



Definition of stress

HSE defines stress as “the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them”.

This definition is widely accepted and under this definition all stress is damaging.



Workplace Stress, Management Standards & Mapping



Effects of Stress

It is usually recognised that stress can affect the body in three different ways, physically, behaviourally and emotionally. Individuals can suffer from one, or a combination of these symptoms, for both short-term or long-term periods.



Physical symptoms include:

- Backache
- Fatigue
- Muscle tension
- Skin rashes
- Breathing difficulties
- Headaches
- Chest pains
- Changes in menstrual patterns
- Sweating palms, dry mouth, nervous twitches etc



Behavioural symptoms include:

- Absenteeism
- Erratic moods
- Apathy
- Increased use of alcohol/tobacco
- Increased use of tranquilisers/drugs



Psychological symptoms include:

- Anxiety
- Irritability
- Low self-esteem and confidence
- Depression
- Loss of libido
- Guilt
- Fear and panic
- Poor sleep
- Aggression
- Inappropriate behaviour
- Withdrawal from social contacts
- Mood swings



Contributory Factors Include

- Long hours culture
- Lack of breaks
- High expectations
- High pressure environment
- Job insecurity
- Poor change management
- Poor communication
- Bad working/workplace relationships
- Workplace culture
- Lack of understanding
- Fear, intolerance
- STIGMA.....



Preventing stress

- Employers often portray stress as an individual problem, questioning an individual's capacity to cope, rather than an issue affecting the whole workplace.
- But ever increasing workloads, hours of work and lack of control over the pace of work and demands on staff all contribute to a 'stressed out' workforce.



The bigger picture....

- By 2020, Depression will be the second most common cause of ill health worldwide -
- One in five adults (21 per cent) reported that they had thought of taking their own life at some point
- One in four 16 to 24 year old women (26 per cent) surveyed has self-harmed, more than twice the rate in young men (10 per cent).

Prevention is better than cure



STRESS ISN'T A PSYCHIATRIC DIAGNOSIS

- Although it is not directly covered by the Equality Act, it is closely linked to your mental health in two important ways:
- **Stress can cause poor mental health conditions**, and make existing problems worse. For example, if you often struggle to manage feelings of stress, you might develop a mental health problem like **anxiety** or **depression**.
- Mental health conditions can cause stress. You might find coping with the day-to-day symptoms of your mental health condition, as well as potentially needing to manage medication, health care appointments or treatments, can become an extra source of stress.
- This can start to feel like a vicious circle, and it might be hard to see where stress ends and your **mental health condition** begins



Health & Safety Law

There is a wide range of H&S Law and the following key requirements are most relevant:

- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- The Management of H&S Regulations 1999
- Safety Representatives and Safety Committee Regulations 1977 (The Brown Book)
- The Working Time Regulations



HASAWA 1974 Employer's Duties Sections 2-3

- Ensure the safety, health & welfare of their employees
- Consult with employees with regard to joint action on HSW matters
- To protect anyone who may be affected by work activities
- Produce policies and procedures to enable the above



What are the issues in your workplace?

TASK

In small groups discuss and make notes about the most common issues that members talk to you and the union reps about.

15- 20 minutes, please list the issues on a flip chart and choose a spokesperson to report back.



- The Health and Safety at Work Act states that every employer must as far as reasonably practicable, ensure the health, safety and welfare at work of all their employees. This applies to mental and physical health.
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations say employers **must** assess risks to the health and safety of employees, including mental health.
- The regulations are particularly relevant to stress and the effects of stress on mental health. Employers' risk assessments should help them determine how to minimise risks to their staff.
- Employers should use HSE Management Standards to assess stress risks

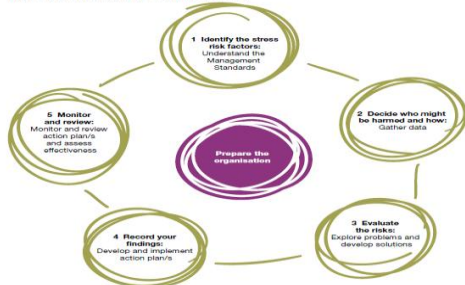


HSE Management Standards The Management Standards classify the principal causes of work-related stress into six key areas:

