

Employee Policy Health, Safety & Wellbeing

1. Policy Statement

NHSBT has a duty of care to you and is committed to providing a safe environment for you to work in and making it a great place to work. However, you are responsible for your own general fitness, health and wellbeing which will contribute to your quality of life including while at work. We offer a range of services to help you achieve and maintain this. This policy sets out our expectations of you as our employee and identifies some of the support that we provide to help you maintain a healthy life and attendance at work.

Additionally, our commitment to *inclusion* across race, gender, age, religion, identity, and experience drives us forward every day and this is reflected in this Policy.

When using this policy, you also need to refer to the FAQ's supporting it and the Attendance Policy.

2. Our Expectations and support available to you

If you are absent from work because of illness, you will need to refer to the Attendance & Sickness Absence Policy. We will all have times when we are not feeling 100%, and therefore we may need to seek support to keep us well and able to attend work, or to provide additional support if absent from work.

It is expected that you seek, as appropriate:

- help and advice from your own local GP services
- support from NHS Walk-in clinics
- help and advice from your local pharmacy services
- help and advice by contacting
 1. England and Northern Ireland - NHS 111
 2. Scotland - NHS 24
 3. Wales – NHS Direct
- support from additional services provided by NHSBT (see below)
- advice and support from local or national charities (see some links below)

In some circumstances, you may have an injury or condition, and still wish to attend work. However, it may not be appropriate for you to do so, if you need additional time for recovery or it may be possible to adjust your duties temporarily. See the Attendance Policy and Flexible Working Policy for more information.

Speak to your manager:

On receipt of such advice, you should speak to your manager to let them know that you are not feeling well, but you are doing something about it. They may be able to make some allowances for you or put in some control measures to support you at this time. This could be a temporary change to your hours or duties. Adjustments may also be made to policy, depending on your specific requirements. It is important that you speak to your manager if you are experiencing any issues that require support in the workplace.

When speaking with your manager about your wellbeing, you may want to [prepare for this discussion](#).

There is also a ['Wellbeing Action Plan'](#) which is available on the Wellbeing Hub, where you can reflect on what can cause your mental health to decline and how you can support yourself to feel better. This can be kept for your own use or shared with your line manager to enable them to support you too.

Self care

[Wellbeing Hub](#) is an area on Link that provides self-care support for you and your manager. It provides useful hints and tips as well as signposting for example with mental health concerns.

[Employee Assistance Programme \(EAP\)](#) is a confidential, specialist support and information service, available to you. Subjects include - but are not limited to: work life balance; relationships; childcare; health & wellbeing; debt; disability; illness; careers; bereavement & loss; stress eldercare, life events; immigration; anxiety & depression; family issues; bullying & harassment education; consumer rights; and workplace pressure.

If you are assessed by EAP as requiring confidential face-to-face counselling support, this will be provided for up to a maximum of 6 sessions per assessment.

[Maintaining a healthy lifestyle](#)

We are all very different when it comes to our interest in a healthy lifestyle; however, it is important that we all take responsibility for our own approach as far as possible. Maintaining a healthy diet, with regular exercise, should keep us fit and well, physically, and mentally, and therefore support our attendance at work. We work closely with our catering partners across all our sites, through Facilities, to try and ensure that they offer a range of options to support a healthy balanced diet. When it comes to diet and exercise, we are all different, and therefore have different interests and needs.

Self care

The [Wellbeing Hub](#) provides a variety of free resources and tools colleagues can utilise to support and improve their overall wellbeing. Colleagues are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the Hub and use it as necessary.

[The Role of HSW](#)

The Health, Safety and Wellbeing Department (HSW) are available to provide advice and guidance on any area of health and wellbeing to you and your manager.

Some areas where the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team can help you are:

- workplace risk assessments
- work related stress risk assessments
- advice on workplace/reasonable adjustments
- advice on return to work

Should you wish to contact them, including in relation to work related absence, contact [HR Direct](#)

[OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH \(OH\)](#)

We have an OH service to provide support to you with your health and wellbeing both in and outside of work. Normally, any contact with OH will be as a result of a health concern you have identified or if your manager has any concerns about you.

Self Care

You may have already considered any of the above options that are available to you, and still feel you want to seek some additional advice, that may help you manage your situation, particularly, in a work context. You therefore have the option to contact our [OH services](#) on their clinical helpline for advice. You can do this entirely confidentially without having to go through your manager.

