

Work-related stress

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"STRESS"

Content of presentation



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Definition of stress



- Stress is defined by HSE as the **“adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed on them.”**
- It is not an illness but can lead to physical or psychological damage to the sufferer.
- Stress affects people in different ways – what stresses one individual may have no negative impact on someone else.



Stress statistics



Work-related stress, depression or anxiety

595,000

Workers suffering from work-related stress, depression or anxiety (new or long-standing) in 2017/18

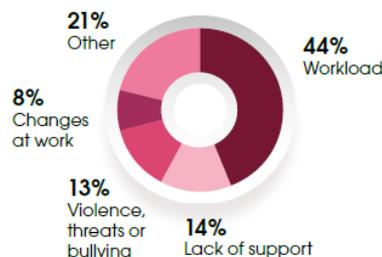
239,000

Workers suffering from a new case of work-related stress, depression or anxiety in 2017/18

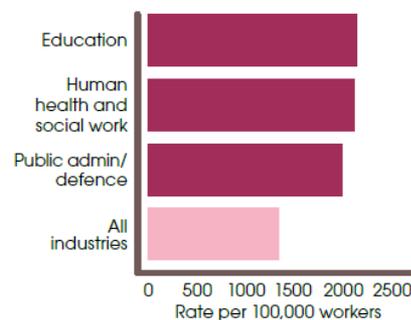
15.4 million

Working days lost due to work-related stress, depression or anxiety in 2017/18

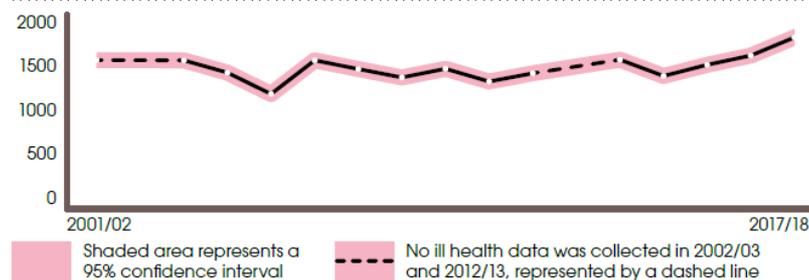
Stress, depression or anxiety by cause, averaged 2009/10–2011/12



Industries with higher than average rates of stress, depression or anxiety, 2015/16–2017/18



Stress, depression or anxiety per 100,000 workers: new and long-standing



The rate of self-reported work-related stress, depression or anxiety was broadly flat but has shown signs of increasing in recent years.

Working days lost per worker due to self-reported work-related stress, depression or anxiety shows no clear long-term trend.

Working days lost due to stress, depression or anxiety account for 57% of all working days lost due to ill health.

Estimates of work-related stress, depression or anxiety based on self-reports from the Labour Force Survey (LFS).

To find out the story behind the key figures, visit www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/causdis/

What is Work related stress?



- Work related stress is stress which is caused or aggravated by work, the work environment or the workplace;
- Work related stress can occur when work is badly planned, designed or managed;
- Work related stress is not RIDDOR reportable;
- Because there are identifiable stressors, work related stress can be prevented or managed.

Recognising stress

- **Emotional**
 - Tearful
 - Sensitive
 - Aggressive
- **Mental**
 - Confused
 - Poor memory
- **Behavioural**
 - Mood swings
 - Twitchy
 - Arriving later
 - Working longer hours



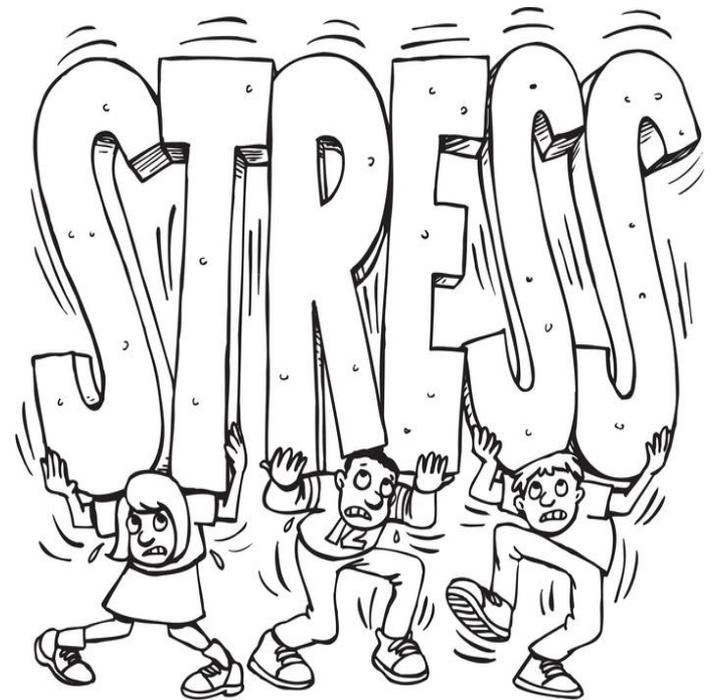
"STRESS"

Recognising stress



Stress can also happen in a team because one member (or more) has problems and the others feel they are not pulling their weight or are receiving preferential treatment. This can appear as

- Disputes and disaffection
- More staff leaving
- more complaints and grievances
- More sickness absence and stress
- More poor performers
- Lack of co-operation
- Stressed line-manger



Why tackle stress?



The business case:

- Employee commitment to work
- Staff performance and productivity
- Attendance levels
- Staff recruitment and retention
- Customer satisfaction
- Organisational image and reputation
- Potential litigation

Why tackle stress?



The legal case:

Employers have duties under:

- The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
 - ✓ Requires employers to protect workers from hazards including stress caused or aggravated by work.
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
 - ✓ Requires employers to assess the risk of stress-related ill health arising from work activities and to tackle those risks where necessary.

The Management Standards are guidance to help employers comply with these duties.

Why tackle stress?



The moral case:

- There is evidence that prolonged periods of excessive pressure have an adverse effect on health
- Research provides strong links between stress and physical effects such as heart disease, back pain, headaches, gastrointestinal disturbances or various minor illnesses; and psychological effects such as anxiety and depression
- Poor coping strategies can also lead to other harmful behaviours, such as skipping meals, drinking too much caffeine or alcohol, or smoking.

Solutions for tackling stress?



- **Resilience and Mindfulness training**
 - Develop skills so people think differently about pressure to mitigate the negative impact they have
 - sometimes called coping mechanisms.
 - only benefit those who have been trained,
 - they do not tackle the cause or stressor.
 - may simply delay the problem rather than remove it.
 - alone they are will not tackle work related stress and may mean an employer is not compliant.
 - Research has shown that approaches that include a combination of organisational and other approaches is more effective for tackling stress.

Solutions for tackling stress ?



- **Well-being**

- Well-being is a generic term for initiatives promoting good health ranging from massage or yoga to five-a-day and smoking cessation schemes.
- Aimed at individual workers and only helps those taking part.
- They are not designed specifically tackle work-related stress or its causes

