

1 Introduction

UKCEH is committed to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of all staff, which includes those employed on temporary or fixed term contracts, Visiting Workers, students and those workers provided by a third party agency.

We recognise that our employees are our most important resource and the Employee Wellbeing Policy covers the organisation's commitment to employee health, the responsibilities of managers and others for maintaining psychological health, health promotion initiatives, communicating and training on health issues, the range of support available for the maintenance of mental health, and organisational commitment to handling individual issues.

2 Objectives

The aim of this policy is to describe our commitment to the mental health and wellbeing of employees in its broadest, holistic sense, setting out how the organisation fulfils both its legal and moral obligations, the responsibilities of different functions and specialists and the range of services available to help employees maintain good health and wellbeing. We recognise that wellbeing and performance are linked. Improving everyone's ability to be resilient and to balance work and home life will ultimately lead to improved individual and organisational performance.

3 Organisational commitment

UKCEH has legal obligations under health and safety legislation to manage risks to the health and safety of employees. In addition to reducing safety risks, this means operating our organisation in a way that minimises harm to employees' mental health, for example by ensuring that the demands of jobs are not unacceptable and having policies and procedures in place to support individuals experiencing mental ill health at work.

Alongside legal obligations, UKCEH has a moral obligation to foster a mentally healthy culture by putting in place measures to prevent and manage risks to employee wellbeing, together with appropriate training and individual support. We will also be incorporating these principles into line manager training and running regular initiatives to raise awareness of mental health issues at work.

4 Responsibilities

4.1 Organisation

UKCEH has a legal duty of care to employees to ensure health at work, as set out in the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. We will ensure that our policies and practices reflect this duty and review the operation of these documents at regular intervals.

4.2 Line managers

Line managers will put in place measures to minimise the risks to employee wellbeing. Managers should ensure that employees clearly understand their role within the team and receive the necessary information and support from managers and team members to do their job. Managers must also familiarise themselves with UKCEH's policies on diversity and tackling inappropriate behaviour in order to support staff, for example on bullying and harassment issues.

In particular, line managers must ensure that they take steps to reduce the risks to employee health and wellbeing by:

- ensuring that the right people are recruited to the right jobs and that a good match is obtained between individuals recruited and job descriptions/specifications;
- keeping members of their team(s) up to date with developments at work and how these might affect their job and workload;
- ensuring that members of their team know who to approach with problems concerning their role and how to pursue issues with senior management;
- making sure jobs are designed fairly and that work is allocated appropriately between teams; and
- ensuring that work stations are regularly assessed to ensure that they are appropriate and fit for purpose.

4.3 People Team

The People Team will develop organisation-wide policies and procedures to protect the wellbeing of employees as well as assisting line managers in supporting individuals. We will also liaise as appropriate with occupational health and other medical professionals, with the object of helping employees to maintain good psychological health.

4.4 Occupational health

Our Occupational Health partner, Sugarman, will provide a comprehensive service designed to help employees stay in work, or to return to work, after experiencing mental health problems. This will include preparing medical assessments of individuals' fitness for work following referrals from line managers and the People Team, liaising with GPs and working with individuals to help them to retain employment.

Occupational Health professionals will play a critical part in developing return to work plans after absences related to mental and physical ill health, and work with the People Team, GPs and line managers on designing jobs and working environments to ensure that return to work is successful. Occupational Health professionals will also design and implement health promotion and lifestyle behaviour management programmes, including initiatives on managing pressure and ongoing health conditions at work, which will be implemented by the People and SHE Teams.

4.5 Employee assistance programme provider

The provider of external employee assistance services, [Health Assured](#), will alert UKCEH's management to clusters or "hotspots" of psychological risk in the organisation, drawing on anonymised data provided by calls to its 24-hour helpline and information from face-to-face counselling with employees.

4.6 All staff

All staff must take responsibility for managing their own health and wellbeing, by adopting good health behaviours (for example in relation to diet, alcohol consumption and smoking) and informing the organisation if they believe work or the work environment poses a risk to their health. Any health-related information disclosed by an employee during discussions with managers, the People Team or the occupational health service is treated in confidence.

5 Occupational health support

A comprehensive occupational health service is available from UKCEH's occupational health partner, Sugarman, from individual health screening to the design of return-to-work plans for those rehabilitating after a period of long-term sickness absence.

Workplace wellbeing services provided by the occupational health team include:

- workstation assessments;
- pre-employment screening;
- fitness-for-work assessments; and
- post-incident support.

