mental health problem. Therefore having a positive approach to supporting and retaining staff if they develop mental health problems will be positive for all your staff. Staff are more likely to feel valued if they know that their employer sees them as an asset and is committed to working to support them and to make reasonable adjustments to enable them to continue contributing in the workplace if they are experiencing problems. It is important for an employer to remember that an individual's mental health may be deteriorating due to problems at work or other factors or indeed a combination of both. Considering what can be done in the workplace to improve and promote an individual's mental health will contribute to improved retention levels.

A recent review has highlighted the negative and positive factors which influence job retention for people with mental health problems. Barriers to job retention include:
- the stigma related to mental health problems
- fear of disclosure
- lack of awareness of rights, such as inclusion under the Disability Discrimination Act
- managing workplace adjustments without advice or support
- managing one's own stress and symptoms in the workplace
- managing ongoing adverse reactions and events within the workplace
- overcoming negative or low expectations
- lack of support services.

Factors which promote successful job retention include:
- promoting positive and realistic perspectives of mental health problems
- considering the job satisfaction and job preferences of people with mental health problems
- promoting healthy workplaces for all employees
- facilitating natural supports in the workplace
- providing supportive and well trained management/supervisors
- promoting modified work programmes and facilitating workplace adjustments
- facilitating early intervention programmes and minimal time off work.[4]

Support and reasonable adjustments when someone first develops mental health problems can make the difference between continued employment, social support and increased self worth and the downward spiral of poverty, loss of self-esteem and long term unemployment.

Awareness of mental health

Awareness about mental health issues is low in the UK. There are many myths and stereotypes which exist such as all people with mental health problems are violent, are unpredictable, are difficult to communicate with, will not recover, cannot be treated and cannot work. Increasing awareness of mental health in the workplace will facilitate more appropriate responses to people experiencing mental health problems and will affect whether they are retained within the workplace. An individual's own knowledge about their mental health problem and its impact on their life will be relevant to their ability to retain work. People with mental health problems who have more realistic insight tend to attain and maintain employment more effectively.[5]

POSITIVE PRACTICE

Employers are encouraged to invest in mental health awareness training as it will help the individual experiencing a mental health problem, their colleagues, their managers and the workforce as a whole.

Job roles and satisfaction

As with any other employee job retention is closely linked with job satisfaction and initial job preference for people with mental health problems. Individuals who are satisfied at work and who are working in their preferred areas are more likely to stay. Job satisfaction can be influenced by gaining a sense of achievement and recognition of effort, as well as the challenge provided, having control over your work, the pace, the level and the amount and an individual's earnings or rewards.

POSITIVE PRACTICE

Employees and employers will both be most satisfied if an individual's tasks and workload are challenging and achievable. Workloads therefore should be appropriately allocated and reviewed. Support and flexibility at work

Being supported at work is a key factor which promotes mental health and well being in the workplace.[8] It is specifically relevant to people who have had mental health problems. Research shows that access to
on-going support, such as job coaching or mentoring, is crucial for people with mental health problems who have rejoined employment through vocational rehabilitation.[9]

The first step in supporting staff is creating a supportive environment. It is important that staff feel they can be open about their mental health status without being judged or discriminated against. This should include being able to be open about difficulties at work and concerns about their ability to cope. If an employee is experiencing difficulties at work they should be encouraged to seek help as soon as possible.[10]

POSITIVE PRACTICE

Employers are encouraged to recognise that employees who have experienced mental health problems may need additional help and support in regaining their confidence at work.

Flexible patterns of work can support employees to have a greater sense of responsibility, control and ownership over their working life. It can help people to become more confident and less stressed, as well as improving working relations and increasing individual's organisational commitment. Changing patterns of work can also help to improve efficiency, job satisfaction and absenteeism.[11]

Effective management and communication
Supportive management and effective supervision is one of the strongest factors associated with positive job retention.[12] Effective managers will support people in their current roles, making reasonable adjustments to reduce pressure and stress and to promote mental health and resilience in the workplace. They will be mindful of potential problems and difficulties and will be vigilant to early warning signs or problems. If someone needs time off the manager will manage the absence, keeping in touch with the individual but not pressurising them to return and managing their workload in their absence. Upon their return once more it will be the manager's responsibility to make appropriate adjustments, inform other colleagues appropriately and monitor the situation.

Throughout this process managers should provide honest and appropriate feedback to employees and they too should be supported, to ensure they do not experience problems in what they may find to be a stressful or personally challenging time.

Effective communication will help employers to ensure accurate information, instruction and guidance is being shared, to facilitate the exchange of ideas and views, to reduce misunderstandings, to improve performance, to enable effective decision making, to improve health and safety and to increase staff morale.[13]

Appropriate adjustments to support retention
Employers have a duty to make reasonable adjustments to the workplace to enable people with mental health problems to be employed and to remain in employment. Appropriate adjustments can include:
● flexibility with work – flexible working time and working hours
● review of current workload
● changing work roles eg rearranging responsibilities and reducing demands
● changing work practices eg reducing contact with the public
● changing work pace – enabling the individual to take control of work and breaks required
● permission to gain support through the day eg phone calls with external supporters or support from a job coach or mentor within the organisation
● changing the working environment eg providing separate space, reducing noise levels, allowing home working
● ensuring an appropriate manager with effective communication skills is supporting the individual
● providing additional training and supervision if felt to be required. (adapted from 14)

Research in other occupational health areas has shown that modified work programmes are an effective tool for facilitating an appropriate return to work. These modifications can include reducing workload and assignments or reducing hours in the short term. Evaluations of the workplace are suggested as an appropriate first step.

Adjustments should be agreed not imposed and should be a result of discussion and negotiation between employer and employee. The employee does not necessarily need to be under any greater surveillance, unless they feel this to be appropriate and supportive. Not every issue or every problem will be related to someone's mental health so don't attribute every emotion or concern as such.

POSITIVE PRACTICE
Employers are encouraged to consider the importance of adjusting workplaces to support their staff. When an adjustment is made employers should consider what information is shared with fellow employees, although all employees should understand the benefits of adjustments being available to them.

