

Work Related Stress Management Procedure SHEP 17-A

Introduction

1. St George's, University of London (SGUL), recognises it has a duty of care under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and is committed to protecting the health, safety and welfare of its employees. St George's recognises that work-related stress is a health and safety issue and acknowledges the importance of identifying and reducing workplace stressors.
2. SGUL has adopted the Health and Safety Executive's definition of stress as 'the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed on them'.

The HSE states that "employees feel stress when they can't cope with pressures and other issues."

These definitions take into account the individuals' work and the person who is undertaking the work and the combination which can be detrimental to an individual's health.

Aims of the Procedure

3. The aims of this Procedure and Guidance are to:
 - Prevent, as far as reasonably practicable, work-related stress, by putting in place a programme of stress risk assessment to identify the foreseeable causes of work-related stress. To control, reduce or eliminate the causes of work related stress follow the risk assessment
 - Support employees to address pressures and stressors (things that can cause stress e.g. work issues, workplace relationships, family issues, ill-health) inside and outside the workplace that may impact their work
 - Educate managers to recognise the signs of stress in employees
 - Provide guidance to staff and managers on the actions that they should take in the event of any member of staff experiencing stress at work
 - Provide mechanisms to monitor procedures and outcomes, and to assess the effectiveness of this Procedure and guidance

Scope

4. This procedure applies to all members of staff.
5. A copy of this Procedure and guidance will be made available to all members of staff via the SGUL Portal (Intranet) which can be downloaded and will be made available in hard copy form on request to the Safety, Health and Environment Office (SHE).

Arrangements

6. This document describes the arrangements put in place to help SGUL to work towards implementing 'The Management Standards for tackling work related stress' as set by the Health and Safety Executive (Appendix 1) and enable workplace stress to be managed effectively

Risk Assessments

10. Line Managers within the organisational units of SGUL will identify issues that can lead to workplace stress e.g. increased workload, organisational changes; and conduct risk assessments to eliminate, reduce or control the risks of stress taking into account the person and their workload with assistance from the SHE office.

Stress risk assessments will also be conducted when a need has been identified or if a significant organisational change has occurred.

- There are two Risk Assessment tools [produced by the HSE](#) available for organisational units to use in assessing risks of stress: Risk Assessment Focus Groups and an online Risk Assessment Questionnaire.
- Line managers will be trained to conduct stress risk assessments, run focus groups and with the help of the SHE Office identify suitable control measures. These will follow the recommendations included in the HSE [Management standards](#). Control measures may involve referral to Occupational Health or the SGUL counselling service, as well as in-house adjustments relating to the stress management standards.

Counselling and Support

11. SGUL provides counselling for staff affected by stress at work or external factors. Support will be provided from the following sources in confidence:

- [Counselling Service](#)
- [Safety Health and Environment Office](#)

Training and Guidance

7. The SHE office will provide resilience training and awareness support for all staff via an external trainer.
8. Human Resources will be responsible for ensuring that resilience training is available to all staff with management responsibilities. Human Resources will also provide support and guidance to managers in managing staff with health issues, including those impacted by stress.
9. Human Resources will continue to provide training on an individual and team basis to help staff perform efficiently and effectively.

Consultation

12. SGUL will consult with employees and with Trades Union (BMA, Unite and University and College Union) on the stress Management Procedure and guidance and the actions taken to prevent work place stress.

Links to other SGUL Policies

13. This document is supported by and should be read in conjunction with other relevant policies, including the following:

- [Capability Procedure](#)
- [Management of Sickness Absence](#)
- [Alcohol and Substance Misuse](#)
- [Harassment and Bullying](#)
- [Equality Code of Practice on Employment](#)
- [Equal Opportunities Policy](#)
- [Grievance Procedure](#)

Roles and Responsibilities

14. Specific roles and responsibilities are as follows:

Council

- Responsible for ensuring that SGUL complies with all health and safety legislation and regulations.

Principal

- Ensure that the requirements and aims of the Procedure and guidance are emphasised at the highest level in SGUL;
- Ensure that the document with its related procedures, mechanisms and strategies are effectively implemented;
- Require managerial action to implement the Procedure and guidance;
- Promote awareness of the Procedure and guidance within and outside SGUL;

Heads of Institutes and Corporate Units

- Support organisational units conducting risk assessments and ensure recommendations from risk assessments and audits are implemented
- Ensure staff are trained to discharge their responsibilities

Line Managers / Principal Investigators

- Conduct regular and effective risk assessments to eliminate potential work related stressors or to control the risks associated with stress
- Develop and implement recommendations of the risk assessments conducted in their area
- Ensure good communication, especially during periods of organisational change
- Ensure appropriate match between employees and their jobs by effective selection and assessment
- Ensure employees are given appropriate development opportunities
- Review workloads, hours and holidays of staff in their area
- Attend training as requested in good management practice and health and safety
- Treat employees with respect and dignity at all times
- Ensure staff are trained to discharge their responsibilities

