



EMPLOYEE HEALTH & WELLBEING SERVICE

Occupational Health
Occupational Physiotherapy
Employee Wellbeing

Cardiff and Vale Stress Risk Assessment (SRA)

The Cardiff and Vale Stress Risk Assessment (SRA) is based on The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) Management Standards which cover six key areas of work that, if not properly managed, can result in poor health, lower productivity and increased accident and sickness absence rates. The purpose of the Stress Risk Assessment is to identify and manage factors that can lead to increased stress. By completing the SRA the manager and employee are discussing, acting and following-up by monitoring the risks and lessening them. When completing the form you may wish to refer to the Stress Risk Assessment Aid which defines the management standard, suggests possible questions and identifies potential control measures.

Information on Stress

The Health and Safety Executive (2018) defines work-related stress as “the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed on them at work”. It is important to distinguish between pressure which can be positive motivator if managed correctly and stress which if excessive and prolonged can be detrimental to health.

What triggers stress and the capacity to deal with stress varies from person to person and even within the same person at a different time. Stress is controlled by a variety of factors including support systems at home and work, personality, individual resilience and coping mechanisms.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) Management Standards identify six main areas that can lead to work related stress if not managed properly. These are demands, control, support, relationships, role and change.

Stress is not an inevitable result of work and staff suffering from stress are not weak or to blame. It is, in fact the most common cause of long term absenteeism from work and accounts for 49% of all working days lost, costing the UK economy up to £99 billion per year. Within Cardiff and Vale UHB, stress, anxiety and other psychiatric illness is one of the top two reasons for sickness absence.

Stress is not an illness, however if experienced for a prolonged period it can result in psychological illness e.g. anxiety, depression or physical symptoms such as headaches and musculoskeletal symptoms such as back and/or shoulder pain.

Early detection of stress allows action to be taken before the pressure becomes a problem, and it will be easier to reduce and eliminate the cause.

Responsibilities

In most circumstances, it is the manager who completes the SRA with the employee. Employees are strongly encouraged to discuss their concerns with their line manager as this is the person usually best placed to support the employee. The SRA is a collaborative process which can identify steps for the employee and manager to take. If however an employee feels unable to complete this process with their line manager then they can approach their line manager's line manager. If that isn't appropriate they can contact HR or Trade Union for advice.

The form does not need to be sent to Occupational Health, however it may be helpful to include details of the issues raised and actions taken when a referral to Occupational Health is being considered.

Stages of Process

Preparation

If you feel stressed you can approach your line manager and request that a SRA is completed. Alternatively a Line Manager can suggest undertaking a SRA if they are concerned about the employee's wellbeing. If a manager is aware that a major change is about to impact on their team they may wish to undertake a team SRA in advance to ensure that appropriate support is put in place proactively.

Discussion

Stress affects people differently and at different times. Sometimes you may feel reluctant to discuss how you are feeling because you don't want to be seen as weak, however being open with your Line manager will help your Line manager understand what you are feeling and will help to ensure that appropriate support is available.

Action Plan

The action plan follows on from the discussion. Each potential source of stress: demands, control, support, relationships, role and change should be considered although in some cases they may not all be relevant. The Employee and Line manager can explore what actions/adjustments are already in place and agree further actions/adjustments. These may include action for the manager or for the employee, as we each have a responsibility to take steps to look after our own wellbeing. For further information and examples of potential solutions please see accompanying document.

Follow-up

It is essential that the SRA is not a one off action, a review date must be agreed to ensure that the actions taken remain suitable. Regular monitoring allows for the discussion to continue. It may be a process of trial and error. Sometimes action doesn't have the desired affects and amendments need to be made. The process is ongoing. Also people's circumstances change.

More information

- HSE management standards <http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/what-to-do.html>
- Employee Wellbeing Service <http://www.cardiffandvaleuhb.wales.nhs.uk/ews-services-and-support-available>
- Policies and procedures – see in particular, Management of Stress and Mental Health in the Workplace Procedure, Managing Attendance at Work Policy, Flexible Working Policy <http://www.cardiffandvaleuhb.wales.nhs.uk/employment-policies-procedure>



STRESS RISK ASSESSMENT ACTION PLAN - FOR MANAGER AND EMPLOYEE TO AGREE AND COMPLETE TOGETHER

Contact Employee Wellbeing Service

Risk assessment for: _____ Department _____

Manager _____ Date _____

Type of Stressor	Specific causes of workplace stress identified within each category	Existing workplace support and adjustments already in place	Further action to be taken	Who will ensure the action is done? and Review date
Demands				
Control				
Change				
Role				
Relationships				
Support				

FOLLOW-UP DISCUSSION (REPEAT AS OFTEN AS NECESSARY)

Risk assessment follow up for: _____ Department _____

Manager _____ Date _____

Type of Stressor	Outcome of action taken	Any further follow-up	By whom
Demands			
Control			
Change			
Role			
Relationships			
Support			