Returning to work
Rehabilitation and returning to work for someone with a mental health problem is far more beneficial to the individual and the employer than retirement, unemployment and potential recruitment costs. Returning to work can be a particularly stressful experience in itself. It will be important for the individual to feel in control and in consultation with their manager about their choices and possible changes that can be reasonably expected

Early action
It is well recognised that the longer an individual has time off work the more difficult it will be for them to return and the less likely it will be for such a return to be successful.[15] Therefore early action or intervention is strongly recommended to ensure that an individual does not lose ability and feel more disabled due to absence from work.

POSITIVE PRACTICE
Employers should recognise that support needs are immediate and therefore support needs to be immediate. When problems begin so should the support.

A return to work interview should be carried out and, depending on the length of leave, a pre-return interview outside the workplace may also be beneficial. This interview should be used to consider adjustments in working practice, a strategy for reintegrating the individual into the workplace and an update on the current workload and atmosphere. There should be an on-going relationship between the employee, their manager, the human resources department and the occupational health advisors where appropriate.

Accessing support
As with physical health problems there will be occasions when specialist advice will be needed to assist someone with a mental health problem at work. This includes:
● when there are frequent absences from work
● when the employee appears to be distressed or is behaving unusually
● when the employee appears to be experiencing side effects from medication.

In these circumstances there should be a procedure which managers are aware of to enable them to gain advice and to take action. Decisions affecting the employee should only be based on medical advice as it applies to their working environment and changes that could be made there.

POSITIVE PRACTICE
Employers should ensure that managers are supported and are able to raise concerns relating to the well-being of their staff with an independent source if required.

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7. Disciplinary and grievance procedures

About this fact sheet

This fact sheet aims to provide information and advice about workplace rules and regulations, disciplinary, grievance and dismissal procedures. This includes information relating to the practice of supporting people with mental health problems through these procedures, informing colleagues and ensuring as positive an outcome as possible for individuals and the organisation.

> Positive workplaces are those where all individuals know their rights and their responsibilities, employers or employees.

Rules in the workplace

Rules and regulations are essential in any workplace. They should promote fairness and equality and should provide both employers and employees with procedures which will support them if and when problems arise. They enable organisations to operate effectively through promoting the positive conduct of employees and providing appropriate methods of dealing with poor performance, inappropriate conduct or unacceptable attendance.

It is good practice for all employers to outline the terms and conditions of employment for their staff and if you employ more than 20 people it is a legal obligation. It is also good practice to have clear and concise policies and procedures and to ensure that your staff are aware of them. There is little point in having an excellent policy on anti-discriminatory practice if no one knows it exists, it will not be referred to or implemented. It is also good practice not to have too many written rules there should be some flexibility and personal discretion built in to every procedure.

If procedures are not implemented and followed effectively it can lead to:
● low staff morale
● resistance to change
● lowered efficiency
● reduced productivity
● poor working relations
● unhealthy working environment for staff
● increased stress levels for employees and managers
● successful claims for unfair dismissal
● complaints relating to breach of contract
● damaging claims related to anti-discrimination legislation.[1]

Workplace rules and regulations could cover:
● timekeeping
● absence
● health and safety regulations
● use of organisational facilities
● discrimination
● bullying and harassment
● deliberate damage to property or person
● bringing your employer into disrepute

- breach of confidence
- negligence
- insubordination
- gross misconduct.

Avoiding disciplinary procedures

It is vital to have regulations and procedures to deal with disciplinary problems. However, preventing problems from arising in the first place is more beneficial for workplaces. Effectively planned, clearly communicated and fairly applied employment policies and procedures will help to develop positive practice and good employment relations, minimising problems and reducing the need to use disciplinary procedures.

Areas to be considered could include:
- effective recruitment
- appropriate induction
- relevant training for the individual and the role
- support programmes at work
- flexible approach to work-life balance issues
- motivational factors
- appropriate management style
- clear lines of communication
- positive working environment.[2]

Recognising potential disciplinary issues early and taking action quickly reduces the negative impact on the organisation as a whole. Recommended actions may include:
- investing in a supportive environment for staff
- ensuring positive working relationships or trying to keep in contact with staff views
- encouraging staff to be open and honest about the organisation, developing organisational rather than individual commitment
- being vigilant look for early warning signs
- using informal procedures wherever appropriate.

Dealing with absence

Absence records should be kept to enable managers to identify problems with lateness or non-attendance. All absences should be investigated thoroughly by line managers. When dealing with problems with absence employers need to identify whether the periods of absence are:
- unexplained or the reasons provided are unacceptable:
  If this is the case it becomes a conduct issues and should be dealt with through the regular disciplinary procedures.

- due to illness or injury:
  If this is the case it becomes a capability issue which should be dealt with as such using appropriate procedures other than disciplinary ones. Illnesses and injuries cover both physical and mental health problems.

POSITIVE PRACTICE
When dealing with absence employers should always consider the impact of the workplace on the health of individuals. For some conditions including depression and anxiety workplace procedures and stressors could be exacerbating the situation.

Employers must remember that occasional lateness or some time off to attend regular appointments, when agreed in advance, may be part of the 'reasonable adjustments ' they could make to support people with disabilities in employment under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. The lateness may be due to the impact of certain medications and appointments may be medical and only available in the working week. More flexible working arrangements may therefore be required to support that individual. The Act also makes it unlawful for an employer to treat a disabled person less favourably for a reason relating to their disability, without a justifiable reason.

Performance management
Employees have a contractual responsibility to achieve a satisfactory level of performance and they should be given help and encouragement to achieve this. Employers are responsible for setting realistic and achievable targets and ensuring that employees are fully aware of the expectations set. Where problems arise the matter should be investigated as the causes may be of relevance to the employer. For example a lack of relevant skills could be reduced with training, a lack of confidence could be reduced with coaching, mentoring or motivating, a more formal induction process could reduce a lack of knowledge of working practices.

An employee should not be dismissed due to poor performance unless sufficient warnings, the opportunity to improve and reasonable support have been provided.

POSITIVE PRACTICE
Regular supervision with managers and updates within teams will help to identify any problem areas and the possible action required in the early stages. This will ensure that an individual's self confidence and a manager's confidence in their ability will not be damaged.