Safety, Health and Environment Office

- Provide resilience training, this includes the awareness and management of workplace stressors
- Provide advice and guidance on the conduct of risk assessments and the development of action plans to support the effective management of work-related stress
- Facilitate the Risk Assessment Process by supporting the Health and Safety Advisers within Organisational units

Human Resources

- Providing appropriate training for staff and managers

- Support managers of individuals suffering adverse impacts as a result of stress, including on their health
- Refer employees to occupational health providers, counsellors or other specialists as required
- Monitoring cases of sickness absence, including those that may be linked to work-related stress

Members of Staff

- Recognise and take responsibility for their own health, utilise sensible work practices and training, identify their own development needs and bring those to the attention of their manager
- Discuss and bring to the attention of their line manager their own stress-related issues
- Provide support to colleagues and encourage those affected by work-related stress to seek help
- Assist managers with the stress risk assessment process to ensure early support, intervention and resolution of stress related issues

Occupational Health Adviser

- Provide specialist advice and guidance as required
- Support individuals who have been absent from work on the grounds of stress and advise them and their management on a planned return to work
- Refer individuals to specialist counsellors or health specialists as required
- Inform SGUL of any changes and developments in the field of managing stress at work

Employee Assistance Programme

Information and help is available from the Employee assistance programme 24/7. The service can be contacted via 0800 085 1376, email them at assist@cic-eap.co.uk or access the **Confidential Care** Website at www.well-online.co.uk. Login details are User ID: sglogin Password: wellbeing

Employer Assistance Programme for Line Managers requiring advice

Confidential Care provide a dedicated telephone advice line for managers and supervisors who need advice or would like to talk through how to approach a difficult situation in their role as a manager. The advice line is open 8am to 8pm Monday- Friday and can be reached via 0800 085 3805

Monitoring and Implementation

15. This Procedure and guidance will be implemented and monitored as follows

- The Procedure and guidance will be reviewed within 3 years, or as the result of increased reports of work-related stress at SGUL (eg higher rates of absence due to stress being recorded on the HR system), and revised as necessary
- The SHE office in conjunction with HR will be responsible for monitoring the delivery of the required guidance and training to staff and line managers about stress and stress management
- Council has overall responsibility for the management of Health and Safety at SGUL.

