MENTAL HEALTH POLICY

Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg.
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SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTION, ROLES and RESPONSIBILITIES

Policy Statement

1. Mental health conditions are widespread and most of us will either experience one, or know someone who has experienced one. One in four adults in the UK experience at least one diagnosable mental health condition in any one year. The Cardiff Council is committed to promoting and maintaining the mental health and wellbeing of all employees through workplace practices, and encourage employees to take responsibility for their own mental health and wellbeing.

2. Mental health conditions can present in many ways and as an employer, the Council has a duty of care to employees which includes ensuring that managers have the necessary skills and knowledge to identify the early signs of mental ill health and be proactive in supporting their staff.

3. From a business perspective, the proactive management of employees' mental and physical health can produce a range of benefits, including the reduction of sickness absence, greater staff engagement and productivity, and reduced staff turnover, recruitment and costs.

4. The Council can offer a range of support from within and outside the authority to provide professional and practical help. Additionally an employee's Trade Union may also be a source of support.

5. This policy and supporting documentation (Mental Health – a Manager's Guide) is a positive step towards making Cardiff a better place to work.

Roles and Responsibilities

6. It is important that everyone clearly understands their roles and responsibilities within these processes.

7. Managers Responsibilities

- (In addition to their responsibilities as employees):
- Ensure that all employees are made aware of this policy.
- Actively support and contribute to the implementation of this policy.
- Refer employees for assistance and support as appropriate.
- Maintaining confidentiality with the exception of safeguarding or criminal issues were confidentiality cannot be ensured.
- Approaching issues sensitively without making moral judgements.
- Seek advice from HR People Services when required.

- Know your limitations - you are not a health professional. Ensure you have the right information to signpost employees to appropriate advice, treatment and support services.

8. Employee Responsibilities

It is the employee's responsibility to:
- Understand this policy and seek clarification from management where required.
- Support fellow workers in their awareness of this policy.
- Support and contribute to the Council's aim of providing a mentally healthy and supportive environment for all employees.
- Take reasonable care of their own mental health and wellbeing, including physical health.
- Take reasonable care to ensure their actions do not affect the health and wellbeing and safety of other people in the workplace.

9. HR People Services Responsibilities

- Advise managers on the consistent application of the policy.
- Provide all employees and managers with information and advice as necessary.
- Refer employees for assistance and support as necessary.
- Review the application of the policy and procedures in the light of operational experience.

Purpose

10. The Council believes that the mental health and wellbeing of its employees is key to organisational success and sustainability. The Council aims to:

- Build and maintain a workplace environment and culture that supports mental health and wellbeing and prevents discrimination.
- Increase employee knowledge and awareness of mental health and wellbeing issues and behaviours.
- Reduce stigma around depression and anxiety in the workplace, and all forms of mental health illness.
- Facilitate employees active participation in a range of initiatives/activities that support mental health and wellbeing.

Who is covered by this Policy?

11. This Policy applies to all employees of the Council, irrespective of status and/ or grade, except those employed directly by Schools. The policy is commended to school governing bodies.

Key Principles

12. ACAS have stated that there are three things employers can do to help maintain the health of employees, and help those with mental health conditions to remain in work and be productive:

- **Spot the signs –** This may initially mean taking a note of what you see as you walk around or in team meetings and then choosing the right moment to intervene.

- **Engage with the problem –** There are some good practical steps you can take to help with coping strategies, and some legal requirements you need to bear in mind, for example your duty to make reasonable workplace adjustments to the working environment in certain circumstances

- **Keeping a watching brief –** This does not necessarily mean passively observing, although in some circumstances this be the best option. Promote awareness of mental health issues and create a culture where employees feel they can talk to you about their concerns. Keeping communication channels open is critical.

What is Mental Health?

13. Mental health is the mental and emotional state in which we feel able to cope with the normal stresses of everyday life. If we are feeling good about ourselves we often work productively, interact well with colleagues and make a valuable contribution to our team or workplace.