Your manager will *not* receive a report following your appointment. Therefore, if there is anything that is raised in the report that could affect your wellbeing at work, or you need any additional support from your manager, you would need to raise this with them as soon as possible, otherwise they may not be aware to provide the support you may need.

Talk to your manager

Following conversations between you and your manager, you both may have already considered any of the options outlined above. However, your manager may also choose to refer you to OH (**management referral**), whether you are at work or absent, for the following reasons:

- health-related absences
- health issues that are / may be affecting your ability to work
- work issues that are / may be affecting your health
- physiotherapy
- required health surveillance, e.g. driver medicals, vaccinations, night worker checks

Occupational Health are there to ensure that you are not harmed by any activity that you need to undertake in your work, and that any health conditions that you may have do not negatively impact your work, or yours or your colleagues safety, for example night working / lone working may have a detrimental impact on someone with a heart condition or diabetes.

You are contractually obliged to co-operate fully with any occupational health arrangements and must attend any appointments booked for you, and any subsequent appointments or meetings associated with the referral. Not co-operating may make it difficult for your line manager to support you as they will not have the full picture available to them.

Physiotherapy

Physiotherapy may be made available to you through OH to enable you to recover more quickly from musculoskeletal issues.

There is a set of specific criteria which must be met before you will be able to receive any treatment:

- that you are off work, or at work with significant restrictions in place;
- that you have been suffering from a musculoskeletal condition for less than 6 weeks at the point of referral i.e. not a long standing or lifelong condition
- you will not be receiving physio treatment anywhere else

To receive this support your manager must complete a referral to OH.

You will have an initial assessment to determine what the best course of action will be for you - either exercises described over the telephone or face to face treatment, depending on your condition or progress. You may receive up to 8 physiotherapy sessions, *including the initial assessment*, through this service. A report on your progress will be sent to your manager. Additional information can be found at Health and Wellbeing/Physiotherapy in 'People First'.

Reasonable adjustments

If you have a disability, or a health condition which could be considered as a disability, NHSBT has a duty under the Equality Act 2010 to make 'reasonable adjustments' to help support you to be able to do your job. This is a legal term used in the legislation.

However, you do not need to have a diagnosed condition or disability to be able to access workplace/reasonable adjustments. These can be put in place through open discussion and agreement with your manager, to help you through any issues that you may have, whether temporary or longer-term. Workplace/reasonable adjustments can also include adjustments to the application of HR policies, for example attendance triggers.. More information on the process and how to record the workplace adjustments can be found in the [Workplace / Reasonable Adjustments Policy](#) and on the [Wellbeing Hub](#).

Self care

You may have already spoken to a healthcare professional about any support or advice you may need and may already be seeking treatment or taking medication. It is clearly important that such advice should be followed, to support you returning to fitness or to stay well.

Talk to your manager

Temporary workplace/reasonable adjustments – short term or developing conditions

If you have any concerns, issues, or thoughts, about your own health and wellbeing and that this may influence your work, whether you have been absent or not, then you should talk to your manager to discuss some of the options that may be available to you. Sometimes it may be appropriate that following medical advice you may be able to agree appropriate short term / immediate control measures, potentially including support from HS&W, if appropriate. This may not always require a referral to OH.

Sometimes following a period of illness, we may on medical advice (usually from OH), need to provide you with some additional support. This is usually for a temporary period and will be subject to any appropriate review by you or your manager.

Examples of this include:

- Temporary changes to your working hours or duties (refer to the Flexible Working Policy),
- A gradual return to normality (see Attendance Policy),
- Detailed Action plans recording on a Workplace Adjustments form,
- Specific HS&W advice (via HR Direct)

For additional information, refer to the Attendance Policy.

Working with a chronic or long-term condition

Self care

You may already have, or may develop, long-term or chronic medical conditions while working for us. It is important that you attend routine appointments in relation to your condition and take any prescribed medication to ensure that you manage your condition and remain well. Medical appointments will be supported as detailed in the Time off Work policy.

Although it is not always possible or appropriate, continuing to work when you are able, is medically proven to be beneficial in the medium and long term, and can help your recovery.