Disciplinary procedures
Disciplinary procedures are the means by which concerns about rules being observed and standards maintained are addressed. Proper disciplinary procedures are an aid to effective management and they should not be considered solely as a means of formalising a complaint or imposing sanctions. Management is responsible for maintaining discipline, setting standards of performance and supporting appropriate conduct and competencies among staff. However, for workplaces to work effectively employees must accept as reasonable the demands, expectations and regulations placed upon them.

Good disciplinary procedures should:
- be in writing
- specify to whom they apply

- be non-discriminatory, this will include towards people with mental health problems
- provide for matters to de dealt with without undue delay
- provide for proceedings, witness statements and records to be kept confidential
- indicate the disciplinary action which may be taken
- specify the level of management which has the authority to take the various forms of disciplinary action
- provide for workers to be informed of the complaints against them
- provide workers with an opportunity to state their case before decisions are reached
- provide workers with the right to be accompanied
- ensure that, except for gross misconduct, no workers is dismissed for a first breach of discipline
- ensure that disciplinary action is not taken until the case has been carefully investigated
- ensure that workers are given an explanation for any penalty imposed
- provide a right of appeal, normally to a more senior manager, and specify the procedure followed.[3]

POSITIVE PRACTICE
Employers should encourage employees undergoing disciplinary procedures to be accompanied to any relevant internal meetings or hearings. This will be particularly relevant for individuals who may be experiencing mental health problems.

Being the subject of a disciplinary procedure or inquiry will be a stressful time for the individual concerned. However it will also have an impact on that individual's family, their colleagues and the managers involved. Employers should be mindful of this and should ensure that they:
- investigate all the facts thoroughly
- consider each case on its merits
- act promptly and effectively
- be firm, fair and consistent
- follow procedure
- encourage improvement and support those involved.

Informal action
Employers can use informal methods to resolve problems and depending on the seriousness of the issue this should be tried initially. It can be effective in dealing with an initial breach of rules, poor performance or verification of fact. It should take the form of a discussion, therefore should be a two way process. This can also be known as a counselling session. Both manager and worker should fully understand the outcomes and any action that needs to be taken. A note should also be kept for reference purposes.

POSITIVE PRACTICE
If employers are concerned about the health, including the mental health, of employees and the impact this is having on the capabilities or the conduct of an employee a counselling session should be used to clearly outline the problems, the expectations, the support requested and the improvements required.

Formal action
Formal action when required will be dependent on the individual case, the current action or circumstance and previous conduct. There are three levels of action: a first warning, a final warning and dismissal or other sanction.

First warning may be oral or written. An oral warning will be most appropriate for minor infringements but will be kept on record as the start of possible disciplinary procedures. A written warning will be most appropriate for more serious infringements. It will provide details of the complaint and the improvement or change required, as well as timescales and rights to appeal. The incidents resulting in both oral and written warnings should be disregarded as part of the disciplinary procedure after a stated period of time, although details should remain on file.

If the worker has received a previous warning and no improvement has been made in the timescale previously agreed or there have been incidents of further misconduct a written warning may be required. A full written warning may also be relevant where the first action or infringement is significantly serious. Such a warning should remain current until after a stated period of time, although details should remain on file.

POSITIVE PRACTICE
Employers should ensure that all staff are aware of the disciplinary procedures and that managers and supervisors have received information or training on its implementation and review.

Final sanctions and dismissal

Final sanctions include disciplinary suspension without pay, demotion, loss of increment or responsibility or dismissal. The dismissal of an employee is the final step taken if despite warnings, the requirement of improvement with the support which the individual required to enable them to reach this point has not been achieved in the agreed time. Any penalty should be confirmed in writing including information about the nature of the misconduct, the action taken and the procedures for appealing.

POSITIVE PRACTICE
Employers and employees or employee representatives should work together to try to avoid the need to utilise final sanctions and dismissal procedures if possible.

Grievance procedures

In any workplace individuals may have problems or concerns about their work, working practices, their workload, their colleagues or their working environment which they may wish to raise. An effective grievance policy provides a mechanism for these issues to be dealt with fairly, quickly and consistently before they could develop into disputes which could effect the whole organisation.

It is currently good employment practice for employers to have structured grievance procedures in place but it will soon become a legal requirement. Procedures work most effectively when they are supported by employers, managers, employees and workers.

Most routine complaints can be dealt with informally between line manager and individual. However when this fails the individual should be asked to put their grievance in writing initially to their line manager and then if required to a more senior manager. If the grievance is disputed a meeting should be held within a specified time and individuals should be informed of relevant procedures before the event. If the dispute continues it may be best to involve an independent party, such as a colleague from human resources, if available.

Some organisations may wish to have specific procedures for handling grievances when related to more serious or sensitive issues such as discrimination, bullying or harassment.

POSITIVE PRACTICE
Employers should have written grievance procedures as they reduce the likelihood of any infringement of employees' rights. Employers should also provide employees with relevant information regarding grievance procedures and outcomes.

Being accompanied to hearings
Workers have a statutory right to be accompanied by a fellow worker or trade union representative to disciplinary and grievance hearings. The right applies when a worker is required or invited to attend and when a reasonable request to be accompanied is made. The accompanying person can either be a co-worker or a trade union official and can address the hearing but not reply for the individual worker.

New procedures
In 2004 the Employment Act 2002 will come into force. This Act will introduce statutory procedures for disciplinary, grievance and dismissal in all workplaces.

The new disciplinary procedures will consist of three steps:
- providing the employee with information – a written statement and an invitation to attend a meeting
- unless suspended, the employer will take action after the meeting and inform the employee
- if the employee wishes to appeal a further meeting will be held and the employee will be informed of the outcome.

The new grievance procedures will also consist of three steps:
- the employee will provide the employer with a written statement about the grievance
- a meeting will be held and the employer will notify the employee of the outcome
- if the employee wishes to appeal a further meeting will be held and the employee will be informed of the outcome.[4]

Employers should involve employees or employee representatives as much as is practicable in the development, revision or review of all procedures, ensuring their fair and consistent application.

References

1. ACAS (2003) Self Help Guide – producing disciplinary and grievance procedures, ACAS (www.acas.org.uk)

2. ACAS (2003) Discipline and Grievance at Work, ACAS (www.acas.org.uk)

3. ACAS (2000) Code of Practice on Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures, ACAS (www.acas.org.uk)

4. Institute of Directors (2003) New Statutory Dismissal, Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures, IoD

8. Rights, Roles and Responsibilities

About this fact sheet

This fact sheet aims to provide information and advice about employees' and employers' rights, roles and responsibilities within the workplace. Some rights are considered in more detail as they may have more relevance to people with mental health problems or they may be used to support the mental health of all employees. The factsheet includes information for human resources professionals, occupational health professionals and managers which can be used to support people with mental health problems in the workplace.

Summary of rights related to the workplace

Employees are entitled to a wide range of rights set out in Parliamentary Acts, regulations and codes of practice. These include the right:

● not to be discriminated against
● to equal pay when doing work of equal value
● to a safe system of work
● to appropriate working hours (including the right not to work on a Sunday)
● to apply for flexible working
● to time off including annual leave
● to a written employment contract
● to protected employment rights
● not to be unfairly dismissed
● for written reasons for dismissal on request
● to provide notice to terminate employment
● to redundancy pay or pay when laid off
● to payment due to the insolvency of the employer
● to minimum pay
● to statutory sick pay
● to an itemised pay statement
● not to have unlawful deductions made from pay
● to be accompanied at disciplinary and grievance hearings
● to trade union membership
● to maternity benefits and rights
● to paternity leave
● to adoption leave
● to parental leave
● to time off for dependants
● to protection when disclosing wrongdoing to an employer
● to equal rights irrespective of part-time or full-time contracts
● to equal rights irrespective of fixed term or permanent contracts.[1]

Some rights are automatic, for example the right not to be discriminated against. Others may relate to length of service - for example the right to have written reasons for dismissal on request only applies legally to employees with more than a year's service.

There are some rights which are specifically relevant to people with mental health problems. There are also some rights which could be used to support people with mental health problems or more generally to promote mental health in the workplace.

These rights include:
● the right not to be discriminated against
● the right to work in a safe environment, including regulations on levels of stress
● the right to flexible working arrangements
● the right to reasonable time off.

Discrimination
An employee or potential employee has the right not to be discriminated against during recruitment or selection or within the workplace. There are a few exceptions but it is positive practice for all employers not to discriminate. Mental health problems are covered by the Disability Discrimination Act if they have lasted or are expected to last for more than 12 months. People with recurring or episodic conditions are also covered if substantial adverse effects are likely to recur beyond twelve months of the first occurrence.
The Act also covers individuals who have recovered and it is therefore unlawful to discriminate against an individual for a past health problem.[2]

POSITIVE PRACTICE
Employers are encouraged to support anti-discriminatory practice for employees, sub-contractors, clients and customers. Effective equality practices encompass a wide range of possible causes of inequality or discrimination in one policy, such as disability, race, religion, age, gender, sexuality.

Safety
All employees have the right to work in a safe environment and not to have their health damaged by their work or their workplace. Employers are responsible for assessing any health hazards in the workplace for introducing controls and monitoring effectiveness. This includes health hazards which may be damaging employees' mental health, rather than or as well as their physical health. Employers, employees and their representatives have responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

All employers with more than five employees have a duty to produce a written health and safety policy. Employers are also required to assess risk, identify measures to reduce risk and appoint competent individuals to manage measures under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

POSITIVE PRACTICE
The promotion of good health will be more effective when included in a comprehensive approach to health and safety. Employers are encouraged to involve employees in the regular reviews of health and safety measures.

Stress
Individuals have the right to be safe at work and this includes the right not to have to experience damaging levels of stress (i.e. levels which pose a significant risk to an individual's health). The Health and Safety regulations outline the responsibility of employers to control levels of excessive stress caused by work.

Stress is an adverse reaction to excessive pressure. It can be caused by a variety of factors and each individual within the workplace may react differently to different levels of stress. Situations or factors which for one person are challenging and motivating may be a source of severe stress for a colleague.

Personal signs of stress can become apparent in individual's capability, performance and conduct. Managers should be aware of particular changes in behaviour such as worsening relations with colleagues or clients, indecisiveness, inability to concentrate, absenteeism, poor timekeeping and abrupt or aggressive reactions. Signs of stress in an organisation can include a deterioration of industrial relations or morale, an increase in absenteeism or turnover of staff, or a reduction of efficiency and productivity. If stress is identified as an issue for an organisation, employers should develop organisational responses as well as encouraging individual action.[3]

POSITIVE PRACTICE
Working relations are enhanced and stress levels are reduced when individuals are clear of their role within a workplace and the contribution they make to broader organisational goals.

The Health and Safety Executive has published proposals for a code aimed at easing stress at work and improving the quality of life for employees. The guidelines specifically relate to:
● job demands
● job control and worker consultation (how much say individuals have)
● systems to cope with concerns
● unacceptable behaviour (including bullying)
● clear understanding of an individual's place within the organisation
● understanding reasons for change and the impact on individual's jobs.[4]

It must be recognised that some levels of stress are not directly related to the workplace and there may be little that an employer can do to reduce these. However, a positive approach to stress management will consider work-life balance issues and changes in individual circumstances, and can therefore have wider application and impact.

The Institute of Employment Studies has recently released a report highlighting the cost of stress and the need to rehabilitate individuals who have been stressed at work. Good rehabilitation practice includes:
● maintaining contact with an employee on a personal rather than work related basis
● considering the specific determinants of stress for the individual
● providing immediate support from the start of the absence period
● encouraging stress awareness among line managers
● being creative and flexible and identifying options for returning to work
● developing an agreed rehabilitation plan with the individual employee
● creating a written policy or guidance for employee rehabilitation.[5]

POSITIVE PRACTICE
Employers are encouraged to consider stress as part of a broader mental health policy. Stress levels can be viewed as a symptom or marker of the mental health of the organisation and the determinants of mental health within it.

Flexible Working Arrangements

Employees have the right to apply for flexible working arrangements, but generally this relates to employees with caring responsibilities, particularly for children under six years or children with disabilities under 18 years. Currently the average working week is limited to 48 hours. Employees are entitled to rest periods and rest breaks during the working day and most employers use their discretion when arranging and approving these.