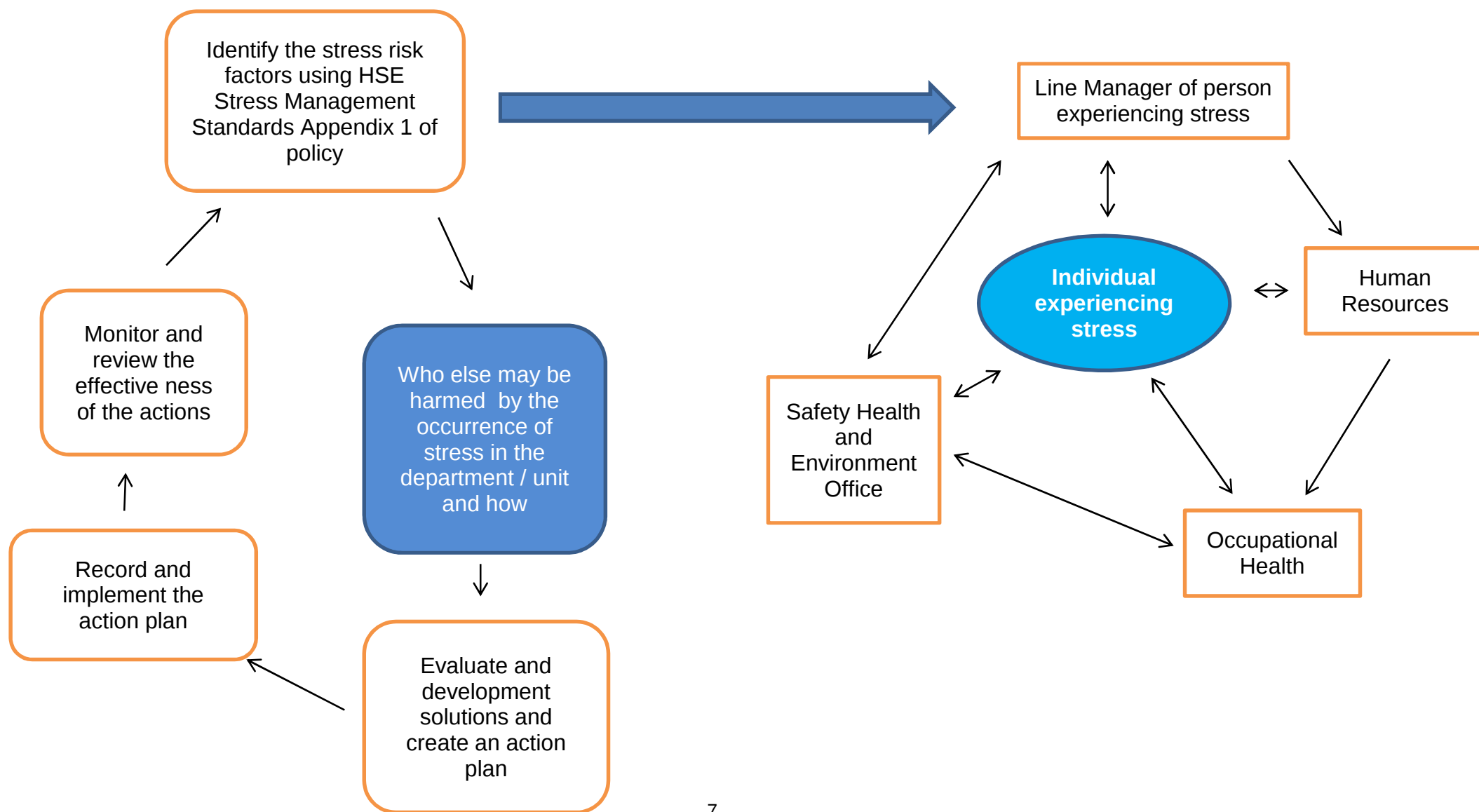
References

16. The following documents underpin and complement this Procedure and guidance:

1. Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974

2. The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
3. [How to tackle work-related stress - A guide for employers on making the Management Standards work 2009](#)
4. [Preventing and Tackling Stress at Work – An Approach for Higher Education 2005 UCEA](#)

Stress Assessment and response flow chart



Appendix 1

Health and Safety Executive - The Management Standards for tackling workplace stress

The HSE's Standards and processes for tackling workplace stress are designed to:

- Help simplify risk assessment for stress
- Encourage employers, employees and their representatives to work in partnership to address work related stress throughout the organisation
- Provide the yardstick by which organisations can gauge their performance in tackling the key causes of stress

The Management Standards define the characteristics or culture of an organization where stress is managed effectively.

The Management Standards cover six key areas of work design that, if not properly managed, are associated with poor health and well-being, lower productivity and sickness absence. In other words the six management standards cover the primary sources of stress at work.

Demands

Includes issues like workload, work patterns, and the work environment. The standard is that:

- Employees indicate that they are able to cope with the demands of their jobs; and
- Systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns.

What should be happening / states to be achieved:

- The organisation provides employees with adequate and achievable demands in relation to the agreed hours of work
- People's skills and abilities are matched to the job demands;
- Jobs are designed to be within the capabilities of employees; and
- Employees' concerns about their work environment are addressed.

Control

How much say the person has in the way they do their work. The standard is that:

- Employees indicate that they are able to have a say about the way they do their work; and
- Systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns.

What should be happening / states to be achieved:

- Where possible, employees have control over their pace of work;
- Employees are encouraged to use their skills and initiative to do their work;
- Where possible, employees are encouraged to develop new skills to help them undertake new and challenging pieces of work;
- The organisation encourages employees to develop their skills;
- Employees have a say over when breaks can be taken; and
- Employees are consulted over their work patterns.

Support

Includes the encouragement, sponsorship and resources provided by the organisation, line management and colleagues. The standard is that:

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

- Systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns.

What should be happening / states to be achieved:

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

Relationship

Includes promoting positive working to avoid conflict and dealing with unacceptable behaviour. The standard is that:

- Employees indicate that they are not subjected to unacceptable behaviours, e.g. bullying at work; and
- Systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns.

What should be happening / states to be achieved:

- The organisation promotes positive behaviours at work to avoid conflict and ensure fairness;
- Employees share information relevant to their work;
- The organisation has agreed policies and procedures to prevent or resolve unacceptable behaviour;
- Systems are in place to enable and encourage managers to deal with unacceptable behaviour; and
- Systems are in place to enable and encourage employees to report unacceptable behaviour.

Role

Whether people understand their role within the organisation and whether the organisation ensures that the person does not have conflicting roles. The standard is that:

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

What should be happening / states to be achieved:

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

Change

How organisational change (large or small) is managed and communicated in the organisation. The standard is that:

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

What should be happening / states to be achieved:

- The organisation provides employees with timely information to enable them to understand the reasons for proposed changes;
- The organisation ensures adequate employee consultation on changes and provides opportunities for employees to influence proposals;
- Employees are aware of the probable impact of any changes to their jobs. If necessary, employees are given training to support any changes in their jobs;
- Employees are aware of timetables for changes;
- Employees have access to relevant support during changes.

Reproduced from the Health and Safety Executives leaflet 'Tackling Stress: The Management Standards Approach' (March 2005)

Managing the causes of work-related stress: A step-by-step approach using the Management Standards 2007

Appendix 2

Web Resources

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/>

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/standards/>

[Working together to reduce stress at work](#) Published November 2008

[How to tackle work related stress](#) Published October 2009

[Tackling work-related stress using the Management Standards approach](#) Published March 2017

<http://www.unitetheunion.org/uploaded/documents/EuroStress201411-17288.pdf>

http://www.helpguide.org/mental/stress_management_relief_coping.htm