14. Positive mental health is rarely an absolute state. One may feel in good mental health generally but also suffer stress or anxiety from time to time. Mental ill health can range from feeling 'a bit down' to common disorders such as anxiety and depression and, in limited cases, to severe mental illnesses such as bipolar disorder or schizophrenia.

15. Mental health conditions may emerge suddenly, as a result of a specific event or incident, or gradually, over a period of time when the condition may worsen or improve. Mental ill health is very common, with 1 in 4 experiencing a period of mental ill health in the course of their lifetime. It is therefore essential that managers become confident in supporting staff with mental health issues.

16. It is important to realise that most mental health problems are short lived. Even when people experience more serious, long-term or recurring problems, they are still able to live meaningful and satisfying lives. This may mean making some adjustments to accommodate the effects of their mental health problems

17. Although certain symptoms are common in specific mental health conditions, no two people behave in exactly the same way when they are unwell. Many people who live with or are developing a mental health problem try to keep their feelings hidden because they are afraid of the reaction of others. Many people feel troubled without having a diagnosed or diagnosable mental health condition – although that does not mean they are not struggling to cope with daily life.

18. A range of factors within and beyond the workplace can contribute to mental health conditions. Outside work, these can include bereavement, debt, family problems, addiction, relationship breakdown, and housing problems. Within work - organisational change, workload, nature of relationships at work and management styles can affect an employee's mental health.

Addressing the Stigma of Mental Health Conditions

19. In recent years, National Campaigns have gone some way to removing the stigma attached to mental illness It is important for employees to know there is no shame attached to admitting that they may have a problem. It is not a sign of weakness to report that certain aspects of work or home life are having a negative effect on an individual's wellbeing.

20. The stigma associated with mental health remains a major obstacle to the effective diagnosis and treatment of mental health conditions. It can

prevent employees from talking to colleagues or managers about their problems because they fear discrimination. It may even prevent them from acknowledging to themselves that they have a problem.

SECTION 3 – PROCEDURE

21. HR People Services will provide advice at any stage to managers or employees on the implementation of the policy. Managers are not expected to counsel employees or provide medical advice, indeed it would be considered inadvisable to provide unqualified counsel.

22. People who experience wellbeing in the workplace perform well and are therefore more effective in their roles. It is important to remember that everyone's experience of mental ill health is different –so two people with a diagnosis of depression may have different symptoms and need different adjustments.

23. If you think that an employee may have a mental health condition managers should try speaking with them in order to seek to persuade them to see their GP or Occupational Health. The most important thing is to let them know you are there to help and provide support. Not to judge them or make them do anything they feel uncomfortable about.

24. Practical guidance on dealing with an employee's disclosure about a mental health problem is contained in the Mental Health Manager's Guide.

Spotting the Early Signs

25. How people are treated and managed on a day-to-day basis is central to their mental well-being and engagement. Thus line managers have a key role in supporting well-being, spotting early signs of mental health problems and initiating early intervention. As with all medical conditions, early interventions and preventative measures have benefits for all.

26. Mental health must be managed in the same way as any other medical condition. Line managers should know their team better than anyone and are therefore ideally placed to spot the early signs that someone may be mentally unwell.

27. Getting it right is often a matter of common sense. A good manager will regularly ask staff how they are, take an interest in their wellbeing, communicate expectations, monitor and review workloads and be personally accessible. People with mental health issues say that having a supportive line manager makes a great difference to their working life.

Team Members

28. The manager also need to think about the effect on other team members when one member of the team has mental ill-health. You may need to discuss with the individual concerned whether they are willing to share some information with the rest of the team. You may need to raise awareness about mental ill-health, and what you can all do to help. You may also need to deal with other members of the team feeling under additional pressure.

Manager's Own Health

29. As a manager who is managing a team member who has mental health issues, you may feel that there is a tension between your desire to support a team member and your need to ensure that work gets completed to deadlines. You may feel frustrated, or out of your depth and in need of support yourself. Managing someone with complex mental health issues may be challenging, and you may find it helpful to talk the situation through with your own line manager, Occupational Health staff, or a HR officer. Remember that you need to protect your own mental health wellbeing.