Employees can make a request in writing for changes in hours of work, times of work or place of work. Employers are encouraged to consider reasonable requests for the short term as well as the long term. Flexible working practices can be successful for both individuals and teams, but are only likely to be successful if measures are taken to gain commitment from all those affected.

POSITIVE PRACTICE
Employees value flexible working arrangements enormously and therefore employers are encouraged to increase the levels of flexibility to cover the statutory minimum and other caring responsibilities and to promote work-life balance considerations.
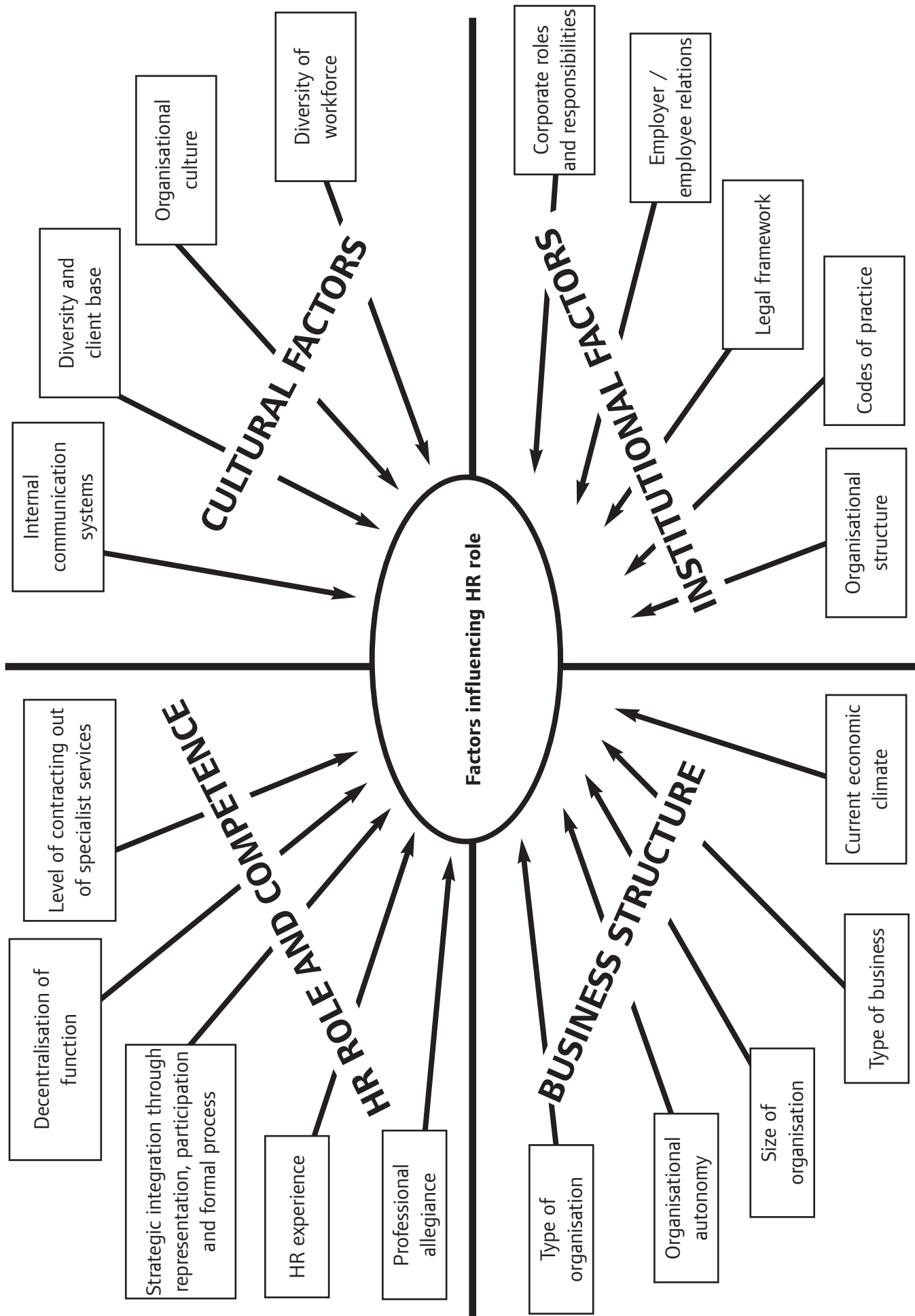
Time Off

Employees have the right to time off for various reasons including for holidays, for maternity, paternity or for adoption leave, for public duties, to look for alternative work (in some circumstances), for trade union activities, for duties as an employee representative, for duties as a safety representative, for duties as a pension fund trustee, or for medical suspension if continued employment would endanger health.[6]

Absence records should be kept and monitored and most employers should have an absence policy which includes procedures to minimise disruption to the organisation and procedures to deal with individuals fairly and compassionately, and procedures for rehabilitation as necessary.

When dealing with short term sickness, organisations should have clear rules on the provision of certificates and should ensure that employees are seen by their manager when they return to work. For long term sickness, organisations should maintain regular contact, consider the determinants within the workplace and alternatives if appropriate, consider the welfare of colleagues and those covering the current workload and consult the employee on any concerns or decisions made.

POSITIVE PRACTICE
Employers should involve employees in the development of policies relating to required or requested time off. Employees have valuable suggestions to make as these policies will have a direct impact on their work and workloads.

Factors influencing HR role

CULTURAL FACTORS
- Diversity of workforce
- Organisational culture
- Diversity and client base
- Internal communication systems

INSTITUTIONAL FACTORS
- Corporate roles and responsibilities
- Employer / employee relations
- Legal framework
- Codes of practice
- Organisational structure

HR ROLE AND COMPETENCE
- Level of contracting out of specialist services
- Decentralisation of function
- Strategic integration through representation, participation and formal process
- HR experience
- Professional allegiance

BUSINESS STRUCTURE
- Current economic climate
- Type of business
- Size of organisation
- Organisational autonomy
- Type of organisation

Human resources responsibilities

The core function of human resources management is to ensure that an organisation can achieve success through people and relationships. This includes ongoing work to develop, deliver and support best practice in:

- policy documentation
- organisational change
- recruitment, selection and retention
- training and development
- performance management
- employee relations
- line management and staff support
- occupational health and safety.