Talk to your manager

It is important that you speak confidentially with your manager, if you have a long-term medical condition, to enable them to understand your specific needs. The conversation should focus on what treatment and medical support you are receiving; what support you need to stay in work and what workplace/reasonable adjustments, if any, could be made to help you. This should be documented on the [Workplace Adjustments form](#).

Workplace/reasonable adjustments could include*

- Ergonomic changes to your workspace;
- Flexible working hours; (refer to the Flexible Working Policy),
- Increased breaks;
- Sharing your workload with others;
- Adjustments to attendance policy triggers

**This list is not exhaustive and dependant on agreement with your manager based on operational requirements*

Your manager may discuss with you whether a referral should be made to Occupational Health for further advice.

If you are not at work due to your condition, it is important that you maintain regular and meaningful communication with your manager throughout your absence.

There are also many support organisations that you can contact for most common long-term medical conditions, and they often have advice materials which may be helpful to you.

Other support services

Following OH referral and advice, it may be appropriate to refer you to other support services to help you with your current health condition or situation. For further information see the Wellbeing Hub.

Eye Care

As an identified Display Screen Equipment (DSE) user, if you have any health issues related to this, we will ensure that, you will be provided with any appropriate support. For further information, refer to MPD342 in controlled documents. All colleagues who are DSE Users, or are working from home, should complete the workstation assessment on Service Now (See the Wellbeing Hub for details.) This will assess your situation and any risks that you may need support with.

You may, qualify for Eye examination vouchers. Eye care vouchers are also available should you require corrective measures such as glasses or contact lenses. If you need support with this process, contact HR Direct on (2)7700, who will take you through the process and issue vouchers where appropriate.

Before any vouchers can be issued, you must also ensure that you have completed 'Training for DSE Users' (See People First for details). If you are identified as a DSE user, this will appear on your mandatory training dashboard. Training is still mandatory to complete once, however, it is recommended you complete it again if you have a health issue OR when changing workstations OR every 2-3 years as good practice.

You should check with your optician their policy on the use of these vouchers before purchasing glasses or contact lenses.

Mental Health

Mental health refers to how we think, feel, and behave. Our mental wellbeing is about our ability to manage life's problems and make the most of opportunities. Both affect our daily life, relationships, and our physical health.

Mental health is common to all of us and can be described as a state in which we are able to cope with the 'normal' stresses of everyday life, while being able to work productively, interact well with colleagues and customers and generally make a valuable contribution at work. Mental ill health can range from feeling a bit down, to more common disorders including anxiety, stress, depression and more seriously, bi-polar disorder, schizophrenia, Alzheimer's etc.

Good mental health and resilience are fundamental to our physical health, our relationships, our education, our training, and our work and to achieving our potential. In addition, good mental health and wellbeing also bring wider social and economic benefits.

We all have times when we feel down or stressed or worried. Most of the time those feelings will pass; however, sometimes they may develop into a more serious problem which could happen to any one of us.

Everyone is different. Your mental health doesn't always stay the same, it can change as circumstances change and as you move through different stages of your life.

There is sometimes a stigma attached to mental health problems, meaning that people may feel uncomfortable and may not wish to talk about the issues. We recognise this; however, we actively encourage you to speak to your manager if you are experiencing any concerns to ensure you are supported in the workplace. Alternatively, you are able to contact HR Direct or look at the Mental Health Policy for further advice.

Self care

Working has an important role in promoting mental wellbeing including self-esteem and identity. It can provide a sense of fulfilment and opportunities for social interaction. For most of us, work also provides our main source of income.

Working can also have negative effects on our mental health, particularly in the form of stress.

If you notice a change in your own mood or personal circumstances or someone you know may ask you how you are feeling, this could be an indication that something needs to change. The 'Indicators and Symptoms of Stress' (See 'Policies and Guidance') is a good place to start. In addition there are some useful websites on the Wellbeing Hub that you may wish to access.

You may have already identified yourself that you need support, or already have a care plan in place for an existing condition. It is important that you follow all the recommendations within your care plan any medical advice provided, and that you take any prescribed medication in relation to your condition.

Talk to your manager

Should you be concerned about your own mental health or that of others, talk to your manager, or your manager's manager. You can also seek help and support through HR Direct and using the links below. We all need to take responsibility for caring and to challenge any stigma and/or discrimination.

