

Health & Wellbeing Policy

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1. Purpose

CareTech Group will support our employees by encouraging safe and healthy workplace settings, promoting good wellbeing at work, and applying non-discriminatory practice.

This policy aims to ensure that all employees, irrespective of the position and level they hold, and with consideration of any legally protected characteristics (e.g. race, faith, gender), are:

- Provided with a basic understanding of mental health and wellbeing issues;
- Supported if they experience mental health problems;
- Protected from discrimination regardless of their wellbeing status; and
- Provided with opportunities to participate and support in health promotion activities.

This policy does not form part of any employee’s contract of employment and it may be amended at any time. We may also vary the guidance within this policy as appropriate.

2. Scope

The organisation has legal obligations under health and safety legislation to manage risks to the health and safety of employees. In addition to reducing safety risks, this means operating the business in a way that minimises harm to employees' mental health, for example by encouraging dialogue across the organisation on the importance of having good mental health and having policies and procedures in place to support individuals experiencing ill health at work.

This policy applies to all employees across the CareTech Group.

Responsibilities

3.1 Organisation

The organisation has a legal duty of care to employees to ensure health at work, as set out in the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

The organisation will:

- ensure that its policies and practices reflect this duty and review the operation of these documents at regular intervals;
- promote a culture based on trust, confidentiality, support and mutual respect, which will allow employees with welfare concerns to be able to report difficulties without fear of discrimination or reprisal;
- develop our managers and senior staff to deal positively with welfare issues, and to show leadership for this policy guidance;
- publicise our commitment to anti-stigma campaigns and actively promote our responsibilities under it seeking to de-stigmatise mental health issues in the workplace and thereby to create an open and non-discriminatory environment.

Line managers

Line managers will be encouraged to have dialogue with staff to address welfare concerns and support positive wellbeing. They will put in place supportive measures to minimise the risks to employee health and wellbeing. Everyone must familiarise themselves with the organisation's Workplace Stress policy and associated guidance. For example, managers should ensure that employees understand their role within the team and receive the necessary information and support from managers and team members to do their job.

Managers must also familiarise themselves with the organisation's policy on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion which will go live from the third quarter of 2021 and tackling inappropriate behaviour in order to support staff, for example on bullying and harassment issues.

In particular, line managers must ensure that they take steps to reduce the risks to employee health and wellbeing by:

- ensuring that the right people are recruited to the right jobs and that a good match is obtained between individuals recruited and job descriptions/specifications;
- implementing and enforcing this policy. Managers should promote, respect and encourage each employee to reach their full potential and deal appropriately with any breach of this policy. They are to ensure all employees are trained and made aware of their responsibilities, under the company policy and through legislation, providing additional development and support where necessary;
- keeping employees in the team up to date with developments at work and how these might affect their job and workload;

- discussing wellbeing as part of regular robust supervisions;
- ensuring particular attention is given to employees who are lone working through regular contact and dialogue;
- promoting the opportunity / need for de-briefs after operational incidents / events;
- ensuring that employees know who to approach with problems concerning their role and how to pursue issues with their line manager;
- making sure jobs / rotas are non-discriminatory, designed fairly and that work is allocated appropriately between teams; and
- ensuring that work stations are regularly assessed to ensure that they are appropriate and fit for purpose.

Human resources

The HR team will develop organisation-wide policies and procedures to protect the wellbeing of employees, including a new policy on 'Equality, Diversity and Inclusion', which goes live during Quarter 3 of 2021 and will supersede previous versions.

HR will assist line managers in supporting individuals and liaise as appropriate with occupational health and other medical professionals, with the aim of helping employees to maintain good psychological health. HR will also report monthly to the Executive Board on absences relating to mental health to help inform the organisations' strategy to improving mental health and wellbeing.

Occupational health

Where Occupational Health support is required, a referral will be made by the HR team to our independent Occupational health provider. Professionals will provide a comprehensive service designed to help employees stay in work, or to return to work, after experiencing welfare problems that may include Mental health. This will include preparing medical assessments of individual's fitness for work, liaising with GPs and working with individuals to help them to retain employment.

Occupational health professionals will play a critical part in developing rehabilitation plans for employees returning to work following sickness absence, and give advice to the organisation on reasonable adjustments where available, and working environments to ensure that rehabilitation is successful.

Employee assistance programme (EAP)

We have partnered with Health Assured which is an independent EAP provider who are ready 24/7, 365 to give compassionate support to employees. It aims to help employees deal with personal problems that might adversely impact their work performance, health and wellbeing. It includes assessment, short-term counselling and referral services for employees and their immediate family. The number is 0800 030 5182.

Health Assured will alert the organisation's management to clusters or "hotspots" of psychological risk in the organisation, drawing on anonymised data provided by calls to its 24-hour helpline and information from face-to-face counselling with employees. Health Assured will also design and implement health promotions and lifestyle behaviour management programmes, including initiatives on self-managing pressure and ongoing health conditions at work. This will be distributed to employees regularly via the HR team.

There will also be access to Health Assured's health and wellbeing app which provides proactive wellbeing tools and engaging features to enhance existing services. Each feature has been carefully built with employee mental health and wellbeing in mind and designed to improve the mental and physical health of employees by utilising personal metrics to set bespoke goals and achievements. The app can be downloaded in the App Store or Google Play and, when prompted, accessed using the following code **MHA095331**.

Employees

Employees must take responsibility for managing their own mental health and general wellbeing, by adopting good health behaviours (for example in relation to diet, alcohol consumption and smoking) and informing the organisation if they believe work or the work environment poses a risk to their health. Any health-related information disclosed by an employee during discussions / supervisions with managers, the HR team or the occupational health service is treated in confidence.

3. Health promotion initiatives

The organisation will develop and run a range of health promotion initiatives designed to raise awareness of health and lifestyle issues affecting wellbeing. This includes face to face as well as online learning. The HR team will have primary responsibility for leading these programmes, but line managers and employees will be expected to engage.

Example programmes include:

- Mental health awareness;
- stress management;
- disability awareness;
- bullying and harassment; and
- physical activity and fitness.

Managers and employees are encouraged to participate in communication/feedback exercises, including discussions around general welfare, wellbeing and employee surveys.

The organisation will ensure that structures exist to give employees regular feedback on their performance, and for them to raise concerns.

4. Useful resources

Below are some useful resources for support with health and wellbeing.

www.freemindfulness.org

www.headspace.com

www.nhs.uk

www.mentalhealth.org.uk

www.artshealthandwellbeing.org.uk

Samaritans - 116 123 (freephone) jo@samaritans.org (email)