

# Stress at Work

## Employee Self-Assessment



# Identify Your Stressors

## *Self-Assessment*

**If you feel your work is causing you to feel overwhelmed and stressed, it can be difficult to pinpoint the factors which make you feel this way.**

In a fast-paced work environment, it can be easy to be caught up in the momentum of the activity. Pausing to reflect can help you avoid developing behaviours which can have a negative impact in the long term.



# Introduction

This self-directed tool has been developed to help you, based on the Health and Safety Executive's Management Standards for Workplace Stress. Six areas have been identified to contribute to stress at work: demand, control, support, role, relationships, and change. There may also be contributing factors, which are not included under these headings, as well as factors outside of work.

By informing yourself about the specific contributory factors, you can begin to plan a way forward and make some small changes to help you manage these stressors. Additionally, you can use this tool to help you prepare for a discussion with your line manager. Think beyond your reaction to being stressed and try to understand the contributory factors. Information and a conversation guide have been prepared to assist your line manager to understand what support you may need.

If you identify any issues during this process that require support to bring about change, consider discussing them with your line manager. They are usually best positioned to provide assistance. Additionally, you may benefit from seeking advice from Human Resources or Occupational Health.

## How to use this tool

Allow yourself time and space to think. It's ok to use the tool as a guide - and make notes as you read through it, whichever approach you are most comfortable with.

Read through the form, selecting any point you think is relevant to you and in the free text area at the end of each section note how those issues are affecting you. If you are able, give an indication of how important this issue is for you. If you have ideas on how some of these issues may be resolved you should also make a note of them, this may be helpful for you to reflect on later as well as help to keep you focused if you wish to discuss them with your line manager.

When complete, you should try to categorise what you can do to help yourself and what you will need support with, then when you are ready you should request a meeting with your manager/supervisor to discuss your concerns.

# DEMAND

Includes such things as your workload, working patterns and your work environment.

## WORKLOAD / JOB DESIGN

I have difficulty getting through my workload in the time available.

I have difficulty in meeting deadlines.

I have competing deadlines which makes it difficult to prioritise.

I have to work long hours to get through my work.

I report to / undertake work for more than one person.

## COMMUNICATION

There is constant communication when I am 'off-duty' by e-mail, text, and phone.

I feel that I am expected to monitor my email whilst not at work - in the evening, at weekends and when on holiday

I prefer to keep in contact with work on days off and when I am on holiday.

## SKILLS, TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT

I don't feel I have the necessary skills for the work I am expected to do.

## REST

I work long hours – starting early and finishing late.

I feel that there is no time to take breaks and holiday.

I worry about not being able to cope with my back log when I return from holiday.

I feel it is important to be seen to work long hours.

I am expected to attend study days or training when on annual leave or days off.

# DEMAND

Includes such things as your workload, working patterns and your work environment.

## **WORKPLACE HAZARDS AND ENVIRONMENT**

I have an unpleasant work environment.

I am concerned about my unsafe work environment.

I am concerned about unsafe behaviours in my work area.

## **INSUFFICIENT CHALLENGE**

I do not have enough work to do.

I do not consider my work challenging.

Record your thoughts on demand, giving specific examples and dates, thinking about how often these issues may affect you and how important they are to you:

# CONTROL

The amount of influence you feel you have over how you do your work.

**Select each statement which you consider applies to you:**

I have rigid work routines or rotas.

I have limited opportunity to organise my work in a way which suits me.

Record your thoughts on control, giving specific examples and dates, thinking about how often these issues may affect you and how important they are to you:

# SUPPORT

The resources, support and encouragement provided by your manager, your colleagues and the organisation to help you manage your job.

**Select each statement which you consider applies to you:**

I do not feel able to talk to my manager if I have a problem with my work.

I do not feel able to ask colleagues for help if needed.

I do not have sufficient opportunity to attend training or take up development opportunities.

Record your thoughts on support, giving specific examples and dates, thinking about how often these issues may affect you and how important they are to you:

# ROLE

Understanding the purpose of your job and being clear about your responsibilities.

**Select each statement which you consider applies to you:**

I am not clear about the purpose of my job.

I am not clear about what is expected of me either some or most of the time.

I feel I have conflicting roles.

Record your thoughts on role, giving specific examples and dates, thinking about how often these issues may affect you and how important they are to you:



# RELATIONSHIPS

How people work together, respect and behaviour.

**Select each statement which you consider applies to you:**

Relationships with colleagues or my manager are strained.

