Suicide Prevention UK

Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

2024

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Introduction

Suicide Prevention UK (SBUK) is committed to providing, maintaining and promoting a safe, healthy, happy, and supportive working environment.

This policy aims to ensure that:

- We maintain a working environment where wellbeing is promoted.

- We identify workplace risk factors that may contribute to stress and work to eliminate or reduce them as far as reasonably practicable.

- Team members who are experiencing mental health issues are supported and treated fairly and with dignity and respect.

Scope

This policy applies to all those working for and on behalf of SPUK.

Definitions

Mental health conditions include mental disorders and psychosocial disabilities as well as other mental states associated with significant distress, impairment in functioning, or risk of self-harm.

Wellbeing is about feeling good and functioning well and comprises an individual's experience of their life; and a comparison of life circumstances with social norms and values. Wellbeing exists in two dimensions: Subjective wellbeing (or personal wellbeing) asks people directly how they think and feel about their own wellbeing, and Objective wellbeing, which is based on assumptions about basic human needs and rights. (DoH)

Mental health is a state of mental wellbeing that enables people to cope with the stresses of life, realise their abilities, learn well and work well, and contribute to their community. Good mental health is more than the absence of mental conditions and exists on a complex continuum, which is experienced differently from one person to the next, with varying degrees of difficulty and distress and potentially very different social and clinical outcomes.

Stress is "the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed on them." (HSE) This makes an important distinction between pressure, which can be a positive state if managed correctly, and stress, which is likely to be detrimental to physical or mental health if it is prolonged. Stress is not in itself an illness, but it can lead to or contribute to a mental health condition under certain circumstances.

Managing Mental Health and Promoting Wellbeing: Our Commitment

We are committed to:

- Training our staff to a high standard and providing them with the right tools to do their jobs well.

- Actively listening to and working with our staff (both as individuals and as teams) to solve problems. After all, when staff feel able to discuss the struggles they face and feel supported, they are more likely to be able to stay at work, more easily return to work after a period of absence, and work productively.

- Ensuring that our staff know what is happening in the Charity. Change and uncertainty can cause undue stress, so we strive to be open and honest.

- Identifying signs of stress within the workplace. For example, by monitoring sickness absence, accidents, disciplinary and grievance case rates, etc., we can identify factors that may be causing stress and/or negatively affecting wellbeing.

- Risk-assessing teams and/or particular roles where stress may be an issue and working to minimise stress by implementing sensible control measures.

- Ensuring that employees take their annual leave entitlement and volunteers take adequate time off so that they receive adequate breaks to rest, relax and recuperate.

- Having an open-door policy where issues can be raised immediately. This extends to personal issues that affect an individual at work, as what is happening in someone's personal life can have a major impact on their ability to work safely and effectively – we aim to support our staff and enable them to stay at work where they feel able to continue to work.

- Providing our team members with tailored support where they experience difficulties at work. For example:

    - providing flexibility in relation to time off to attend counselling sessions/medical appointments where it relates to their physical and/or mental health (as both are as important as each other)

    - implementing suitable and practical workplace adjustments for those who are struggling (whether through reasonable adjustments relating to a disability or simply variances to a role to support an individual through a difficult time)

- Ensuring that where our staff are affected by mental health conditions, they are treated with dignity and respect.

Recognising our Limitations

If an individual is struggling with their mental health, it is important to recognise:

1. That they may be unable to perform their role effectively and/or

2. That continuing in their role could further damage their health and/or

3. That Suicide Prevention UK is not always equipped to support them effectively.

Any employee or Manager who is concerned that an individual poses a risk to the safety of themselves or others should refer to the following link and seek help and advice from the relevant professionals: https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/nhs-services/mental-health-services/where-to-get-urgent-help-for-mental-health/

If someone is in immediate danger, the Police should be called on 999.

In the Resources section below are some charities and organisations that individuals with mental health issues may contact to seek support and advice.

Suicide Prevention UK will support staff and volunteers to stay at work with us where possible. However, we may ask individuals to step back from their role if:

- They pose a risk to the health and safety of themselves or others,

- They are unable to carry out their role effectively,

- We believe that continuing in their role impacts their mental health and wellbeing negatively despite help, support and/or reasonable adjustments being put in place.

Supporting Policies

Suicide Prevention UK will not tolerate violence, abuse, discrimination, bullying or harassment of any kind, and acknowledges that eliminating negative and poor behaviour is key to supporting mental health and promoting wellbeing within the organisation.

In order to make Suicide Prevention UK a happy and healthy place to work, we have developed the following policies to ensure that employees and managers understand what is expected of them and how we effectively manage breaches of policy:

- Code of Conduct

- Equality and Diversity Policy

- Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy

Resources for Managers and Individuals

Anxiety UK: Charity provides support if you have been diagnosed with an anxiety condition.

Phone: 03444 775 774 (Monday to Friday, 9.30 am to 5.30 pm)

Website: www.anxietyuk.org.uk

Mind: Promotes the views and needs of people with mental health problems.

Phone: 0300 123 3393 (Monday to Friday, 9 am to 6 pm)

Website: www.mind.org.uk

Mental Health Foundation: Provides information and support for anyone with mental health problems or learning disabilities.

Website: www.mentalhealth.org.uk

Alcoholics Anonymous: A free self-help group for those with alcohol addiction.

Phone: 0800 917 7650 (24-hour helpline)

Website: www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk

Cruse Bereavement Care

Phone: 0808 808 1677 (Monday to Friday, 9 am to 5 pm)

Website: www.cruse.org.uk

UKNA - Narcotics Anonymous: A free self-help group for those with drug addiction.

Phone: 0300 999 1212 (daily, 10 am to midnight)

Website: www.ukna.org

Gamblers Anonymous: A free self-help group for those with gambling addictions.

Phone: 0330 094 0322 (24-hour)

Website: https://www.gamblersanonymous.org.uk/

Beat: Eating Disorders

Phone: 0808 801 0677 (adults) or 0808 801 0711 (for under-18s)

Website: www.b-eat.co.uk

Family Lives: Advice on all aspects of parenting, including dealing with bullying.

Phone: 0808 800 2222 (Monday to Friday, 9 am to 9 pm and Saturday to Sunday, 10 am to 3 pm)

Website: www.familylives.org.uk

Relate: The UK's largest provider of relationship support.

Website: www.relate.org.uk

Mencap: Charity working with people with a learning disability, their families and carers.

Phone: 0808 808 1111 (Monday to Friday, 9 am to 5 pm)

Website: www.mencap.org.uk

Policy Date: October 2020

Review Date: June 2024

Next Review: June 2025

Dated and Signed by the Chair and Founder of SPUK: