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| **STRESS RISK ASSESSMENT** |
| **SECTION 1** |
| **Work Area/Department:** |
| **Staff Groups Covered: Line Manager(s):**  |
| **Indicators of stress** Outline here any general indications of the level of stress, e.g. staff turnover, sickness absence rate, work related absences, staff feedback. These may indicate high or low levels of stress. |
| **Staff turnover** | **Sickness absence rate** | **Complaints of work stress** | **Absences related** **to stress** |
|  |  |  |  |
| **SECTION 2** |
| **Stressor**See guidance notes: examples may include stressors such as temperature, noise, threat of violence, emotional demands | **Staff groups affected** | **Control measures** | **Assessment of risk****(high-medium-low)** |
|  |  |  |  |
| **SECTION 3** |
| **STANDARD** | **Indicators of performance****(e.g. staff survey, local surely, focus group feedback, other staff feedback)** | **Control Measures** | **Assessment of risk****(high-medium-low)** |
| **Demand** |  |  |  |
| **Control** |  |  |  |
| **Support** |  |  |  |
| **Relationships** |  |  |  |
| **Role** |  |  |  |
| **Change** |  |  |  |
| **OVERALL RISK ASSESSMENT** (HIGH-MEDIUM-LOW)This sums up your overall assessment of risk taking into account indicators of stress, sections 1 and 2. |
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| **SECTION 4** |
| **ACTION PLAN: Indicate here any actions identified that may improves stress levels. Indicate actions taken and outcome.** |
| **Possible actions** | **Action taken** | **Outcome** |
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| **Signed:** | **Title:** |
| **Date of completion:** | **Review:** |

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**GUIDANCE ON COMPLETION OF THE STRESS RISK ASSESSMENT**

**Introduction**

Conducting a risk assessment for stress at work is a requirement under the Management of Health and Safety at Work regulations. Stress has been defined as **"the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them".** The risk assessment is based on the workplace and should focus on elements of work which could result in harm to health through stress.

The following may help you complete the Stress Risk Assessment.

**SECTION 1:**

**You can complete this section with information already available to you.**

• Indicate the work area or department relevant, staff groups covered and the relevant line manager/managers if there is a mix of professional groups.

• Record any information that might indicate the general level of stress in the workforce in this area. This might include absence rates (if known), turnover, staff absence known to be linked with workplace stress, staff complaints or feedback concerning work stress. The result of the Staff Governance survey may also be relevant.

**If the information available to you suggests that the risk is Low, proceed to Section 4, complete the Risk Assessment and give a review date. If not, proceed to Section 2**

**SECTION 2:**

In this section, you first identify if there are any special features of the workplace or the work conducted in the area which are particularly likely to cause stress.

Examples might be **physical factors** such as noise, temperature, etc. **threats** such as risk of violence, aggression or verbal abuse from clients, or **factors** such as the need to provide **an emergency response**, regularly **break bad news**, deal with traumatic incidents, deal with death, especially in children or young adults. These are only examples – there may be other stressors peculiar to your workplace.

**Only record these if you, or your staff, believe that these issues pose a particular, unusual stressor in your work area. Recording every possible occasional stressor may distract from the really important stressors.**

**You may decide there are no special features or stressors which should be recorded under section 2, and you can then go to Section 4.**

Once you have listed the stressors, record any control measures that are in place to help reduce the risk of stress and **record whether the risk remains high, medium or low**. Control measures might be departmental systems, clinical supervision, policies and procedures or other measures.

**If you now have enough information to make a decision about the level of RISK, go to Section 4 and complete the Risk Assessment.**

**If you are unable to make a decision on RISK, go to SECTION 3.**

**SECTION 3:**

**You may wish to obtain further information on which to base your assessment. You can consider the 6 HSE management standards and assess how your department or area rates against these standards. Details of this are in Appendix 2.**

**Possible** methods of obtaining information would be:

• Obtaining views of staff through existing groups such as open discussions, departmental meetings, partnership meetings, etc. It is important that staff side reps have the opportunity to contribute if this option is chosen.

• Conducting focus groups with a representative group of staff. HSE has issued guidance about how to conduct focus group work. https://www.hse.gov.uk/**stress**/assets/docs/**focusgroups**.pdf

• Conducting a survey within your own department. HSE have suggested and provided a survey toolkit online which may be useful www.hse.gov.uk/stress/standards/downloads.htm.

• **The HSE have a checklist for managers to ensure that their approach to risk assessment is suitable and sufficient, which managers may find helpful.** https://www.hse.gov.uk/**stress**/assets/docs/**checklist**.pdf

• Managers may also wish to adapt the example stress risk assessment for individuals or use the HSE Return to Work questionnaire which can be accessed here https://www.hse.gov.uk/search/search- results.htm?gsc.q=stress%20return%20to%20work%20questionaire#gsc.t ab=0&gsc.q=stress%20return%20to%20work%20questionaire&gsc.page= 1

• Staff representatives should be invited to be involved in these procedures.

**Advantages/Disadvantages**

The main advantage of any of these methods is that they offer a much clearer picture of how your staff view workplace stress. The main disadvantage is that it is time and resource intensive. However, with the information obtained you can list any relevant control measures and assign your rating of the risk as **high, medium or low**.

**If considering focus groups or surveys, Occupational Health would strongly advise that you contact your local OH team to discuss the advantages/disadvantages in full.**

**SECTION 4:**

Consider the stressors and risk ratings in sections 1, 2 and/or 3 and decide on an

**overall risk rating** for stress in the work area as **low, medium or high.** Remember that if your assessment is Medium or High you must put together a plan to reduce that risk

**ACTION PLAN**

In the **ACTION PLAN**, consider the following:

• what possible additional steps could be taken to reduce risk,

• what steps have been taken (this section can be updated as action is taken),

• any outcomes.

It is accepted that some possible actions may be resource constrained and not possible to implement but they can still be listed as possible actions. **This section is the most important to complete carefully.**

Finally, sign and date the assessment. Give a date for review.

**Health and Safety Executive (HSE) Management Standards for Stress**

In November 2004 HSE published a series of six standards for management of stress. In general, the approach is the standard 5-step risk assessment: i) Look for the hazards; ii) decide who might be harmed and how; iii) evaluate the risk and decide what needs to be done; iv) record your findings; v) monitor and review. In the case of stress, it is particularly important to consult with staff, identify problem areas, agree an action plan in partnership, and review the plan. See HSE guidance at http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/standards/

**Demands**

Employees indicate that they are able to cope with the demands of their jobs

**Control**

Employees indicate that they are able to have a say about the way they do their work

**Support**

Employees indicate that they receive adequate information and support from their colleagues and superiors

**Relationships**

Employees indicate that they are not subjected to unacceptable behaviours,

e.g. bullying at work

**Role**

Employees indicate that they understand their role and responsibilities

**Change**

Employees indicate that the organisation engages them frequently when undergoing an organisational change

The six specific standards are:

**In each case an additional standard is that “Systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns”.**

**The standards are derived from the generic issues that can cause stress in the average workplace.**

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