I think I am being harassed or bullied by a colleague.

I feel I am treated unfairly or with a lack of respect.

I feel my skills and knowledge are not appreciated.

Record your thoughts on relationships, giving specific examples and dates, thinking about how often these issues may affect you and how important they are to you:

# CHANGE

Do you feel appropriately informed about changes at work that may affect you and how are you consulted when changes to your job are being considered?

**Select each statement which you consider applies to you:**

I have not been informed of significant changes to my work until they were introduced.

I have not been given an opportunity to comment on changes to my job.

I feel uncertain over the effects of a change to my job.

I am concerned about my job security.

Record your thoughts on change, giving specific examples and dates, thinking about how often these issues may affect you and how important they are to you:

## OTHER ASPECTS

Are there any other aspects of your work that you have found stressful?

Are there any factors outside of work that you have found stressful?

# Next steps

You should now have a better understanding of the issues which may be contributing to your experience of stress, particularly in the workplace. You may now want to prioritise the areas you wish to discuss with your manager and those which you might have some control over. It is important to note that your manager has responsibility for managing you and your work, if you choose not to inform them there is very little they can do to assist you.

Before you proceed it will also be important to consider what aspects of your life away from work could be contributing to this feeling. Family circumstances, health or financial worries may be very stressful. If you are struggling to cope, this may affect how you respond to work-place stressors and visa- versa. It is up to you how much you share with your manager, but understanding its potential impact will be important for you to develop coping strategies, an action plan or to help you improve your resilience.

As a starting point take some small steps to improve your wellbeing - think about the three key areas: exercise, diet and sleep. You may wish to self-refer to Occupational Health for advice.

If you are worried about discussing the points you have highlighted, or feel unable to speak to your manager, contact Human Resources for advice.

## SOURCES OF SUPPORT FOR STAFF AT WORCESTERSHIRE ACUTE NHS TRUST

Staff Health & Wellbeing pinwheel (click on the image for more information) –



Who can you contact?	How can they help?	How do you contact them?
<b>Human Resources</b>	HR are a confidential and safe team to speak to and can offer guidance and information on other services, in addition to support.	01905 760410 ext. 38594 <a href="mailto:wah-tr.hrenquiries@nhs.net">wah-tr.hrenquiries@nhs.net</a>
<b>Network of Staff Supporters (NOSS) Counselling Service</b>	A caring and confidential service for all staff. A 24-hour helpline also available.	Tel: 01978 780479. <a href="mailto:email_therapyservices@optimahealth.co.uk">email_therapyservices@optimahealth.co.uk</a>
<b>Trade Union Representatives</b>	Trade union representatives provide advice and support to their members when they have issues at work.	Find your local TU rep here: <a href="http://whoswho.worcsacute.nhs.uk">Who's Who (worcsacute.nhs.uk)</a>
<b>Freedom to Speak up Guardian</b>	You can raise issues or concerns in confidence with the Freedom to Speak up Guardian, who will support you and ensure your complaint is listened to confidentially and taken down the correct channel, if appropriate.	The Freedom to Speak up Portal can be accessed <a href="#">here</a> or: <a href="mailto:wah-tr.freedomtospeakup@nhs.net">email wah-tr.freedomtospeakup@nhs.net</a>
<b>Health &amp; Safety</b>	Health & Safety can provide advice, support and guidance to members of staff regarding their health and safety at work and can support with incident reporting.	<a href="#">Contact the Health &amp; Safety Team</a>
<b>Staff Health and Wellbeing Guardian</b>	The Staff Health and Wellbeing Guardian is available to listen, offer guidance and ensure you know what support is available to help you improve and maintain your wellbeing at work.	Email the Staff Health & Wellbeing Guardian via <a href="mailto:wah-tr.healthandwellbeing@nhs.net">wah-tr.healthandwellbeing@nhs.net</a>
<b>Staff Psychological Wellbeing Service</b>	The service provides a safe and confidential space for staff to check in with their psychological wellbeing and to discuss any additional support needed.	<a href="mailto:wah-tr.staffpsychologicalwellbeingservice@nhs.net">wah-tr.staffpsychologicalwellbeingservice@nhs.net</a>
<b>Occupational Health</b>	Occupational Health provide independent advice to both managers and employees on the health of individuals at work, the working environment, health risks associated with the workplace and any occupational implications.	<a href="mailto:wah-tr.OccupationalHealth@nhs.net">wah-tr.OccupationalHealth@nhs.net</a> 01905 760693