



## Tackling Work-Related Stress in Education

### The story so far

The Self Reported Work-related Ill-health Survey 2001-02 indicates that 13% of all incidence of work-related stress is attributable to the education sector – the second largest contributing sector. As a result, tackling work-related stress in education is a priority for HSE.

At the heart of HSE's work in this area are the Management Standards for work-related stress. Launched in 2004, the Standards give employers a workplace standard and a practical framework to undertake risk assessment for work-related stress. The Standards enable employers to meet their legal duty of care for the health, safety and welfare of their employees under the HSWA 1974, and the duty to carry out (and act on the findings of) risk assessments for workplace hazards, which include work-related stress.

## Implementing The Management Standards-Phase One

Since 2004 HSE has been working to raise awareness of the Management Standards for work-related stress, and to promote their use, targeting its work on the five key sectors where the incidence of work-related stress is greatest. Along with Education these are: Health Services, Local Government, Central Government and Financial Services.

This awareness raising campaign has involved two phases. In phase one (SIP1), which started in April 2005, HSE has been supporting around 70 organisations, including 10 from education (mainly Further and Higher Education (FE & HE) Institutions) over a two year period to use the Management Standards approach to tackle work stress.

In parallel with this phase one activity, HSE has been running two research contracts with Worklife Support – one to test the impact of rolling out the National Well-Being Programme in a significant proportion of schools in two Local Authorities (LA's) currently untouched by that Programme, and a second to test the effectiveness of a 'streamlined version' of that Programme in a cross-section of schools drawn from eight LA's and the Independent sector. This research work is due to report in summer 2007 and will help inform wider implementation of the Standards in phase two. For more information on the National Well-Being Programme, an approach broadly equivalent to the Standards and designed specifically for schools, see [www.worklifesupport.com](http://www.worklifesupport.com)



For more information visit the HSE website: [www.hse.gov.uk/stress](http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress)

# What's Happening Next- Phase Two

## **Healthy Workplace Solutions Workshops**

HSE's activity is now focused on encouraging take up of the Standards or an equivalent approach by the remaining organisations within the five key target sectors, including schools, colleges and universities.

HSE staged 23 "Healthy Workplace Solutions" (HWS) workshops regionally in September – November 2006 specifically for employers in education (8 for LA's as employers of school staff, 7 for FE, 5 for HE and 3 for the Independent education sector). Over 550 delegates representing over 140 LA's, 130 FE colleges, 70 universities, and 30 independent schools, attended the 23 workshops for education employers.

These workshops formed part of a series of 67 workshops in total covering all five sectors. They were designed to get the majority of employers there to start taking action in 2007 to meet their duty of care under the health and safety legislation to safeguard the mental well-being of their employees.

The workshops were very practical - providing help and advice on how employers can manage the risks associated with work-related stress, using HSE's management standards as the starting point. The workshops emphasized the importance of employers consulting with employees and their trade union representatives in order to implement the Standards approach effectively.

## **Three Tier Support**

By way of follow up to the workshops, attendees, along with SIP1 organisations, are eligible for a package of ongoing support to help them to implement the Management Standards approach. The support is in three tiers:

### **Tier One – The Management Standards Helpline 0845 345 5678.**

The helpline, launched in October 2006, can offer advice on any aspect of the Management Standards process. Organisations may find the helpline of particular use when working with HSE's Stress Indicator & Analysis Tools.

### **Tier Two – Masterclasses**

HSE is planning to stage a series of regional one day "masterclasses" across the UK in 2007/8, focussing on specific aspects of the Management Standards process. Each event will include sessions on a range of topics

related to managing work-related stress. Delegates will have the opportunity to work in small groups, led by a facilitator and an expert in the topic. The content of the sessions is being identified from workshops and SIP1 feedback and evaluation; calls coming through the helpline; and a questionnaire on the Management Standards Implementation Forum (see below\*).

### **Tier Three – External Providers**

HSE Stress website includes a gateway page to help organisations make informed choices when seeking assistance from an external provider.

\*Workshop attendees have been invited to join the **Management Standards Implementation Forum**, managed by HSE. All SIP1 organisations have previously been invited to join this forum. By joining this web-based community, organisations have the opportunity to seek good practice advice from their peers and to give HSE feedback needed to provide help better tailored to their needs.

### **Follow Up Activity by HSE Inspectors**

From April 2007, HSE's Inspectors will be undertaking targeted follow up activity in a significant number of LA children's services departments, FE colleges, and universities. Both workshop attendees and non-attendees will be visited, with the focus on large employers or those with high sickness absence. Inspectors will be seeking evidence that action has been taken, or is being taken, to complete a suitable and sufficient risk assessment for work related stress using HSE's Management Standards or an equivalent approach.

## **Further Information**

If you want to know more about introducing the Management Standards or equivalent in your LA, school, college or university please visit the HSE Stress website at [www.hse.gov.uk/stress/index.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/index.htm). You can also keep informed of the latest developments on HSE's Stress Programme by registering on the website for the HSE stress e-newsletter.

Alternatively, please contact:

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