Reasonable Adjustments

30. There are a number of reasons why employers should take steps to make adjustments for people with mental health conditions. From a regulatory perspective, the Equality Act (2010) outlines an employer's duty to make reasonable adjustments for people with disabilities in order to ensure that they have the same access to everything that involves gaining or keeping employment as a non-disabled person. According to the Act, a person is defined as disabled if they have a mental or physical impairment that has a substantial long-term (i.e. more than 12 months) effect on their normal day-to-day activities. A person is also protected under the Act if they have been affected in this way in the past but have been well for some time.

31. It is good practice to make adjustments that are 'reasonable' for any employee with mental health conditions, whether or not they may be covered by the Equality Act. Advice should be sought from Occupational Health.

32. **Good practice for applying workplace adjustments (Refer to Reasonable Adjustments Guidance 5.C.275)**

- Have an open, honest and practical conversation with the person about how their mental health condition impacts their work and what adjustments can be made.

- Ask the individual what they need – they are often the best experts of managing their condition.

- Focus on what the person can do – not what they can't.

- Tailor adjustments to the specific needs and abilities of the individual – be creative.

- Be flexible – as some mental health conditions can be episodic. It may be more helpful to agree adjustments that can be implemented as and when required and revoked when not.

- Regularly review the adjustments to ensure they are working and are still appropriate.

- Be realistic about what you can offer. If you are unsure, consult HR People Services.

- With the permission of the individual communicate the adjustments to other team members to alleviate perceptions of favourable treatment.

- Refer to Occupational Health if appropriate or sign post to support services.

32. Practical examples of workplace adjustments

- Being flexible and creative is important when considering solutions. Below are examples, which could act as prompts for line managers and employees exploring these issues together and would be subject to the service requirements of the Directorate.

33. Working hours or patterns

- Take a flexible approach to start/finish times and/or shift patterns in line with the Flexible Working Policy.

- Phased return to work.

- Equal amount of break time, but in shorter, more frequent chunks.

- Allow someone to arrange their annual leave so that is spaced regularly throughout the year.

- Allow the possibility to work from home at times.

- Temporary reallocation of some tasks.

34. Physical environment

- Minimise noise – e.g. reducing pitch or volume of telephone ring tones providing office/room dividers/partitions if practical.

- Provide a quiet space for breaks away from the main workspace.

- Allow for increased personal space.

- Move workstation – to ensure for example that someone does not have their back to the door.

35. Support with workload

- Increase frequency of supervision.

- Support someone to prioritise their work.

- Allow the individual to focus on a specific piece of work.

36. Support from others

- Provide a buddy or mentor.

- Consider mediation as an option if there are difficulties between colleagues.

- See section 5

37. Employee Wellness Action Plan

- Discuss Completing the Employee Wellness Action Plan and action accordingly.

SECTION 4 – RELATED DOCUMENTS

Mental Health –A Manager's Guide
Attendance and Wellbeing Policy 1.CM.049
Flexible Working Policy 1.CM.088
Reasonable Adjustments Guidance 5.C.275
Redeployment Policy 1.CM.207
Stress Management Policy 1.CM.118
Stress Risk Assessment Code of Guidance 1.CM.113
Carers Policy 1.CM.188
Management of Alcohol, Drugs and Substance Misuse 1.CM.134

SECTION 5 SUPPORT SERVICES

Employee Assistance Programme – Carefirst – This free phone telephone service is available 24 hours a day, 365 days of the year. All calls are answered directly by a team of qualified and experienced counsellors. Professional information and advice services are also provided by a separate team of information specialists plus there is access to a web based information service. Telephone 0800 174319
http://cmsweb/cardiff/content.asp?id=40976

Employee Counselling Service – The Employee Counselling Service (ECS) offers free and confidential counselling to anyone who is employed by the Cardiff Council. Telephone 029 2078 8301
http://cmsweb/cardiff/content.asp?id=11153&d1=0

