

Health and Wellbeing Policy

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1. Introduction

The North Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Clinical Commissioning Groups (the CCGs) recognises the contribution of its employees and is committed to providing good working conditions and health and safety standards beyond the basic standards set out in the Health and Safety at work Act 1974. The CCGs aim to be a 'healthy organisation' with engaged and positive employees who recognise the CCGs commitment to their health and wellbeing.

The NHS Constitution includes a commitment to *"Provide support and opportunities for staff to maintain their health, well-being and safety"*. This commitment remains as strong now as it did when the NHS Constitution was launched in January 2010.

There is strong evidence that shows that NHS organisations that support the health and well-being of their staff achieve a range of positive outcomes. The NHS Health and Wellbeing Review (Boorman Review November 2009) states that NHS organisations prioritising staff health and well-being achieve enhanced performance, improve patient care, are better at retaining staff and have lower rates of sickness absence.

The level of health and well-being of the workforce is therefore a key indicator of organisational performance and patient outcomes. The evidence makes it clear that cultures of engagement, mutuality, caring, compassion and respect for all - staff, patients and the public - provide the ideal environment within which to care for the health of the nation.

The Health and Wellbeing Policy provides the CCGs with the framework to take a proactive and engaging approach to enhancing the health and wellbeing of our staff.

The health and wellbeing of the CCGs employees will be achieved through a number of wellbeing initiatives, support mechanisms and the Staff Engagement Forum.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies: Dignity at Work, Career Break, Working Time Directive, Absence Management, Flexible Working, Home Working, DSE and Alcohol and Substance Misuse.

2. Background

This policy has been developed with the eight elements of workplace wellbeing, with key behaviours and actions:

Key behaviours

Leadership
Shared strategic vision
Engagement
Communication

Actions

Know your data
Prevention
Intervention
Evaluate and act

3. Key Metrics

There are a number of metrics that indicate the overall health of the workforce in most organisations, including at the CCGs.

These include though aren't limited to:

- Sickness absence rates and trends
- Staff turnover rates
- Staff survey results
- Stress Assessment Tool
- Staff temperature check

The CCGs will monitor the range of metrics and employee feedback to help understand the needs of staff and what the key issues are relating to health and wellbeing.

Sickness absence rates and trends are monitored by the CCGs and reported to the Organisational Development Committee on a quarterly basis.

The 2017 Staff Survey results indicated a number of potential factors of employee wellbeing which may or may not be directly influencing the current levels of morale and energy across the organisation.

As the CCGs continue to build knowledge, skills, behaviours and culture of a high performing organisation, having resilient employees with the knowledge, skills and tools to recognise stress triggers and health signals and proactively manage them will be central to an engaged, healthy workforce.

4. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to set out the overarching Health and Wellbeing Policy and themes for the CCGs. The Policy covers both preventative activity to minimise the risks of ill health and reactive activity to support staff with health and wellbeing concerns.

The Policy views health and wellbeing from two perspectives: organisational responsibility and work based action, as well as encouraging employees to take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing outside of work as part of their everyday life.

5. Support for Wellbeing Initiatives

The CCGs have significant wellbeing initiatives for all staff to ensure the principles of engagement and alignment to the Organisational Strategy are underpinned.



6. Strategic Objectives

Reflecting the four key themes of health safety and wellbeing in the model above links to the CCGS induction, values based appraisal and OD Strategy.

7. Promoting Positive Mental Health

It is the responsibility of the CCGs to promote a positive working environment and prevent and manage as far as possible risks to mental health. The CCGs recognises that there are many challenges in the working environment. These can include:

- Staff shortages
- Financial pressures
- Organisational change

The CCGs aims to ensure that any risks are minimised with good, clear, two-way communication and making the best use of available resources.

The CCGs have a Flexible Working Policy and a comprehensive Work-Life Balance Policy and a Home Working Policy offering a range of flexible working and leave options which balance with home commitments.

Managers have a key role in promoting the wellbeing of their teams. They also have the responsibility to protect themselves from stress and a right to promote their own mental health. Managers are responsible for effective team and line management that reduces risk factors and promotes a positive working environment for mental health.