Stress

Many situations can cause stress including money matters and relationships with partners, children or other family members. Stress may be caused either by major changes and life events such as divorce, unemployment, moving house and bereavement, or by a series of minor instances. Sometimes there are no obvious causes.

There are many different signs and symptoms which are an indicator of stress. Exhibiting signs of stress will eventually lead to becoming less productive and less effective at work.

Stress-related ill health can present itself as physical symptoms, as changes in normal behaviour and as emotional symptoms. See the 'Indicators and Symptoms of Stress' under 'Policy and Guidance'

Self care

You are responsible for looking after your own mental health, to stay well, and to let us know if you feel your work may be affected by your condition.

Talk to your manager

If you are feeling stressed or anxious as a result of your work, you must raise this with your manager, wherever practicable, to ensure you receive the appropriate support. We have a legal responsibility to protect all employees from risk and harm, and to assess the risks of workplace hazards, including stress.

Your manager is there to help and support you when you are struggling at work or have issues affecting it, regardless of whether this is work related or otherwise, but they can only do so if they are aware of your issues, how they affect you while at work and what they may be able to do when it does.

You may also speak to:

- Employee Assistance Programme – a confidential and free advice service
- HR Direct - to ensure you receive the appropriate support from your manager and/or HSW
- Occupational Health - a clinical advice line is available

Work Related Stress Risk Assessments

These may be useful to you and your manager, to assess any potential risk of stress on your particular role, based on your job description and person specification. You and your manager may then take necessary action such as putting effective controls in place to reduce the risks to you. You can access the following controlled documents:

[Work Related Stress - MPD370](#)

[Work Related Stress Risk Assessment Manual - DAT660](#)

[Managers Code of Practice for Long Working Hours and Stress Reduction - DAT659](#)

[Work Related Stress Risk Assessment -FRM872](#)

[Work Related Stress - INF171](#)

[Health and Safety Risk Management - MPD1090](#)

[Support for Staff and Critical Incident De-briefing - MPD468](#)

[Occupational Health and Wellbeing - MPD788](#)

[NHSBT Health, Safety and Wellbeing, Statement of Intent - POL39](#)

If anyone presents with work-related stress, after the role-stress-risk assessment controls and recommendations have been put in place, an individual stress risk assessment should be completed, which will focus on the specifics of their case and their needs and the role. If this is required, you should contact the HSW department for advice and assistance. Should this result in absence, your manager must contact [HR Direct](#) for further advice.

Drug, alcohol and substance abuse

Talk to your manager

If you are having problems with alcohol, drugs, or other substances, you must speak to your manager or manager's manager to seek their advice and support.

Self care

You may contact the clinical advice line to ask general questions or your manager may refer you to Occupational Health (OH), in which case you must attend appointments as required and follow any course of treatment as advised. If your manager becomes aware of any suspected potential abuse or a related problem, they will speak with you about their concerns, and may refer you to OH. Refer to the [Alcohol, Drug and Substance Abuse Policy](#) and supporting [FAQs](#) for further guidance.

Smoking

Our expectations

We have a no smoking policy on all sites under our control, including temporary sites and liveried vehicles. The use of E cigarettes is also not permitted on our sites. The Department of Health is committed to a no smoking policy for all NHS premises. It is a legal requirement to provide a [Smoke Free Environment](#) for the benefit of all employees, donors, patients, and visitors. Therefore, smoking in a non-permitted area, may result in disciplinary action.

Cigarette smoking is the greatest single cause of illness and premature death in the UK. About 100,000 people in the UK die each year due to smoking. Smoking-related deaths are mainly due to cancers, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), stroke and heart disease.

Smoking can also cause problems for non-smokers. Breathing in second-hand smoke can increase a non-smoker's risk of developing lung cancer by a quarter. It is estimated that, every year, second-hand smoke kills over 12,000 in the UK from lung cancer, heart disease, strokes, and COPD.

