



## ANDERIDA ADOLESCENT CARE

### COPING SKILLS, STRESS AND WELLBEING PROCEDURE

Anderida promotes self-responsibility in all aspects of the care role and recognises the young people we care for have extremely complex needs and have suffered severe trauma in their lives. Behaviours exhibited by young people as well as the demands of the work can impact on individuals supporting young people/ working in our homes and resources. Anderida operate their own policies, procedures and risk assessments to help minimise these risks and encourage staff to consider their health and wellbeing in all aspects of their work and personal time.

1.1 Anderida are committed to recognising and tackling work-related stress. Anderida endeavours to do this by providing appropriate support and consideration to improving well-being, on a confidential basis where appropriate.

In particular, we will:

- Promote a culture of open communication, participation and encouragement. Through training, effective planning and allocation of workloads and ensuring feedback is provided on performance, we want staff to develop their skills and confidence and to feel able to raise any concerns they have about their work or working environment.
- Provide training specific to enhancing coping skills.
- Offer individual therapeutic supervision, in addition to performance supervision, which can be given on request by qualified in-house therapists and counsellors.
- Offer three-way supervision where additional support may assist in resolving conflicts, stress or other work-related difficulties.
- Use staff development, staff support systems and policies reflecting current good practice to help staff understand and recognise the causes of stress and to address work-related stress and the impact of external stressors at work.
- Provide a workplace free from harassment, bullying and victimisation.
- Address violence, aggression and other forms of inappropriate behaviour through therapeutic responses, police intervention where appropriate or disciplinary action if related to a staff conduct.
- Ensure risk assessments include or specifically address workplace stress, trauma situations and that these are undertaken at the start of employment and then regularly reviewed as part of supervision.
- Maintain an appraisal/PJ process to ensure the suitability of workloads, supported by a capability procedure.
- Facilitate requests for flexible working where reasonably practicable.

- Ensure recognise their responsibilities in taking up these support opportunities in advance of and during stress/anxiety leading to work-related difficulties.
  - (a) This policy covers all employees.
  - (b) This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and we may amend it at any time.

## 2. PERSONNEL RESPONSIBLE FOR THE POLICY

- (a) Our board of directors has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy and for ensuring compliance with the relevant statutory framework. The directors have delegated day-to-day responsibility for operating the policy and ensuring its maintenance and review to the management team and employees who are subject to it.
- (b) Managers and employees will monitor the development and dissemination of good practice, the recognition of the symptoms of stress, awareness of and effectiveness of this policy to ensure it is achieving its stated objectives.
- (c) All managers have a responsibility to use the best practice tools available to them to recognise the signs and symptoms of stress and are encouraged to seek advice from line/managers/therapists/clinical consultants on how to best support stress/anxiety in the staff they manage.
- (d) Managers and employees must ensure that you familiarise yourself with the policy and act in accordance with its aims and objectives.
- (e) You must speak to your manager if you experience or are aware of a situation that may lead to a stress problem. You must plan and organise your work to meet personal and organisational objectives and co-operate with support, advice and guidance you may be offered by your line manager. Advice may draw on coping skills training or other methods to help manage stress, anxiety, low mood and emotional difficulties.

## 3. WHAT IS STRESS AND ANXIETY?

- (a) Stress is the adverse reaction people have to life/work pressures or demands placed on them. Stress is not an illness but, sustained over a period of time, it can lead to mental and/or physical illness.
- (b) Anxiety is an excessive worry, sometimes accompanied by the physical symptoms of anxiety, such as shaking, sweating, palpitations, increased heartbeat, shallow, breathing, unsettled stomach during or in advance/anticipation of situations. Anxiety is a normal emotion that can be necessary for keeping people safe and alert to danger. However, where it is disproportionate to the situation, based on 'what if's' or has an impact on performance/ability to undertake your role and/or affects personal time, it would be considered harmful to you.

- (c) There is an important distinction between working under pressure and experiencing stress or anxiety. Certain levels of pressure are unavoidable and relevant to the job, regulations and clients.
- (d) Stress and anxiety are individual and not necessarily an indicator that excessive pressure/demands have been placed but an individual response to life and workplace stressors.
- (e) Pressures outside the workplace, whether the result of unexpected or traumatic events such as accidents, illness, bereavement, family breakdown or financial worries, can result in stress. They can also compound normal workplace pressures.
- (f) We recognise that what triggers stress and the capacity to deal with stress varies from person to person. Individuals react to similar situations in different ways and will respond to different strategies methods of support on an individual basis. A one method fits all should not be applied.