NHS   **Choices**
The NHS website has a wide range of advice and practical tools for raising awareness of mental health issues, self-management of symptoms and sources of further specialist help.

www.nhs.uk/livewell/mentalhealth

NHS Direct Wales

Telephone 0845 4647
Website www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk

Health advice 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Centre for Mental Health

The Centre for Mental Health works to improve the quality of life for people with mental health problems by influencing policy and practice in mental health and related services. It focuses on criminal justice and employment.
Tel: 020   7827   8300
www.centreformentalhealth.org.uk

Samaritans
Telephone: 08457 90 90 90 (24 hours a day) or 116 113

Cardiff 02920 344022 (9am to 9pm)
Email jo@samaritans.org
Website www.samaritans.org

Provides confidential, non-judgmental emotional support for people experiencing feelings of distress or despair, including those that could lead to suicide. You can phone, email, write a letter or in most cases talk to someone face to face.

CALL (Community Advice and Listening Line)

Telephone 0800 132 737
Website www.callhelpline.org.uk

Offers emotional support and information/literature on Mental Health and related matters to the people of Wales. Anyone concerned about their own mental health or that of a relative or friend can access the service. C.A.L.L. Helpline offers a confidential listening and support service.

Saneline

Telephone 0845 767 8000 (6pm-11pm)
Website www.sane.org.uk

Saneline is a national mental health helpline providing information and support to people with mental health problems and those who support them. If you're a carer needing support you can contact all of the above as well as Carers Direct and the Princess Royal Trust for Carers, both of whom are able to provide support and advice on any issues affecting you

Rethink Mental Illness Advice Line

Telephone 0845 456 0455 (10am-1pm Monday to Friday)
Email info@rethink.org
Website www.rethink.org

Rethink is the largest national voluntary sector provider of mental health services with 340 services and more than 130 support groups. It helps over 48,000 people every year through its services, support groups and by providing information on mental health problems.

It expert advice and information to people with mental health problems and those who care for them, as well as giving help to health professionals, employers and staff.

Helpline: 0300 5000 927
www.rethink.org

Mind Infoline

Telephone: 0300 123 3393 (9am-5pm Monday to Friday)
Email info@mind.org.uk
Website www.mind.org.uk

Mind is the leading mental health charity in England and Wales. It campaigns to create a better life for everyone with experience of mental distress. Mind

provides confidential mental health information services. With support and understanding, Mind enables people to make informed choices. The Infoline gives information on types of mental distress, where to get help, drug treatments, alternative therapies and advocacy. Mind also has a network of nearly 200 local Mind associations providing local services.

Education Support Helpline (for teachers and employees in education)

Telephone: 08000562561

Advice, support and Counselling 24 x 7

Website www.education supportpartnership.org.uk

TUC

Website www.tuc.org.uk

Advice on mental health first aid.

Cognitive Behaviour Therapy

WWW.MOODJUICE.CO.UK

WWW.MOODGYM.CO.UK.

Dewis Wales

Information and advice about individual well-being or how you can help someone else.

Sources of advice and information for managers:

Employee Assistance Programme Manager Support Line

NHS Health for Work Adviceline
Tel: 0800 077 8844
http://www.nhshealthatwork.co.uk/

The Mind Infoline
Lines are open 9am to 6pm, Monday to Friday (except for bank holidays).
Tel: 0300 123 3393 info@mind.org.uk. Text: 86463

Mindful Employer - www.mindfulemployer.net
Developed, led and supported by employers, the MINDFUL EMPLOYER® initiative is aimed at increasing awareness of mental health at work and providing support for businesses in recruiting and retaining employees.

Centre for Mental Health - http://www.centreformentalhealth.org.uk/

The Centre for Mental Health aims to help to create a society in which people with mental health problems enjoy equal chances in life to those without.