The human resources function provides support and guidance to an organisation in defining the rules for managing people and balancing consistency in the application of corporate values and policy.

Professionals within human resources act as:

- change-makers – helping integrating new policies and change existing practice
- advisers – for employees and employers
- regulators – ensuring rules and regulations are adhered to and standards are maintained.

In terms of supporting people with mental health problems at work human resources professionals should:

- ensure that mental health is accepted as a legitimate area of concern by employers and employees
- advise employers on effective recruitment and retention policies to ensure people with mental health problems are not discriminated against
- ensure that employers meet all their statutory responsibilities in relation to mental health at work
- work with employers to reduce the risk factors that may damage an individual's mental health at work, for example stress reduction programmes and support at work
- manage an appropriate occupational health department (see below)
- develop guidance for managers to support people with mental health problems effectively
- encourage an accepting environment and support mental health awareness training for all staff
- provide a confidential service to all staff so that issues relating to disclosure and early identification are managed appropriately
- encourage the development of independent employment assistance programmes to support staff at work.

POSITIVE PRACTICE

Human resources professionals can establish positive policies to promote mental health, support employers and employees to maintain mental health in the workplace, review current practices and ensure mentally healthy standards are maintained.

Occupational health responsibilities

The function of an occupational health department is to develop and maintain a healthy and productive working environment for all employees by:

- auditing the current workplace for risks to health and well-being
- reviewing policies and strategies to assess their impact on health at work and safety at work

- devise solutions for individual employees who may require workplace adjustments
- monitor and review the workplace.

One of the key aims of 'Securing Health Together' (the occupational health strategy for England, Scotland and Wales) is to significantly improve the physical and mental health of individuals through better management of workplace health and through use of the working environment to promote health. One of the targets of the document is that by 2010 everyone will have access to an occupational health department, to support occupational health in every workplace.[7]

In terms of supporting people with mental health problems at work occupational health professionals should:
- make a detailed assessment of the health of the employee
- make a detailed assessment of determinants within the workplace
- recommend reasonable adjustments which can be made to the workplace
- assist with the development of rehabilitation programmes
- advise on support required by an individual to begin or to continue work
- support the employee to seek further help, if required
- support and supervise the individual's manager, in relation to the health of the individual and monitoring of the situation
- advise on the eligibility of ill health retirement or employment termination.

POSITIVE PRACTICE
Occupational health professionals can ensure that mental health is embedded in their positive practice, such as health reviews, risk assessments, recommended adjustments and support in the workplace. Mental health promotion is an integral part of effective occupational health practice, regardless of diagnosis.

References

1. ACAS. Employing People. 2003 (www.acas.org.uk)

2. Employers Forum on Disability (1998) A practical guide to employment adjustments for people with mental health problems London: Employers Forum on Disability (information on the Disability Discrimination Act also available from the Disability Rights Commission – www.drc.gov.uk)

3. ACAS. Health and Employment. 2003 (www.acas.org.uk)

4. Health and Safety Executive. Draft Management Standards for Stress. London: HSE. 2003

5. L. Thompson, F. Neathey, J. Rick. Best Practice in Rehabilitating Employees Following Absence due to Work-related Stress London: HSE. 2003

6. J. Hiltrop, C. Despres, & J. Sparrow. The Changing Role of HR Managers in Europe The European Management Journal 13 (1) 91-98. 1995

7. Health and Safety Commission & Health and Safety Executive. Securing Health Together. London: Heath and Safety Executive. 2000

9. Useful organisations and resources

The following details and information are as accurate and up to date as possible. This is not an exhaustive list and other useful organisations and resources may be available.

Mental Health Organisations

Depression Alliance
35 Westminster Bridge Road
London SE1 7JB
Telephone: 020 7633 0557
Fax: 020 7633 0559
Email: information@depressionalliance.org
Website: www.depressionalliance.org
Provides information, support and understanding for those affected by depression and their carers. They also provide a network of local network of local support groups as well as campaigning to raise greater awareness of the condition.

Manic Depression Fellowship
Castle Works
21 St. George's Road
London SE1 6ES
Telephone: 020 7793 2600
Fax: 020 7793 2639
E-mail: mdf@mdf.org.uk
Website: www.mdf.org.uk
Provides advice and information on employment issues.

mentality
134-138 Borough High Street
London SE1 1LB
Telephone: 020 7716 6777
Fax: 020 7716 6774
Email: enquiries@mentality.org.uk
Website: www.mentality.org.uk
mentality is the first national charity dedicated solely to the promotion of mental health. They work with the public and private sector, user and survivor groups and voluntary agencies to promote the mental health of individuals, families, organisations and communities. They can assist you with any aspect of planning, implementation and delivery of NSF Standard One including policy support and development, advice on what works, development of indicators/measuring success and through mental health promotion training.

Mental After Care Association (Maca)
1st floor
Lincoln House
296–302 High Holborn
London WC1V 7JH
Telephone: 020 7061 3400
Fax: 020 7061 3401
Email: info@maca.org.uk
Website: www.maca.org.uk
Provides community services including advocacy, assertive outreach schemes, community support, employment schemes, forensic services, information, respite for cares, social clubs and supported accommodation. Maca also works for positive change in mental health legislation and practice.

Mental Health Foundation
83 Victoria Street
London SW1H 0HW
Telephone: 020 7802 0300
Fax: 020 7802 0301
Email. mhf@mhf.org.uk
Website: www.mhf.org.uk
The Mental Health Foundation, incorporating the Foundation for People with Learning Disabilities, are a UK organisation with main offices in London and Glasgow. They provide research and practical projects to help people survive, recover from and prevent mental health problems.

Mental Health Matters
9-10 Enterprise House
Kingsway, Team Valley Trading Estate
Gateshead
Tyne & Wear NE11 0SR
Telephone: 0191 497 1600
Fax: 0191 487 7945
Email: rharris@mentalhealthmatters.co.uk
Website: www.mentalhealthmatters.com
Mental Health Matters is a national registered charity that aims to promote the health and wellbeing of people with mental health problems, their families, carers and friends. Their services comprise housing, daycare and community services, helpline and a wide range of employment and training activities.