If employees believe that any aspect of their work is putting their wellbeing at risk they should, in the first instance, speak to their line manager or contact the People Team people@ceh.ac.uk. The discussion should cover workload and other aspects of job demands, and raise issues such as identified training needs. Please ensure to add 'Private' in the subject line of your email.

A referral to the occupational health team will be made if this is considered appropriate after an employee's initial discussion with their manager and a member of the People Team. Discussions between employees and the occupational health professionals are confidential, although the occupational health team is likely to provide a report on the employee's fitness to work, and any recommended adaptations to the working environment, to the People Team.

Other measures available to support employees in maintaining health and wellbeing include:

- an employee assistance programme;
- access to Welfare Officers;
- procedures for reporting and handling inappropriate behaviour (for example bullying and harassment);
- discounted gym/sports facilities;
- special leave arrangements;
- opportunities for flexible working;
- support for workers with disabilities.

6 Existing support

6.1 Special Leave

UKCEH provides paid leave for staff to deal with domestic and family emergencies, the exact number of days is at the discretion of the line manager in consultation with the People Team and depends upon the individual circumstances. This leave may be given to deal with unforeseen circumstances such as the passing of a dependant and/or close relative or friend or the serious illness or injury involving a dependant, which requires short-term care at home. In addition, statutory leave provisions are also in place to offer ongoing support in the case of parental bereavement.

6.2 Supporting employees experiencing menopause

We do encourage employees who are experiencing symptoms to inform their line manager at an early stage. This will ensure that line managers, with support from the People team, are able to help determine the most appropriate course of action to support an employee's individual needs, including making reasonable adjustments where necessary. For those employees who do not wish to discuss the issues directly with their line manager may find it helpful to have an initial discussion with a trusted colleague, a trade union representative or another manager. Any issues they are encountering can be raised with the People Team and/or Occupational Health to determine what support is available.

Line Managers and colleagues alike should be aware of the resources that are available to support staff who are experiencing symptoms in order support them and these sources of support are both internal and external. In addition to our Employee Assistance Programme and Wellbeing Officers, the other sources of external support available for employees, managers and colleagues, include:

- [Menopause matters](#), which provides information about the menopause, menopausal symptoms and treatment options;
- the [Daisy Network](#) charity, which provides support for
- people experiencing premature menopause or premature ovarian insufficiency; and
- the [Menopause Café](#), which provides information about events where strangers gather to eat cake, drink tea and discuss the menopause.

UKCEH strives to achieve a comfortable working environment for all employees. However, if there are any reasonable adjustments that need to be introduced, such as flexibility around working hours or the pattern of work, these should be discussed with the employee's line manager and requests may be approved on either a temporary or permanent basis.

6.3 Family Friendly policies

Employees with dependants need support and flexibility in order to balance their work and family. To this end UKCEH is committed to providing a fair, consistent and effective approach to the application of family friendly procedures, which are:

- Maternity Leave
- Paternity Leave
- Adoption Leave
- Ordinary Parental Leave
- Shared Parental Leave

We want to ensure that all employees are informed of their rights and entitlements so please refer to these procedures for further details.

6.4 Reasonable Adjustments Passport

UKCEH aims to facilitate an open, understanding work environment to increase awareness of disabilities and health issues. To support all staff the organisation has introduced the Reasonable Adjustments Passport (see Appendix A), which should be used by any member of staff who has a disability or health condition, physical or mental wellbeing issue, and who requires adjustments to be made in the workplace to enable them to work comfortably and effectively. This could be removing physical barriers or providing extra support, such as adjustments to an employee's work station and equipment through, working location within the office and also adjusting working hours and working patterns.

6.5 Wellness Action Plan

In addition, UKCEH has also introduced the Wellness Action Plan (see Appendix B), which is a personalised practical tool, which all staff can use – whether they have a mental health issue or not – to help identify what keeps us well at work, what causes us to become unwell, and how to address a mental health problem at work should anyone be experiencing one. The Wellness Action Plan reminds us what we need to do to stay well at work – whether working from a physical workplace or remotely – and details what we can do to look after our own mental health and wellbeing. It also helps to develop an awareness of our working styles, stress triggers and responses, and enables staff to communicate these with their managers and colleagues.



7 Relationship with other policies

This employee wellbeing policy should be read in conjunction with other policies, procedures and guidance covering attendance and health, including policies on work-life balance, special leave, flexible working, the management of short and long-term absence, sick pay, bullying and harassment, violence at work, equal opportunities, support for staff undergoing fertility treatment, supporting foster carers, supporting transgender employees in the workplace as well as staff training and development.

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