Health and Safety Executive – http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/

Mental Health First Aid Guidance for Line Managers- http://mhfaengland.org/files/5613/9101/5215/MHFA_Line_Managers_Resource.pdf

Time to Change Wales - Time to Change Wales is the first national campaign to end the stigma and discrimination faced by people with mental health problems. http://www.timetochangewales.org.uk/en/

Bereavement
Cruse Bereavement Care helpline for bereaved people and those caring for bereaved people
Tel: 0844 477 9400
Email: helpline@cruse.org.uk
www. Crusebereavementcare.org.uk

Teachers
Teacher Support Network is an independent charity that provides practical and emotional support to trainee, serving and retired teachers and their families.

24/7 Support Line; 08000 562 561(UK) 08000 855 088 (Wales)
Email:support@teachersupport.info   www.teachersupport.info

Debt
Stepchange Debt Charity provides help for anyone in debt or concerned they may fall into debt
Freephone 0800 138 111(includes all mobiles) www.stepchange.org
Email www. Stepchnage.org/contactus/sendusanemail.aspx

Gambling
Gamcare offers confidential counselling, advice and information for anyone affected by a gambling dependency.

Tel:0808 802 0133 www.gamcare.org.uk

Appendix 1

<u>EMPLOYEE WELLNESS ACTION PLAN</u>

The information in this form will be held confidentially and should be regularly reviewed by the employee and line manager. Whilst the employee only needs to provide information that they are comfortable sharing and that relates to their role and workplace, the aim is to provide support and therefore the sharing of information will aid this. It can help the employee and manager to agree, together, how to practically support you the employee in your role and address any health needs. It is the responsibility of the manager to ensure that data gathered in this form will be kept confidential and will not be shared with anyone without the permission of the employee, the exception to this is safeguarding or criminal issues were confidentiality cannot be ensured.

However, it should be recognised that some mental health issues are irregular and ill defined. The unpredictability may therefore make the completion of a plan difficult.

The employee may wish to complete the action plan themselves and then arrange a meeting to discuss. Remember it is important to choose an appropriate place – somewhere private and quiet where the person feels comfortable and equal.

1. What helps you stay mentally healthy at work?
(For example taking an adequate lunch break away from your desk, getting some exercise before or after work or in your lunchbreak, light and space in the office, opportunities to get to know colleagues, quiet place to work)

2. What can your manager do to proactively support you to stay mentally healthy at work? (For example regular feedback and catch-ups, flexible working patterns, explaining wider organisational developments minimising impact of unsuitable environment (heat, light, noise, etc), home working)

3. Are there any situations at work that can trigger poor mental health for you? (For example conflict at work, organisational change, tight deadlines, something not going to plan)

4. How might experiencing poor mental health impact on your work?
(For example you may find it difficult to make decisions, struggle to prioritise work tasks, difficulty with concentration, drowsiness, confusion, headaches, tiredness)

What does good mental health at work look like for you?

5. Are there any early warning signs that we might notice when you are starting to experience poor mental health? (For example changes in normal working patterns, withdrawing from colleagues tiredness, changes in expressing self, changes in clothing/hygiene)

6. What support could be put in place to minimise triggers or to support you to manage symptoms? (For example: extra catch-up time with line manager, environmental factors)

7. Are there elements of your individual working style or temperament that it is worth your manager being aware of?

(For example a preference for more face to face or more email contact, a need for quiet reflection time prior to meetings or creative tasks, negotiation on deadlines before they are set, having access to a mentor for questions you might not want to bother your manager about, having a written plan of work in place which can be reviewed and amended regularly, clear deadlines if you have a tendency to over-work a task, tendency to have particularly high or low energy in the morning or in the afternoon)

8. If we notice early warning signs that you are experiencing poor mental health – what should we do?

(For example talk to you discreetly about it, contact someone that you have asked to be contacted)

9. What steps can you take if you start to experience poor mental health at work? Is there anything we need to do to facilitate them?
(For example you might like to take a break from your desk and go for a short walk, or ask your line manager for support)

10. Is there anything else that you would like to share?

11. Agreed actions(if appropriate)

12. What (if any) information may be shared with colleagues?

Employee signature_____

Date_____ ____

Line manager
signature_____

Date_____
____

Date to be reviewed_____

DRAFT