Mental Health Media
356 Holloway Road
London N7 6PA
Telephone: 020 7700 8171
Fax: 020 7686 0959
Email: info@mhmedia.com
Website: www.mhmedia.com

Mental Health Media produces and sells videos and multimedia resources which educate and inform about mental health and mental distress. They also provide media skills training and support to users and professionals.

Mind
15-19 Broadway
London E15 4BQ
Telephone: 020 8519 2122
Fax: 020 8522 1725
Information helpline: Open Mondays to Fridays 9:15am to 5:15pm
telephone: 0845 766 0163
Email: contact@mind.org.uk
Website: www.mind.org.uk
Mental health charity based in England and Wales. Mind work to create a better life for everyone with experience of mental distress. The Mind networks provide useful resources for specific groups, such as Rural Minds for people in isolated or rural areas, Diverse Minds for black and minority ethnic people and Mindlink for users/survivors.

mind out for mental health
Freepost LON15335
London
SE1 1BR
Telephone: 020 7403 2230
email: info@mindout.net.
www.mindout.net

A major campaign, funded by the Department of Health, to combat the stigma and discrimination surrounding mental health. The campaign has three main target audiences: young people, the media and employers.

The employer programme, working minds, has been working directly with a range of employers to change attitudes and develop good practice around mental health. Free resources available to employers include: Employer toolkit, the Line Managers' Resource, Ambassador presentations and Supporting materials.

National Institute for Mental Health in England (NIMHE)
Blenheim House
West One
Duncombe Street
Leeds LS1 4PL.
Telephone: 0113 254 3811
Email: Ask@nimhe.org.uk
Website: www.nimhe.org.uk
National Institute for Mental Health in England (NIMHE) aims to improve the quality of life for people of all ages who experience mental distress. Working beyond the NHS, they help all those involved in mental health to implement positive change, providing a gateway to learning and development, offering new opportunities to share experiences and one place to find information.

Rethink
Registered Office
28 Castle Street
Kingston-Upon-Thames
Surrey KT1 1SS
Telephone: 0845 456 0455
Fax: 020 8547 3862
Email info@rethink.org
Website: www.rethink.org
Working together to help everyone affected by sever mental illness, including schizophrenia, to
recover a better quality of life.
Reg. Charity No 271028.

Sainsbury Centre for Mental Health
134 Borough High Street
London SE1 1LB
Tel: 020 7827 8300
Fax: 020 7403 9482
Email: contact@scmh.org.uk
Website: www.scmh.org.uk
Working to improve the quality of life for people with severe mental health problems. It aims to
influence national policy and encourage good practice in mental health services.

Samaritans
The Upper Mill
Kingston Road
Ewell
Surrey KT17 2AF
Telephone: 020 8394 8300
Fax: 020 8394 8301
Email: admin@samaritans.org
Website: www.samaritans.org
The Samaritans offer confidential emotional support 24 hours a day to those in crisis and in danger of
taking their own lives.

Sane
1st Floor, Cityside House
40 Adler Street
London E1 1EE
Telephone: 020 7375 1002
Fax: 020 7375 2162
Saneline: 0845 767 8000 open from 12 noon until 2am every day of the year (calls charged at local
rate)
Email: london@sane.org.uk
Website: www.sane.org.uk

SANE is a national mental health charity which aims to raise awareness of mental illness and campaign to improve services, initiate and fund research into the causes of serious mental illness through its research centre, and provide information and support to those experiencing mental health problems through its helpline, SANELINE.

Employment Related Organisations

Acas – Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service
London Office
22nd and 23rd Floor, Euston Tower
286 Euston Road, London NW1 3JJ
Tel: 020 7210 3613
National helpline: 08567 47 47 47 to answer your questions on employment matters in one confidential phone call, Mon-Fri 9.00-4.30
National helpline: 08456 00 34 44 for questions on managing equality in the workplace
National textphone: 08456 06 16 00
Acas offers a range of services from conflict resolution to training and hands-on help in the workplace. Calls to the helpline service go through direct to an adviser who will help with queries on virtually all employment relations matters including rights and obligations.

Commission for Racial Equality
St Dunstan's House
201-211 Borough High Street
London SE1 1GZ
Telephone: 020 7939 0000
Fax: 020 7939 0001
Email info@cre.gov.uk
Website: www.cre.gov.uk
The Commission for Racial Equality is a publicly funded, non-governmental body set up under the Race Relations Act 1976 to tackle racial discrimination and promote racial equality. They work in the public and private sectors to encourage fair treatment and to promote equal opportunities for everyone, regardless of their race, colour, nationality, or national or ethnic origin.

Confederation of British Industry
Centre Point
103 New Oxford Street
London WC1A 1DU
Telephone: 020 7379 7400
Website: www.cbi.org.uk

Department of Health
Richmond House
79 Whitehall
London SW1A 2NL
Telephone: 020 7210 4850 (line open from 9.00am to 5.00pm Monday to Friday).
Minicom: 020 7210 5025.
Email: dhmail@doh.gsi.gov.uk
Website: www.doh.gov.uk

Department of Trade and Industry

DTI Enquiry Unit
1 Victoria Street
London SW1H OET
Telephone: 020 7215 5000
Minicom: 020 7215 6740
Email: dti.enquiries@dti.gsi.gov.uk
Website: www.dti.gov.uk
The Department of Trade and Industry has the clear aim of generating prosperity for everyone in the UK by helping people and businesses to become more productive and more successful. It offers a wide range of information on workplace issues.

Disability Rights Commission

DRC Helpline
FREEPOST MID02164
Stratford upon Avon
CV37 9BR
Telephone: 08457 622 633
Textphone: 08457 622 644
Fax: 08457 778 878
Email: enquiry@drc-gb.org
Website: www.drc.org.uk
Providing information and advice to disabled people and employers about their rights and duties.

Employers Forum on Disability

Nutmeg House
60 Gainsford Street
London SE1 2NY
Telephone: 020 7403 3020
Fax: 020 7403 0404
Minicom: 020 7403 0040
Email: website.enquiries@employers-forum.co.uk
Website: www.employers-forum.co.uk
Information line provides general advice and guidance on disability in the workplace and regarding disabled customers.