#### **4. LEGAL OBLIGATIONS**

- (a) We have a legal duty to take reasonable care to ensure that your health is not put at risk by excessive pressures or demands arising from the way work is organised. We meet this duty by being clear about the nature of the work and the situations that employees are likely to be involved in and must manage.
- (b) We ensure there is a clear on-call system so that appropriate telephone support can be accessed at all times.
- (c) This policy takes account of our obligations under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, Employment Rights Act 1996, Protection from Harassment Act 1997, Working Time Regulations 1998 and Equality Act 2010.

#### **5. SUPPORT**

- (a) We have measures in place to assist staff who may be suffering from stress:
  - Supervision training, to assist staff and managers in recognising and coping with stress.
  - Individual health and wellbeing risk assessment in relations to work stressors and trauma situations at the start of employment, which will be reviewed during the stressful period/if an employee is suffering from stress and anxiety. Following high levels of staff absence the risk assessment will be reviewed.
  - Bi-monthly group supervisions with a clinical consultant psychologist.
  - Bi-monthly group child-focused Cognitive, Behavioural, Therapy sessions.
  - Monthly individual supervision.
  - Annual CHAT and appraisals which look at work-life balance.

- Confidential therapeutic supervision with in-house qualified therapists and counsellors.
  - Approximately quarterly individual risk assessment review/screening for work or personal stress.
- (b) Managers should work consider the following options to provide support to staff suffering from stress:
- Promote a culture of open communication and encouragement.
  - Effectively plan and provide feedback on performance.
  - Ensure that staff receive necessary training.
  - Monitor workloads and reallocate work where necessary to avoid harmful levels of stress.
  - Ensure that staff understand the standards of behaviour expected of them and others, and act on behaviour that falls below those standards.
  - Follow up if, despite concerns, employees are not following advise/strategies.

## **6. RESOLVING STRESS**

- (a) If you believe you are suffering from stress you should discuss this with your manager or supervisor in the first instance. If you feel unable to do so you should contact someone else within the management team who you feel comfortable to talk to.
- (b) Once an issue affecting your health comes to the attention of your manager, supervisor steps will be taken to address that issue. Those steps may include any of the following:
- A supervision, possibly three ways to enable extra support/oversight of the concern.
  - A workload review, reallocation of work, monitoring of future workload or possible redeployment in another resource. Our Capability Procedure may be applied.
  - Where appropriate, investigation under our Disciplinary and/or Grievance Procedures.
  - Referral for medical advice, treatment and/or a medical report to be provided.
  - If you are on sickness absence, discussion of an appropriate return to work and review of individual risk assessment. Our Sickness Absence Policy may be applied.
  - The offer of therapeutic supervision. Which whilst optional could be considered of concern if you failed to accept this but remained unable to work or be effective in your role due to stress or anxiety.

## **7. ABSENCE DUE TO STRESS**

- (a) If you are absent due to stress you should follow the sickness absence reporting procedure contained in your contract and/or our Sickness Absence Policy.

- (b) In cases of prolonged or repeated absence, the procedure set out in our Sickness Absence Policy **AND/OR** Capability Procedure will apply.

**8. CONFIDENTIALITY**

- (a) Confidentiality is an important part of this policy. Every member of staff is responsible for observing the high level of confidentiality that is required, whether they are suffering from stress, supporting a colleague who is suffering from stress or because they are otherwise involved in the operation of a policy or procedure dealing with stress.
- (b) Breach of confidentiality may give rise to disciplinary action.
- (c) However, there are occasions when matters reported by a member of staff suffering from stress may have to be put to third parties. For example, passing onto line managers, sharing with others in the management team who may be needing to offer support or be aware of the emotional difficulty (in line with risk assessments), where duties need to be reallocated within the team or where, as the result of reported bullying or misconduct, a disciplinary investigation and/or proceeding take place. If this is the case, matters will be discussed with the member of staff concerned before any action is taken.

**9. PROTECTION FOR THOSE REPORTING STRESS OR ASSISTING WITH AN INVESTIGATION**

- (a) Staff who report that they are suffering from stress, who support a colleague in making such a report or who participate in any investigation connected with this policy in good faith will be protected from any form of intimidation or victimisation.
- (b) If you feel you have been subjected to any such intimidation or victimisation, you should seek support from your line manager, you may also raise a complaint in accordance with our Grievance Procedure.
- (c) If, after investigation, you are found to have provided false information in bad faith, you will be subject to action under our Disciplinary Procedure.