

**Introduction:**

Mental ill health and stress are associated with many of the leading causes of disease and disability in our society. Promoting and protecting the mental wellbeing of the workforce is important for individuals' health, wellbeing and productivity and is relevant to everyone.

Important aspects of mental health and wellbeing include providing information and raising awareness, management skills to deal with issues around mental health and stress effectively, providing a supportive work environment and offering assistance, advice and support to those experiencing mental health problems.

**Policy Statement:**

The organisation is committed to the protection and promotion of the mental health and wellbeing of all employees.

The organisation shall look to improve the mental health environment and culture of the organisation by identifying, eliminating, or minimising all harmful processes, procedures and behaviours that may cause psychological harm or illness to its employees.

The organisation shall continuously strive, as far as is reasonably practicable, to promote mental health throughout the organisation by establishing and maintaining processes that enhance mental health and wellbeing.

**Policy Aim:**

To provide a working environment that promotes and supports the mental health and wellbeing of all employees.

**Scope:**

This policy will comply with Health and Safety legislation and appropriate guidelines.

This policy will be developed in accordance with existing organisational policies and procedures.

This policy will be evaluated and reviewed as appropriate by HR.

**Policy Objectives:**

**To develop a supportive culture, address factors that may negatively affect mental wellbeing and to develop management skills.**

*Policy actions:*

Give employees information on and increase their awareness of mental wellbeing.

Include information about the mental health support options in the employee's induction programme.



Provide opportunities for employees to look after their mental wellbeing, for example through occupational health and Westfield Health Services.

Help support management in having welfare conversations and resolving employee issues that impact on wellbeing.

Manage conflict effectively and ensure the workplace is free from bullying and harassment, discrimination and racism and ensure people are aware of the grievance policy and informal resolution options.

Establish good two-way communication to ensure employees involvement, particularly during periods of organisational change.

Consider job roles and their appropriateness to the individual, with relevant training, supervision and support provided as required.

### **To provide support for employees experiencing mental health difficulties.**

#### *Policy actions:*

Ensure individuals suffering from mental health problems are treated fairly and consistently.

Manage return to work for those who have experienced mental health problems and in cases of long-term sickness absence, put in place, where possible, a phased return to work.

Give non-judgemental and proactive support to individual employees that experience mental health problems wherever possible.

Ensure employees and managers are aware of the support that can be offered through occupational health department, Westfield Health counselling and our trained Mental Health First Aiders or alternatively their own GP, or a counsellor.

Make every effort to identify suitable alternative employment, in consultation with the employee, where a return to the same job is not possible due to identified risks or other factors.

Treat all matters relating to individual employees and their mental health problems in the strictest confidence and share on a 'need to know' basis only with consent from the individual concerned.

### **To encourage the employment of people who have experienced mental health problems.**

#### *Policy actions:*

Show a positive and enabling attitude to employees and job applicants with mental health issues.

Ensure that HR involved in recruitment and selection are briefed on mental health issues and related legislation and are trained in appropriate interview skills and support supervision involved in interviewing accordingly.



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To recognise that workplace stress is a health and safety issue.

*Policy actions:*

Consult with trade union safety representatives on proposed action relating to the prevention of workplace stress.

Provide training in good management practices.

Provide confidential counselling and adequate resources through Westfield Health and the opportunity to raise issue confidentially with a trained Mental Health First Aider.

Align with other relevant policies such as the Substance Abuse Policy and absence management processes.

**Communication**

All employees will be made aware at induction of the mental health support available.

The Works Committee /Health and Safety Committee will take forward the actions from this policy where required.

Updates will be provided to employees via email or a Works Notice.

**Review and monitoring**

The HR department (or an individual as appropriate) will be responsible for reviewing the mental wellbeing policy and for monitoring how effectively the policy meets its aims and objectives.

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