Equal Opportunities Commission

Arndale House, Arndale Centre
Manchester M4 3EQ
Telephone: 0845 601 5901
Fax: 0161 838 8312
Email: info@eoc.org.uk
Website: www.eoc.org.uk
The Equal Opportunities Commission is the leading agency working to eliminate sex discrimination in 21st Century Britain.

Equality Direct
Telephone: 0845 600 3444 – 8am until 8pm (or 10am until 4pm on Sunday)
Website: www.equalitydirect.org.uk
A confidential helpline service on all aspects of equality in the workplace.

HSE Infoline
Caerphilly Business Park
Caerphilly
CF83 3GG
Telephone enquiries: 08701 545500
Fax: 02920 859260
Minicom: 02920 808537
Email: hseinformationservices@natbrit.com
Website: www.hse.gov.uk

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Fax: 01787 313995
Email: hsebooks@prolog.uk.com
Website: www.hsebooks.co.uk

Incomes Data Services
77 Bastwick Street
London EC1V 3TT
Telephone: 020 7250 3434 for general enquiries
Fax: 020 7324 2510 or 020 7608 0949
Email: ids@incomesdata.co.uk;
Website: www.incomesdata.co.uk
Incomes Data Services (IDS) is an independent research organisation. All their work is focused on employment-related areas and their output draws on many years of experience in this field.

Institute of Directors
116 Pall Mall
London
SW1Y 5ED
Main switchboard: 020 7839 1233
Main fax: 020 7930 1949
Email: enquiries@iod.com
Website: www.iod.com
As a worldwide association of members, the Institute of Directors (IoD) provides a network that reaches into every corner of the business community. Members receive a variety of benefits including information, advice, training, conferences and publications to help them maximise their potential.

Institute for Employment Studies
Mantell Building
Falmer
Brighton BN1 9RF
Telephone: 01273 686751
Fax: 01273 690430
Email: enquiries@employment-studies.co.uk
Website: www.employment-studies.co.uk

Shaw Trust Southern Region
St Peters Centre, Reardon Street, Wapping
London, E1W 2QH
Freephone 0800 169 1790
Fax 020 7977 6816
Minicom 020 7977 6810
Email: southern.region@shaw-trust.org.uk
Website: www.shaw-trust.org.uk
Provides training and work opportunities for people who are disadvantaged in the workplace due to disability, ill health or other social circumstances.

Trade Union Congress
Congress House
Great Russell Street
London WC1B 3LS
Telephone: 020 7636 4030
Email: info@tuc.org.uk
Website: www.tuc.org.uk
The TUC is the voice of Britain at work. With 69 affiliated unions representing nearly seven million working people from all walks of life, they campaign for a fair deal at work and for social justice at home and abroad.

The Work Foundation
Peter Runge House
3 Carlton House Terrace
London SW1Y 5DG
Telephone: 0870 165 6700
Fax: 0870 165 6701
Email: contactcentre@theworkfoundation.com
Website: www.theworkfoundation.com
The Work Foundation, formerly The Industrial Society, combines leading-edge analysis of the modern workplace with practical experience of what inspiring and successful businesses and public sector organisations look like today. It is a new kind of organisation - part research institute, part business consultancy, part advocate. They offer new thinking, research, and solutions to the challenge of making our workplaces more effective, more successful and more fulfilling. The Work Foundation does a lot of work with local authorities, in particular, conducting employee opinion surveys with several local authorities. Their research team, the 'Public Service Unit', is dedicated to the area of improving public service provision.

Resources:

A Toolkit for Mental Health Promotion in the Workplace. Trent Mental Health in the Workplace Project. mentality, 2002. Provides a framework for developing a mental health promotion policy in the workplace. The Toolkit makes the case for investment, information on what works and some practical examples of ways forward.

Burnt Out or Burning Bright? The Effects of Stress in the Workplace. The Mental Health Foundation. 2000. A-32 page report on stress, the individual and the workplace.

Employers' Forum on Disability. The Forum has produced a series of briefing guides providing practical guidance, illustrated with case studies, on a range of issues relating to the employment of people with disabilities. Available online at www.employers-forum.co.uk

Employers guide to Manic Depression and Employment. The Manic Depression Fellowship. 2000. A booklet aimed at employers who have no prior experience or understanding of manic depression. It includes facts about manic depression and employer's responsibilities under the law and other relevant topics.

Guidance to promote employment and other occupational activity for people with mental health problems. NIMHE. Due out shortly, this resource will offer advice and guidance to promote employment and other meaningful activity for people with mental health problems.

Making It effective: A guide to evidence based mental health promotion. radical mentalities briefing paper. mentality. 2003. Supporting best practice and securing further investment will depend on strengthening understanding of what works in mental health promotion. mentality's first briefing paper, provides an overview of evidence as well as current practice within mental health promotion.

Managing for Mental Health: The Mind Employers Resource Pack. Mind, 2000.
This pack includes best practice in mental health promotion at work. It includes sections on where to look for help in a hurry, a complete guide to good practice and policies on employment and mental health, as well as essential background information on mental illness.

Mental Health in the Workplace. Tackling the effects of stress. Booklet. Mental Health Foundation, 1999.

Mental Health, Employment and Training. Report. Mental Health Foundation, 2000.

Mental Well-Being in the Workplace: A Resource Pack for Management, Training and Development. Health and Safety Executive. 1998. An extensive 312-page resource pack.

Strategies for Living. The Research Report. The Mental Health Foundation. 2000. The report identifies people's main supports, coping strategies and sources of help, and concludes by offering recommendations for service development and staff training. Coming soon three user-led projects related to employment and benefit issues, supported by Strategies for Living.

Tackling work-related stress: A manager's guide to improving and maintaining employee health and well-being. Health and Safety Executive. 2001.

Working Minds Toolkit. A practical resource to promote good workplace practice on mental health. Mind Out for Mental Health.

Working Partners: A Guide to Employment of People with Mental Health Difficulties. Mental Health Media. 1999. Video and booklet.

Work-Related Stress: A Short Guide. Health and Safety Executive. 2001. A 12-page free leaflet.