

Civil Service Employee Assistance Service (CSEAS) as a Resource for Managers

Introduction

The CSEAS is a resource available to managers who may want support and guidance when dealing with employees where the employee's health and well-being is of concern and may be impacting on work performance.

Managers may contact the CSEAS

- for consultation about and possible referral of an employee to the CSEAS where there are welfare related issues
- for advice and guidance before a meeting where sensitive issues are to be raised
- for information and details on useful resources

Issues that may arise

The CSEAS provides a wide range of free and confidential* supports to staff and management designed to assist employees to manage work and life difficulties, which, if left unattended, could adversely affect work performance and/or attendance and quality of life.

The lists below are not exhaustive, but are illustrative of the types of issues that can arise and for

which CSEAS support may be helpful.

Work-related issues

- Communication difficulties
- Interpersonal difficulties
- Bullying and harassment
- Violent incidents
- Critical incidents
- Work-life balance
- Absence and sick leave
- Ill health retirement

Personal issues

- Health
- Finance
- Relationships
- Addiction
- Bereavement

Recognising a problem

An effective manager is well placed to identify changes in an employee's behaviour, attitude, work performance and/or attendance which may be indicative of an emerging or ongoing problem. Early intervention is crucial to ensure that the appropriate support and action plan is put in place to assist an employee in such circumstances.

What you can do as a Manager

1. Learn to recognise the signs and symptoms of a potential problem e.g. change in behaviour or deterioration in work performance.
2. Deal with problems as early as possible.
3. Note and record all relevant issues over a reasonable period.
4. Let the employee know what you have observed and what your concerns are.
5. Recognise the positive.
6. Keep any discussion with the employee private.
7. Make the discussion two-way. Be an active listener and allow for feedback.
8. Do not diagnose or make assumptions.
9. Ask if there is anything she/he would like to speak about.
10. If the employee discloses personal and/or work-related difficulties, inform the employee that you will support him/her in seeking any help required.
11. Encourage use of the CSEAS so the employee has the opportunity to explore, and get help and support with, any difficulties.
12. Arrange a follow-up action plan.

Conducting a difficult conversation

A workplace conversation may potentially be difficult for a number of reasons e.g. a lack of rapport with the employee, a long standing issue that has never been addressed, a sensitive subject matter etc. Regardless of the situation, the following techniques may be helpful in having that difficult conversation.

Helpful Techniques

Advance Preparation

- Be familiar with issue(s)
- Stick to the facts
- No judgments/opinions

Appropriate Setting

- Non-threatening venue
- Allow sufficient time
- Avoid interruptions

In Conversation

- Focus on what is said not who is saying it
- Listen not to confirm what you think you already know but to discover something new
- Jot down reminders if necessary
- Summarise and re-state in your own words

Follow-up

- Ensure clarity as to the way forward
- Agree a plan of action
- Meet again for a review discussion

How the CSEAS can help

Managers can contact the CSEAS if they have concerns about an employee. The manager will be afforded the opportunity to discuss these concerns in a confidential* and supportive environment.

The CSEAS can provide guidance before a meeting where sensitive issues are to be raised.

Where a manager is addressing issues concerning an employee's effectiveness at work and believes there may be a health or welfare concern involved, a referral, either suggested or formal, to the CSEAS is an option that can be considered.

CSEAS Referral

An employee can self-refer to the CSEAS by contacting the Service directly.

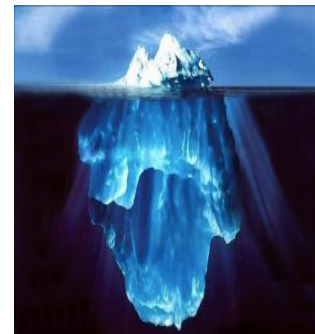
There may be times when line managers or HR Divisions become aware that something is impacting on an employee's performance in the workplace. In this instance, contact with the CSEAS may be suggested.

Formally referring the employee to the CSEAS is also an option.

It is in the employee's interest to avail of the support of the CSEAS as it can provide an opportunity to discuss matters confidentially,* which might have a bearing on the circumstances.

Where an employee has been formally referred by a line manager, HR Division or the Chief Medical Officer, confirmation of attendance and/or engagement will be given to the referring party. Any proposed feedback or progress reports will be agreed with the employee.

If an employee chooses not to avail of the support of the CSEAS, this will be relayed to the person who made the referral.



Don't forget that we only see what is on the surface – we don't know what lies beneath

Useful Websites

Websites

CSEAS website

www.cseas.per.gov.ie

Civil Service Circulars

www.circulars.gov.ie

HR Management in the Civil Service

<http://hr.per.gov.ie>

PeoplePoint (HR and Pensions Shared Services)

<http://peoplepoint.gov.ie>

Citizens Information Centre

www.citizensinformation.ie

CSEAS Website

CSEAS Leaflets available to download from the CSEAS website

www.cseas.per.gov.ie

- Information on the CSEAS
- Effective Communication
- Responding to Difficult Phone calls and Self-Care
- Stress Awareness
- Wellness at Work
- Personal Action Plan
- Bereavement - Coping with Grief and Loss
- Personal Hygiene Issues: Guidelines for Managers and Supervisors
- Critical Incident in the Workplace – CSEAS Response
- Critical Incident in the Workplace - Self-Care information
- Substance Misuse and Addiction
- Good Mental Health in the Workplace
- Conflict Resolution Skills for Managers
- Planning for Retirement – How the CSEAS can help
- Information for those in Suicidal Distress
- Information for those affected by Suicide
- Anger Management
- Building Personal Resilience
- Introduction to Mindfulness

CSEAS Publications available to download from the CSEAS website

www.cseas.per.gov.ie

- Counselling, Psychotherapy, Psychology how do I choose?
- Information Guide on Mental Health & Well-being in the Workplace
- Understanding Stress
- Helping the Bereaved at Work
- CSEAS Code of Practice
- CSEAS Customer Charter
- CSEAS Protocols on Service Delivery
- Personal Affairs checklist
- CSEAS Activity Report 2013
- CSEAS Activity Report 2014
- CSEAS as a Resource for Managers
- Managing your money – Budgeting Information and Assistance
- Helping the Bereaved at Work
- Responding to difficult Phone Calls

CSEAS Presentations and Webcasts available to view on the CSEAS website

www.cseas.per.gov.ie

- Stress Awareness and Management
- Health and Wellbeing
- Mental Health and Wellbeing

Conclusion

Always remember that the CSEAS is available and willing to help managers and staff members to cope with the practical and emotional impact of dealing with personal and workplace issues.

CSEAS Contact details

Contact Details for the CSEAS

Phone

0761 000 030

Email

cseas@per.gov.ie

Website

www.cseas.per.gov.ie

Address

Civil Service Employee Assistance Service (CSEAS)
 Dept. Public Expenditure & Reform
 4th Floor, St. Stephen's Green House
 Earlsfort Terrace, Dublin 2.
 D02 PH42

**Normal professional standards apply to confidentiality, which is between the service user and the CSEAS. Full details on the range of services available from the CSEAS and information on confidentiality and the exceptions to this are available on the CSEAS website www.cseas.per.gov.ie*