

Mental Health & Wellbeing Policy

Introduction:

Mental ill health and stress are associated with many of the leading causes of disease and disability in our society. Promoting and protecting the mental wellbeing of the workforce is important for individuals' physical health, social wellbeing and productivity. Mental wellbeing in the workplace is relevant to all employees and everyone can contribute to improved mental wellbeing at work.

Addressing workplace mental wellbeing can help strengthen the positive, protective factors of employment, reduce risk factors for mental ill health and improve general health. It can also help promote the employment of people who have experienced mental health problems, and support them once they are at work.

Work can have a positive impact on our health and wellbeing. Healthy and well-motivated employees can have an equally positive impact on the productivity and effectiveness of an organisation.

Managing health, work and wellbeing is the responsibility of both the employer and the employee.

Policy Statement:

Huntingdonshire Volunteer Centre is committed to the protection and promotion of the mental health and wellbeing of all staff and volunteers working on behalf of HVC.

Huntingdonshire Volunteer Centre shall continuously strive to improve the mental health environment and culture of the organisation by identifying, eliminating, or minimising all harmful processes, procedures and behaviours that may cause psychological harm or illness to its employees.

WE BELIEVE that developing healthy relationships involves ongoing:

- dialogue
- support
- respect for diversity
- personal development and mentoring
- conflict management
- team building

HVC will endeavour to promote this at all times.

Policy Aim:

To provide a working environment that promotes and supports the mental health and wellbeing of all employees.

HVC will follow these principles:

- Ensure employees know they are valued

- Keep employees informed about what is going on and why.
- Allow employees to have a say in the decisions that are made or at least have the chance to express their opinions.
- Provide systems that encourage predictable working hours, reasonable workloads and flexible working practices where appropriate, which can help employees achieve a measure of control over their working lives and balance the demands of family and work.
- Encourage employees to take their full holiday allowance
- Provide opportunities for employees to look after their mental wellbeing, for example through physical activity, stress reducing activities and social events.
- Ensure employees have clearly defined job descriptions, objectives and responsibilities and provide them with good management support, appropriate training and adequate resources to do their job.
- Manage conflict effectively and ensure the workplace is free from bullying and harassment, discrimination and racism. We will follow guidelines laid out by ACAS (<https://www.acas.org.uk/discrimination-and-bullying>)
See also our **Bullying & Harassment Policy**
- Ensure a physical environment that is supportive of mental health and wellbeing including a sound, ergonomically designed workstation or working situation with appropriate lighting, noise levels, heating, ventilation and adequate facilities for rest breaks.
- Ensure individuals suffering from mental health problems are treated fairly and consistently.
- Manage return to work for those who have experienced mental health problems and in cases of long-term sickness absence, put in place, where possible, a phased return to work.
- Treat all matters relating to individual employees and their mental health problems in the strictest confidence and share on a 'need to know' basis only with consent from the individual concerned.
- To recognise that workplace stress is a health and safety issue.
- Encourage employees to talk to their Manager or Trustees and raise any concerns they might have.
- HVC will not knowingly allow an employee under the influence of alcohol or drugs to continue working. We will follow the guidelines laid out by ACAS for dealing with drug and alcohol addiction (<https://www.acas.org.uk/health-and-wellbeing>)
- HVC is committed to make reasonable adjustments to jobs and workplaces for disabled workers. This is to ensure disabled people have equal opportunities in applying for and staying in work.

This policy will be reviewed **annually**.

This policy was approved by the Trustees of Huntingdonshire Volunteer Centre

Signed: *Mike Baber* Chairman

Date: *23/1/2024*

Date of next Review: *23/1/2025*