



CVA WELLBEING IN THE WORKPLACE

Background

Croydon NHS, Croydon Council and voluntary sector partners produced a Mental Health Promotion Strategy directed at all employers in Croydon. CVA should be part of this process.

Aims are

- To promote mental health and well-being for all in the workplace
- Prevent mental health problems
- Reduce stigma and discrimination experienced by people with mental health problems and to improve the quality of their lives

The Strategy says that to effectively intervene for mental health promotion a workforce needs appropriate knowledge, skills, attitudes and support. Managers need to understand what may be affecting employees' mental health and offer assistance to employees experiencing mental health problems. They also need to positively identify employment opportunities for people with mental health needs. Employees need a greater understanding to bring about positive changes in attitudes and behaviour and reduce stigma and discrimination.

Legislation

The Disability Discrimination Act prohibits discrimination against people with long-term mental health problems

Health & Safety at Work Act – duty of law to make sure employees are not made ill by their work. Hazards and risks affecting mental health need to be assessed.

Costs of doing nothing

Stress-related absence accounts for half of all sickness absence from work – need to recognise **all** staff have mental health needs. One in four people will experience some form of mental health problem in any year.

Large amount of management time can be taken up dealing with poor performance as a result of mental health problems that are caused or exacerbated by poor practice in workplace.

Definitions of stress

Stress is “the reaction people have to excessive pressures or demands placed upon them.” (Health and Safety Executive 2000)

It can also be defined as the response when the level of pressure becomes too great to tolerate and the individual perceives they cannot cope. This level of stress is different for individuals and depends on what type of person you are, your current health and state of mind, and how you perceive a situation – rather than the situation itself.

Symptoms of Stress

Signs of strain in behaviour – eg out of character behaviour, difficulty in relaxing/sleeping
Increased consumption of alcohol
Increased smoking
Avoidance of particular situations
Malicious gossip, criticism of others
Poor employee relations
Arguments, moodiness, over-reaction to problems

In Physical Health

Sweating/dizziness
Tiredness/lethargy
Upset stomach
Tension headaches, other aches and pains
Lower immune system, frequent minor illness

In Psychological Health

Anxious, overwhelmed, unable to cope
Being very low or dull
Undue sensitivity
Absenteeism
Inactivity

Leads to Work Performance

Declining/inconsistent performance
Uncharacteristic errors, frequent mistakes
Loss of motivation
Lapses in concentration
Increased time at work

To prevent stress and create a healthy working environment, CVA will work on building a supportive organisation

Training needed

For all - Understanding Mental Health promotion
 Understanding depression
 – Pressure and Stress Management
 Further sessions depending on needs of staff

What you want to achieve?

Line managers more aware of what causes stress, mental health issues and how to deal

People with mental health needs and who are under stress are encouraged to be open and discuss issues, work on solutions

Staff in general are more aware and amend behaviour accordingly

Better morale in workplace, less people suffering from stress

How to measure achievements?

Staff have more knowledge – questionnaire to all staff

Managers better equipped to deal with situations - less need to call on outside help

More staff feel freer to talk to line managers

Less staff time off with stress or related illnesses

Approved:

Date:

28/1/14

For CVA