

Health, Safety and Wellbeing

1. Policy Statement

We are committed to:

- providing a safe environment for you to work in
- making it a great place to work
- preventing harm to
- and support anyone who has, or is, experiencing mental ill-health

We want everyone to feel appreciated, supported and be treated fairly. Mental health conditions, such as depression, are protected under current legislation and we are committed to preventing discrimination, bullying and harassment against you based on this and any other protected characteristic.

We want to reduce the stigma around mental health and create an environment where everyone can be open and honest and bring their whole selves to work. We will encourage everyone to take personal responsibility for their own mental health and wellbeing.

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.

2. Self-Care

We will all on occasions have times when we are not feeling completely well, 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. We would expect you to seek appropriate help and advice in such circumstances which should include:

- Contact your mental health practitioner and / or follow your Care Plan (if you already have one)
- Contact your GP
- Speak to your manager and tell them what is wrong
- Contact the Employee Assistance Programme
- Contact a Mental Health Wellbeing Champion
- Trusted Colleague
- Trade Union you belong and/or a Trade Union Representative

We recognise mental health can be adversely affected within the home and work environment.

3. Support Available in the workplace

[Employee Assistance Programme \(EAP\)](#) - is a confidential service available to all NHSBT employees to get advice and/or information on a wide range of subjects, including but not limited to work-home balance, caring responsibilities, legal issues, financial issues, consumer issues and relationship issues.

Counselling, Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT) and other therapies are also available. Anything discussed with the EAP is in the strictest confidence and NHSBT are not informed of any details.

Family members living at the same address and over the age of 16 years can also access the EAP for all except face-to-face counselling, unless relationship support is required.

Mental Health and Wellbeing Champions

Right across NHSBT we have colleagues who have been trained in Mental Health First Aid (MHFA), which is an internationally recognised training course, designed to teach individuals how to spot the signs and symptoms of mental ill health. They can recognise those crucial warning signs of mental ill health and guide colleagues to receive the appropriate support.

The use of an Advocate

There may be times when you feel unable to cope or you may have suffered a severe mental health episode. In these situations, it may be difficult for you to speak to us about your condition or circumstances. Therefore, it may be appropriate to have someone who can speak to us on your behalf.

You must advise us in writing of this person and that you are giving them and us consent to discuss your circumstances, and that they are speaking on your behalf.

This person could be a:

- mental health or healthcare practitioner
- family member
- Trade Union Representative
- Mental Health Champion or First Aider

This list is not exhaustive, however it **cannot be** anyone acting in a legal capacity.

Colleague Networks

We have a number of Colleague networks that may be able to offer additional support and advice to you, for your personal set of circumstances for example the Disability and Wellbeing Network and the Neurodiversity Network.

Work-Related Stress Risk Assessment

These are available to ensure that you receive the appropriate support at work, if you are stressed because of work, or if stress is affecting you in some way. [Contact HR Direct](#) to request one for yourself or someone in your team.

Occupational Health (OH)

OH, considers the implications for your health in relation to your work. Occupational Health professionals can assist in identifying areas where work may cause harm to your health and provide advice on how to control these hazards as well as how to best support you to remain in the workplace or return to it after a period of absence.

Workplace/Reasonable Adjustments

Adjustments in your workplace can be temporary or long term, and they can be anything that will help you to cope with whatever situation you are facing and help you to maintain your job. Suggested adjustments could come from:

- You
- An occupational health report
- A GP Fit Note

- Health, Safety and Wellbeing advice
- HR advice
- Specialist consultant advice
- [Access to Work](#)
- [Access to Work Mental Health Support Service](#)

Adjustments should be recorded, and regularly reviewed to ensure that they remain helpful and adequate.

Keeping in Touch process

If you are absent from work, it is important that you remain in touch with your manager. As part of the Attendance Policy, you and your manager must agree the method and frequency of contact when you are away from the workplace, to ensure that they are fully up to date with your progress and to ensure they provide you with the appropriate support. This will also make it easier for you to transition back into the workplace when you are well enough to return, especially after a longer period of absence. Your advocate may be required to do this on your behalf with your manager.

Return to Work

When you are ready to return to work, your **manager** will meet with you to:

- Discuss your absence so that they can establish any reasons for the absence that have not already been discussed.
- See if there are any workplace/reasonable adjustments that can be considered to help you and to ensure that you are fit to return to work
- Record details of your discussions and any actions agreed

This meeting is important to support you in your return, identify any support required if appropriate and to ensure your attendance at work for the future. For more information, refer to the [Attendance Policy](#)

Employee recognition and development

We value your contribution while at work and value the importance of discussing your performance and recognising success. We also support your development in your current role and offer additional support to help you on your chosen career path. We do this by:

- Encouraging regular informal dialogue between you and your manager
- Attending your annual PDPR review
- Attending regular PDP discussions
- Discussing your training needs
- Discussing your career aspirations and other training that may be available to you, whether fully or partly funded by us.

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.

4. Policy Approval and Review

Policy version	UCD/People/Mental Health/036v1.1
Title	Mental Health Policy
Approved by SPC	7 th July 2022
EIA completed	28 th February 2023
Counter Fraud Check	14 th July 2022
This document replaces	UCD/People/Mental Health/036v1.0
Effective Release Date	July 2022

Review Date	November 2024
Author	Daryl Hall
Filepath	G/HR/HR/Everyone/Policies
Distribution	Available on People First