



Management Standards for Tackling Work Related Stress

QBE Sample Presentation to
Senior Management

What is stress

- The adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demands placed on them
- Pressure in itself is not necessarily bad, it can be positive
- It is when the pressure is experienced as excessive by an individual that ill health *through mental harm* can result
- <http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/index.htm>

Top Ten Causes of Stress

1. **Unemployment or fear of losing employment**
2. Financial worries, especially debts.
3. Single parenthood
4. Relationship problems such as divorce
5. Other family problems, e.g children in trouble, parents who are ill
6. Moving house
7. Death in the family
8. Having a baby or infertility
9. Serious or terminal illness
10. Retirement

Economic Loss

- 500,000 made ill by work-related stress.
- 5,000,000 people feel "very" or "extremely" stressed by their work
- Stress costs £3.7 billion every year (1995/96 values)
- 13.4 million working days lost in 2001/2002 attributable to work-related stress, depression or anxiety
- 1 in 5 employees think their job is stressful
- <http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/research.htm>

Legal Duty

- HSWA etc 1974: to take measures to control risk
- MHSWR 1999: to assess risk of (stress related) ill health arising from work activities
- MHSWR 1999 and 2003, removal civil liability exclusion
 - breach of statutory duty, (new)
 - breach of common law duty of care (existing)
- New Management Standards 2003



Legal Diary

- Court of Appeal-Hatton, Bishop, Jones.
- House of Lords-Barber
- Majrowski to be appealed

Liability or Defensible

- Liability requires negligence of:
 - Foreseeability
 - Breach of Duty
 - Causation
- Defensibility requires:
 - Effective implementation of Management Standards
 - Demands
 - Control
 - Support
 - Relationships
 - Role
 - Change

Stress on the Bottom Line

- Employee commitment to work (inefficiency)
- Staff performance and productivity (low)
- Staff turnover and intention to leave (cost of recruitment)
- Attendance levels (odd days absence)
- Staff recruitment and retention (training then leave)
- Customer satisfaction (front line/delivery/quality)
- Organisational image and reputation
- Potential litigation
- *Case studies- absent management, impact on workload*



Tackling Stress Prevents Ill Health

- Moral/ethical code to promote good health
- Prolonged periods of stress work or non work have adverse effect on health
- Physical-heart, headaches, LBP, ulcers
- Psychological- anxiety, depression
- Smoking/alcohol
- Skipped meals or over indulge
- Coffee/caffeine or fruit teas

Do We Have a Problem?

- **Prevention**
- Communicate
- Line manager training
- Assess risk
- Questionnaires/groups
- One-to-one interviews
- OH/HR policies
- Solutions
- Implement
- Monitor
- **Reaction**
- Confidential EAP
- Providing training
- Providing mentoring to encourage confidence
- Arranging treatment
- Transfer to other work
- Change working patterns
- Redistributing the work
- Give a sabbatical
- Can't afford/can't do that!
- **Consequence!!**



Commitment or Lip Service

- All positive reasons to launch a stress project
- Stress policy
- Stress project team
- Stress standards
- Project action plan
- Resources: Time + personnel=reduced stress
- Commitment by executive: YOU
- Involvement by all



Any Questions?