Good Mental Health in the Workplace

Seirbhís Chúnaimh
d'Fhostaithe na Státseirbhíse

Civil Service Employee Assistance Service

www.cseas.per.gov.ie

Good mental health at work

Maintaining and fostering positive mental health in the workplace brings benefits to all concerned. The Civil Service recognises its staff as a valuable resource. By raising awareness of and promoting good mental health in the workplace, the aim is to build and maintain a resilient workforce to deliver effective services. This leaflet provides a brief outline of the booklet titled "Information Guide on Mental Health & Well-being in the Workplace" which is aimed at all civil servants to encourage positive mental health. Please refer to the booklet, available to download from the CSEAS website www.cseas.per.gov.ie for full information.

Who is the guide aimed at? (introduction to guide)

- All civil servants
- Individuals who experience mental health issues
- Line managers and HR personnel in their staff management function
- Colleagues who may work alongside and support those with mental health issues

On-duty EAO available at 0818 008120
Monday – Thursday: 9am – 5.15pm
Friday: 9am – 5pm
Appointments are available evening and weekends if required

Email: cseas@per.gov.ie
www.cseas.per.gov.ie

What is mental health?

The term mental health describes an emotional resilience which enables us to enjoy life and cope with the challenges life brings us.

Mind Full, or Mindful?

Indicators of good mental health

- Resiliency to stress
- Sense of belonging
- Clear thinking
- Productive behaviour
- Ability to take care of self and others
- Sense of well-being and contentment
- Flexibility
- Spirituality - finding a meaning in one's life
- Optimism
- Self-confidence
- Respect for self and others
- Stable relationships
- Empathy

Organisational resources that contribute to the creation of a healthy working environment (section 2 of guide)

Good mental health is promoted in the workplace through the use of positive measures that foster and encourage a healthy working environment. Resources at the disposal of the Civil Service are as follows

Workplace Supports | HR Policies | Learning & Development | Effective Communication | Employee Representation

Individual responsibility for mental health (section 3 of guide)

Individual employees play a key role in caring for their own mental health and have a responsibility to contribute to a positive ethos of positive mental health in the workplace.

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How to create a positive ethos in the workplace

- Look after your mental health
- Be respectful to fellow employees
- Take action on interpersonal problems
- Take action on mental health concerns
- Use your personal resources, e.g. family, friends, GP
- Avail of workplace supports, e.g. CSEAS, HR Division and line manager support

Building resilience

Resilience is the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats or perceived stress. Resilience can be learned and developed.

Strategies for building resilience

- Good social connections/sense of belonging
- Learn how to cope well with crises
- Acceptance
- Set goals - small steps
- Nurture a positive view of yourself
- Maintain a hopeful outlook
- Take decisive actions
- Develop problem solving skills

Self-care tips

- Healthy diet
- Regular exercise
- Understand stress and your response to it
- Good sleep patterns
- Relaxation
- Have fun
- Time management
- Positive thinking
- Embrace change
- Ask for help

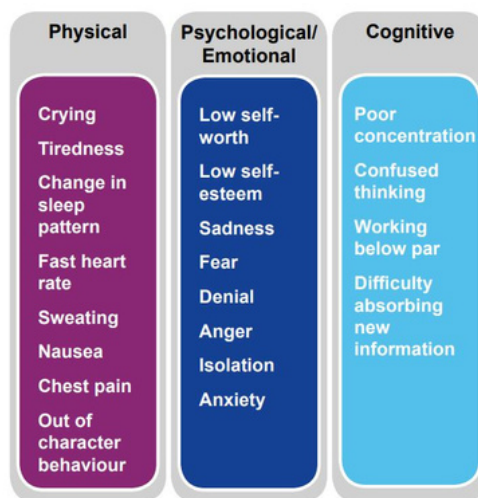### Information for line managers (section 4 of guide)

Line managers play an important role in supporting those with mental health issues and in addressing concerns arising from this. Line managers can create a positive working environment to allow effective communication about mental health issues arising in the workplace. A good manager will

- Be available
- Listen
- Promote Civil Service diversity and equality policies
- Promote support services, e.g. CSEAS, Disability Liaison Officer (DLO)
- Take action when required
- Implement policies on sick leave and attendance

Information for colleagues (section 5 of guide)

Colleagues can be very helpful in contributing to a positive working environment, by behaving in a way that fosters an ethos of good health in the workplace and supporting those with mental health issues.

Information for colleagues (section 5 of guide)

Physical	Psychological/ Emotional	Cognitive
Crying	Low self-worth	Poor concentration
Tiredness	Low self-esteem	Confused thinking
Change in sleep pattern	Sadness	Working below par
Fast heart rate	Fear	Difficulty absorbing new information
Sweating	Denial	
Nausea	Anger	
Chest pain	Isolation	
Out of character behaviour	Anxiety	

Useful resources (appendix 2 of guide)

There are many resources available which provide information and support and promote good mental health. If you have concerns about mental health issues, it is important to seek assistance. These concerns can be about your own mental health or that of a colleague, friend or family member. Be proactive - learn about what is there and promote openess to discussing and addressing mental health and well-being.

The World Health Organisation defines mental health as "a state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community".

Source www.who.int/en