Stress - Managers Checklist Solutions

This guidance provided by the Health and Safety Department provides some possible solutions for managers to consider in the key areas of stress management:-

- Demands
- Control
- Support
- Relationships
- Role
- Change

This may not address all specific circumstances, but should help to assess areas for help and support.

These possible solutions should be read in conjunction with the stress inspection checklist for managers available at

http://www.docs.csg.ed.ac.uk/Safety/ra/stress_managers_checklist.pdf

Further background information on stress/mental health is available at

http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/health-safety/occupational-health/staff/general-health/stress

DEMANDS

- Evaluate that sufficient resources are available to complete work allocated, if not re-evaluate priorities

- Support staff by assisting with prioritisation of work and the establishment of realistic deadlines

- Strike a balance between ensuring that staff are interested and busy but not under-loaded, overloaded or confused about the job

- Provide adequate staff training

- Encourage staff to raise problems in early stages if they cannot cope

- Ensure that proper risk assessments are carried out to control physical hazards

- Ensure that any risk from physical violence, verbal abuse and bullying is identified, controlled or dealt with

- Encourage team cohesion and commitment

CONTROL

- Endeavour to provide more control to staff by enabling them to plan their own work, make decisions about how this should be completed and how problems should be tackled

- Enrich jobs by ensuring that staff are able to use their skills to get tasks completed and understand how their work fits in to the wider aims of the Department or Section

- Only monitor employees output if this is essential

- Ensure regular meetings with staff take place to see how things are going

- Provide a supportive environment

SUPPORT

- Provide support and encouragement, even when things go wrong

- Listen to staff and agree actions for tackling problems

- Ensure that staff are fully involved

- Encourage staff to share their concerns about work-related stress at an early stage

- Ensure that adequate training and information have been provided

- Ensure that individuals do not feel that they are being discriminated against on the grounds of race, sex, disability and other irrelevant reasons – value diversity

RELATIONSHIPS

- Work in partnership to ensure that bullying and harassment do not emerge as an issue

- Ensure that procedures already established via Human Resources are fully utilised

- Ensure that the policy on stress, bullying and harassment are properly communicated to staff and these policies have full management support

- Ensure that all staff are aware of the consequences of breaching the policies

ROLE

- Ensure that roles are defined and understood to prevent conflict and ambiguity

- Make sure staff have a clearly defined role and understand exactly what their role and responsibilities are

- Encourage staff to talk at an early stage if they are not clear about priorities or the nature of the task to be undertaken

- Talk to staff regularly to ensure they are clear about their current job, what it entails and what the expectations of them are

- Ensure that all new members of staff or re-deployed staff receive adequate induction

CHANGE

- Explain clearly why any changes are necessary, explain timetables for actions and outline the initial steps to be taken

- Communicate new developments as quickly as possible to avoid the spread of rumours and misinformation

- Ensure full opportunity to comment and ask questions before, during and after change

- Involve staff in discussions about how jobs might be developed, changed and how means of solving problems can be generated

- Ensure that risk assessments are reviewed if changes such as decreases in staff are liable to increase the probability of hazards arising

- If you have any difficulties printing this document, please contact the Health and Safety Department (514255; Health.Safety@ed.ac.uk) to obtain the document as a paper copy or Word file.