It is the manager's responsibility to ensure that employees are given regular supervision and support. In addition that they are given reasonable influence over how they do their jobs, have scope for varying conditions and are given opportunities to develop and fully utilise their skills.

Managers should ensure that individuals have clearly defined objectives and responsibilities and are provided with good management support, appropriate training and adequate resources to do their job and that the Working Time Directive is adhered to.

Staff should work in an environment that is not detrimental to their mental health and wellbeing. It is the responsibility of staff to understand their own health and safety (including mental health) and that of other colleagues.

Staff will not be discriminated against on the grounds of mental health problems or be discriminated against if experiencing mental health problems.

You should report matters of concern regarding health and safety, including risks to the mental health of yourself or others, to your line manager.

It is your responsibility to attend an Occupational Health appointment if reasonably requested by your line manager. This may be whilst you are off sick or at any time if the manager is sufficiently concerned about your wellbeing.

The CCGs will ensure that those suffering from mental distress are managed fairly and consistently, whatever the cause. All matters relating to individual members of staff and mental health problems will be treated in the strictest confidence.

The CCGs aims to create a culture of support within the workplace where you can talk about mental health problems without the fear of stigma or discrimination. You are encouraged to talk with your line manager or any of the Mental Health First Aiders, in confidence, about your support needs at work.

The CCGs have developed a robust Alcohol and Sub-misuse Policy, which should be read in conjunction with this policy.

8. Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse is defined as the misuse of physical, emotional, sexual or financial control by one person over another, who is or have been in a relationship. This includes family members. Domestic abuse can include being threatened with abuse.

Domestic abuse happens in all groups and sections of society. Race, sexuality, disability, age, religion, culture, class or mental health may have an additional impact on the way domestic abuse is experienced, dealt with and responded to.

What can I do if I am experiencing domestic abuse?

You have the right to work in a supportive and confidential environment that does not discriminate against, or stigmatize you if you are experiencing domestic abuse. You are of course not obliged to tell anyone at work about your domestic situation, but there are a whole range of people within the CCG that you may find it helpful to talk, for example; your manager, Head of HR and OD, Trade Union Representatives, Occupational Health Staff/Counselling service or staff involved with child protection.

It is certainly advisable to talk to someone at work if you feel that your personal situation is affecting your work – specific details aren't necessary but a joint approach to problem solving to resolve any work issues are essential.

Managers will ensure confidentiality by:

Ensuring private discussions and always gaining consent from the individual to share any information – **except** in cases where there are potential child protection issues which **must be** reported and bearing in mind the arrangements for dealing with circumstances where others may be put at risk, please see below.

Reporting of child protection issues:

Where child protection issues are raised, for instance if a member of staff reveals anything which suggested that a child is at risk from abuse (whether physical, emotional, sexual or neglected). In these circumstances the manager must discuss concerns with the member of staff and encourage them to contact Social Services, preferably with consent. If the manager is unsure about doing this, they should discuss this first with the CCGs Safeguarding Team.

Arrangements for where others may be put at risk

With the express permission of the member of staff in question, managers have a duty to maintain a secure environment for all employees and this will be made easier if colleagues are aware of potential risks. However, it is important that the manager agrees with the individual what information can be disclosed. In these circumstances colleagues privy to this information must be reminded that the information is confidential and that there are risks to the member of staff if it is disclosed.

Ensuring that all team members are aware that under no circumstances should the workplace or personal details of individuals be divulged unless consent is given by the individual concerned.

Ensuring that information contained in the member of staffs personal file will not be divulged to anyone without the permission of the individual or the manager.

9. Culture

Developing a cultural “conscience” which puts employee wellbeing at the centre of enabling staff to give their best in a safe and welcoming environment requires top down commitment from the Executive and Senior Managers.

All managers will be required to commit to and appropriately prioritise the CCGs responsibilities as an employer to the wellbeing of its workforce.