Self care

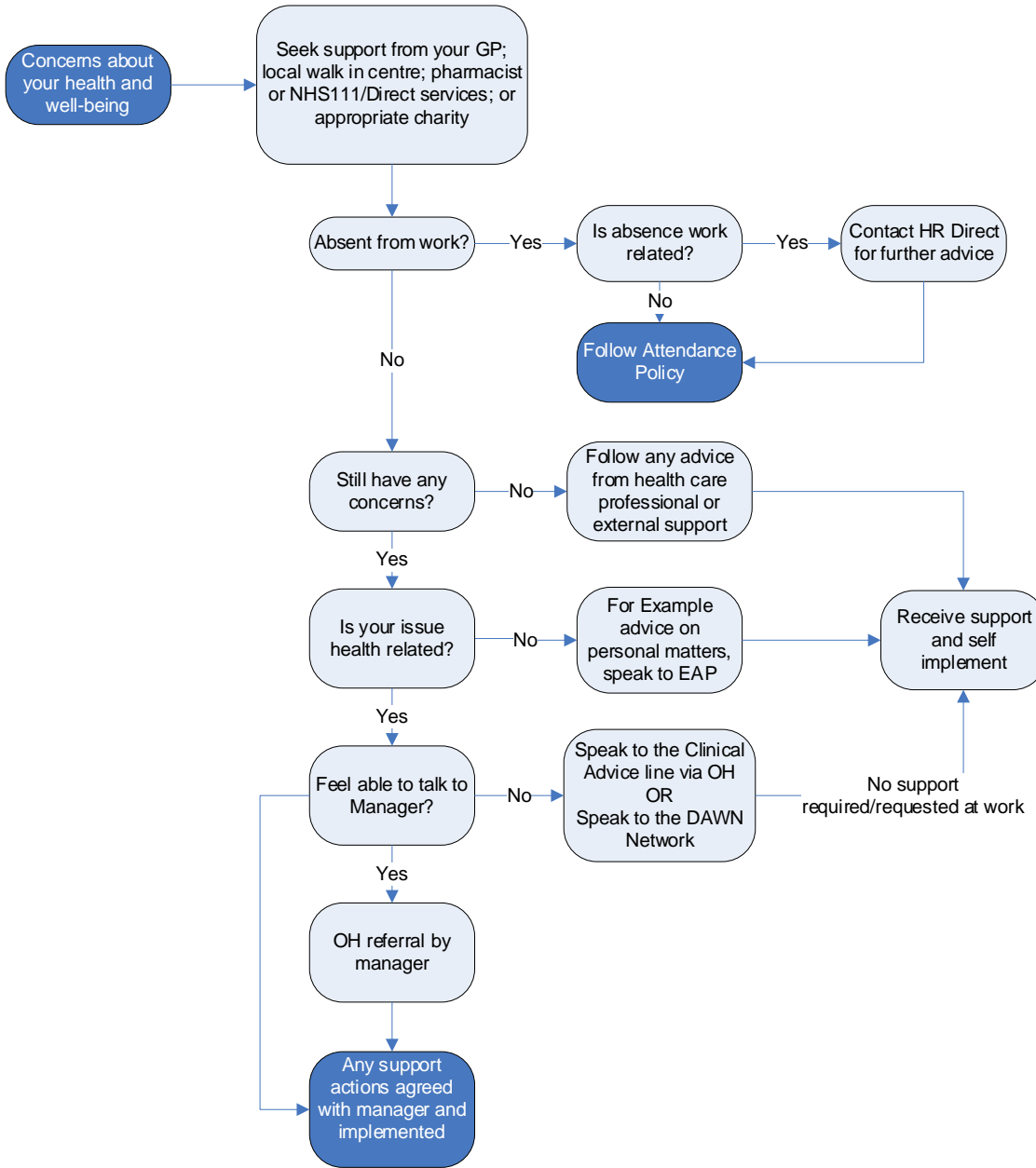
We recognise that stopping smoking can be tough, but we will encourage you to seek advice and support to do this. See the [Wellbeing Hub](#).

In support of your efforts to stop smoking, and of your plan, you may need a temporary adjustment to your working pattern or require time off work. You should refer to the [Flexible Working Policy](#), and/ or the [Time off Work Policy](#).

Confidentiality

All conversations must be kept confidential by all parties involved. We appreciate that this can sometimes be difficult when working in a small team or close environment; however, so that any health and wellbeing concerns raised can be brought to a swift conclusion, confidentiality must be maintained.

3. Flowchart



4. Policy Approval and Review

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Approved by SPC	July 2022 (Minor Amends made February 2024)
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