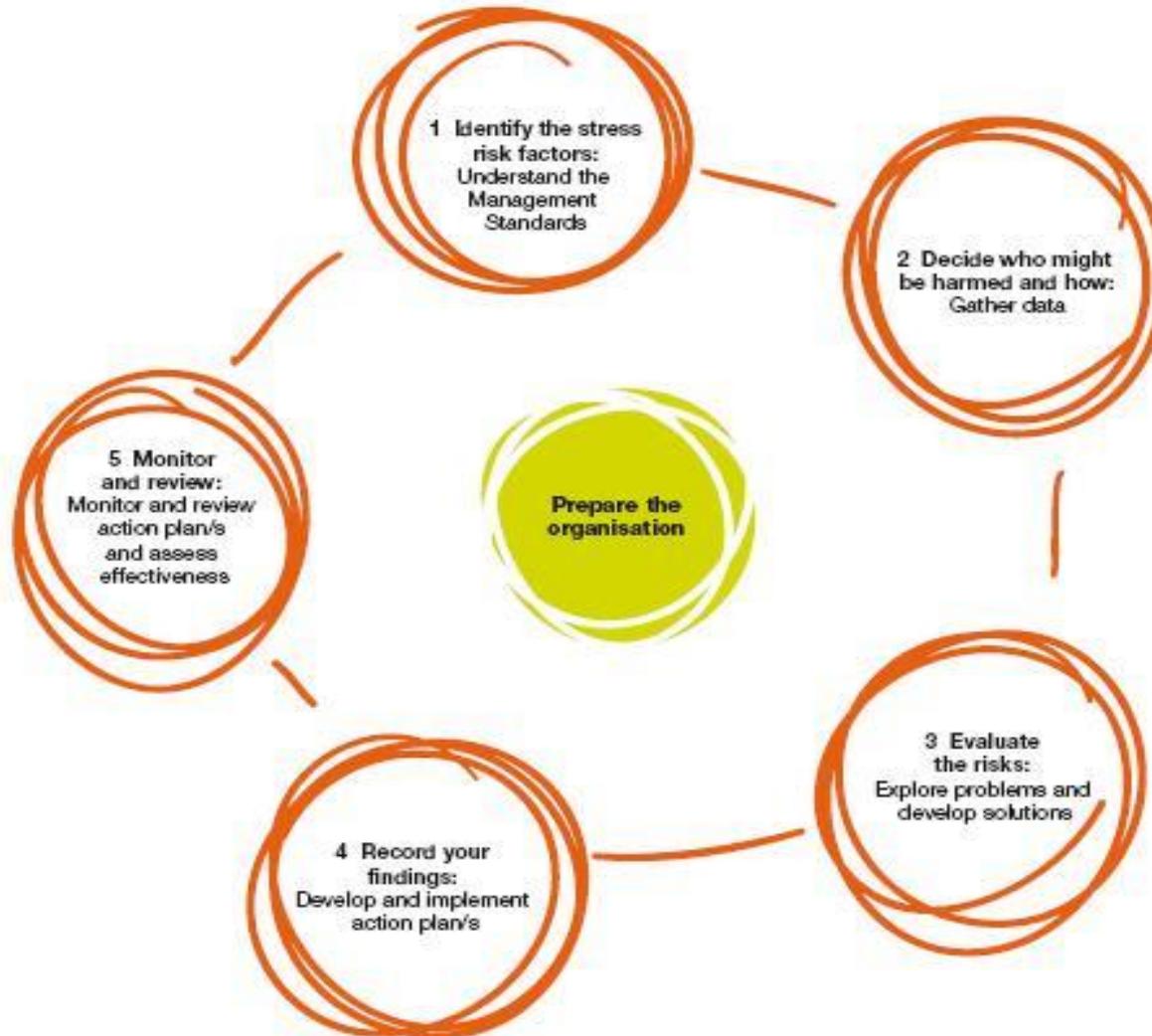
However, resilience and mindfulness training or well-being initiatives alone are not enough to gain legal compliance.

Positive action for tackling stress



- Primary intervention – you need to take action to prevent stress from affecting your employees
- If your risk assessment identifies an issue with work related stress; you need to take steps to remove or reduce that problem
- Activities need to be aimed at raising awareness, changing attitudes and behaviours to mental health amongst managers and staff
- Reasonable adjustments may be required to help those with mental health conditions remain in or return to work

Management standards approach



Management standards approach



HSE developed the 6 Management Standards which, if poorly managed will result in work related stress; these are:

- Demands
- Control
- Support
- Role
- Change
- Relationships

HSE management standards resources



- Management standards indicator tool
 - Includes 35 questions to help organisations determine current working conditions and help monitor future improvements
- Talking toolkit
 - Helps line managers start to have simple, practical conversations with employees
- Step-by-step workbook
 - Includes a selection of checklists to allow you to be sure that each step has been achieved before you move on
- Line manager competency indicator tool
- Work-related stress case studies

Work positive risk management tool



- Healthy Working Lives online tool
 - Aims to help to identify and manage psychosocial risks at work and monitor impact of these risks on organisational performance measures.
 - Includes 35 questions relating to management standards
 - <http://surveys.healthyworkinglives.com>.

Analysis of effectiveness of work positive risk management tool



- Helps systematically identify areas for improvement and highlight corrective action to reduce costs associated with sickness absence, reduced performance, poor retention, low morale, poor health and safety practices.
- All six management standards are associated with all impact indicators . Strongest associations occur for Demands and Change

This strengthens the business case for stress risk management in the workplace.

HSE health priority plan: Work-related stress



HSE want to see the following outcomes:

- A significant increase in the number of employers taking a proactive (rather than reactive) stance to managing WRS through the Management Standards approach or other suitable risk assessment methodology;
- More HR and health and safety professionals trained and competent to implement Management Standards approaches within their organisations;
- Cross-sector learning about ‘what works’;
- Recognition that preventive action on WRS can make a valuable contribution to the wider mental health agenda



All employees have the right to go home healthy from work.

You can help to achieve this.

Questions



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**"I guess things have been kind of stressful at the office.
Tomorrow is Bring Your Therapist To Work Day."**