- **Demands** – Includes issues like workload, work patterns and the work environment
- **Control** – How much say the person has in the way they do their work
- **Support** – Includes the encouragement, sponsorship and resources provided by the organisation, line management and colleagues
- **Relationships** – Includes promoting positive working to avoid conflict and dealing with unacceptable behaviour
- **Role** – Whether people understand their role within the organisation and whether the organisation ensures that the person does not have conflicting roles
- **Change** – How organisational change (large or small) is managed and communicated in the organisation

Stress risk assessment - 5 STEPS

Figure 1 The Management Standards approach



SRSC '77

- To carry out inspections of the workplace Reg 4(1)(e)
- To represent your members with the inspector or other enforcing authority Reg 4(1)(f)
- To receive information from an inspector Reg 4(1)(g)
- To sit on the safety committee Reg 4(1)(h)

SRSC Regulations 1977 (The Brown Book)

Regulation 4 – Summary of H&S Reps Rights

- investigate potential hazards (which include potential causes of stress, such as long hours, inconsistent instructions, bullying and harassment, and excessive workload)
- inspect the workplace and talk to members in confidence
- take up members' health and safety complaints (including complaints about stress and overwork)

SRSC Regulation 1977

- be consulted **in good time** by the employer about health and safety matters;
- obtain health and safety information from the employer;
- inspect health and safety documents held by the employer; and
- take time off to carry out their functions.

Prevention Is Better Than Cure!

Equality Law

The Equality Act 2010 replaces the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) in its entirety, along with other legislation (Sex and Race Discrimination).

The Act defines disability as:

- Having a mental or physical impairment that has a **long term, substantial, adverse** impact on a person's ability to carry out **'normal' day to day** activities.

Other Factors

- Stress is also caused by long term difficult circumstances such as:
 - Unemployment
 - Poverty
 - Difficulties at work
 - Relationship problems
- Not having enough work, activities or change in your life can be just as stressful as having too much.

What is Long Term?

- A disability that will last for 12 months
- OR is likely to last for 12 months
- OR the disability will last for the lifetime of that person
- Some conditions covered from point of diagnosis

Under the Equality Act you cannot be discriminated against because of your

- ▶ age
- ▶ **disability**
- ▶ gender reassignment
- ▶ marriage and civil partnership
- ▶ pregnancy and maternity
- ▶ race
- ▶ religion and belief
- ▶ sex
- ▶ sexual orientation

These are called protected characteristics



What kind of Data could be used when gathering information for evidence and to prepare the organisation?



Stress-related and psychological disorders in Great Britain 2016/17

Work-related stress, depression or anxiety continues to represent a significant ill health condition in the workforce of Great Britain.

Work-related stress, depression or anxiety accounts for 40% of work-related ill health and 49% of working days lost, in 2016/17.

The occupations and industries reporting the highest rates of work-related stress, depression or anxiety remain consistently in the health and public sectors of the economy.

The reasons cited as causes of work-related stress are also consistent over time with workload, lack of managerial support and organisational change as the primary causative factors.



Workplace Mapping



Preventing Stress continued

- The approach taken by TUC, affiliates and the HSE is to emphasise a preventive approach to work related stress. A preventive approach requires the employer to carry out Risk Assessments to identify, control and reduce employees' exposure to work related stress factors at the workplace. The employer is required by law to provide a copy of the Risk Assessment if a safety rep requests one. Having done the assessment, employers have to put measures in place to eliminate or minimise the risks identified.



Does your organisation have a mental health policy

A workplace Stress policy?

Carry out Stress Risk Assessments?

Do H&S Reps inspections contribute to the Risk Assessment process?

Have you used Body Mapping technics?

Have you mapped the Hazards?



Is stress a mental health problem?

What do you think?



Action Planning



Evaluations/ Rarpa forms



Thank you