Embedding good practice into daily operational activity and behaviours requires:

- Clear values and vision of what we are aiming to achieve
- Close working with the Executive Team and workforce on developing policies, including reports on exit interviews metrics
- A consistent communications strategy and two-way dialogues to build on achievement to date
- Recognition of good practice and celebration of successes

- A learning culture practice encouraging staff to share knowledge and skills
- Employee Health Benefits Scheme

The CCGs have a number of options for extending health benefits to staff, including

- Cycle to work scheme
- Weekly health walks (in conjunction with the Council and public health)
- Running club (in conjunction with the Council)
- Free yoga sessions (in conjunction with the Council)
- salary sacrifice schemes for membership access to discounted services and activities, e.g. gym membership

Supporting the strategic aims are a number of operational objectives, including though not limited to:

- To provide a safe system of work for all staff, including any external contractors
- To reduce work related injuries and illnesses and improve wellbeing in the workplace
- To reduce risk ratings in work station risk assessments
- To embed health and safety and risk management in the custom and proceed of all our activities

The CCGs will ensure that:

- All staff are up to date with their Statutory and Mandatory Training relevant for their role
- Ensure that there is a relevant policy in place to support a robust system for the reporting and investigation of incidence and near misses within the organisation and that staff are training in the reporting of such incidents or near misses. Also ensure that the finding from any investigations are shared with staff in order to support organisational learning
- Ensure that appropriate number of staff are training as Fire Wardens, First Aiders, Mental Health First Aiders and Wellbeing Champions

10. Prevention

Staff are encouraged to take personal responsibility and should look after themselves and have self-compassion. Working in such a busy caring environment means that staff may not take the time to look after themselves and develop healthy habits. Creating a culture that supports and encourages health and wellbeing can help staff realise the value of self-compassion and take personal responsibility for their own health.

11. Intervention

The CCGs has a number of interventions in place to assist staff, which all staff are able to access.

12. Supported Working

The CCGs will aim to make the following pledges:

- To embed the principles of the chronic conditions guidelines to ensure that those with acute and chronic conditions at work are managed in the best way possible with reasonable flexibilities and workplace adjustments
- Use Occupational Health services for support
- Include a section on the health and wellbeing of employees within annual report and/or on the CCGs website. The CCGs will record sickness absence rate and actively manager this through line management and as an organisation.
- Encourage staff to stop smoking by facilitating onsite stop smoking support services
- The CCGs offer annual influenza vaccination vouchers, which are available to all staff
- The CCGs have Mental Health First Aiders in the workplace who can support staff and managers with any mental health conditions

- The CCGs have two fully trained Wellbeing Champions, who are able to, in confidence provide advice and signposting on a range of wellbeing initiatives

All staff are requested read the Employers and Managers Guidance on Managing Mental Wellbeing and Resilience, which contains a stress risk assessment to support employees at work.

13. Implementation

Implementation of this strategy will ensure that the CCGs complies with a number of duties and responsibilities aimed at improving staff health and wellbeing and meets the NHS Constitutions commitment to *“Provide support and opportunities for staff to maintain their health, wellbeing and safety”*.

The Boorman Review highlighted a number of factors shown to have a significant impact on the successful implementation, maintenance and continuous improvement of health and wellbeing programmes and practices within organisations.

These include:

- Achieving board and senior leadership engagement and sponsorship
- Building the business case for investing in health, safety and employee wellbeing beyond the minimum legislation requirements
- Developing and implementing a health and wellbeing strategy with clear, measureable step change aims
- Developing and maintaining management competence in and commitment to dealing with employee health and safety and wellbeing
- Ensuring the management of health safety and wellbeing into an organisations performance management metrics and cultural “consciousness”

14. Statement of Compliance with the Equality Act 2010

All relevant persons are required to comply with this document and must demonstrate sensitivity and competence in relation to the nine protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010. The Act prohibits discrimination on the basis of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion/belief, sex or sexual orientation. It also means that each manager or member of staff involved in implementing the policy must have due regard to the need to: eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation; advance equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

15. Review

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years but can be reviewed at any time if the CCGs deem it necessary to do so or a review is requested by staff side or management. The review will be in line with NHS guidelines.

16. Further information

The CCGs have two fully qualified Wellbeing Champions, who are able to provide advice and signposting on a number of areas.