



STRESS MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SHEET

NO: 3

Healthy and happy employees are more productive
Are you taking stress seriously?



Healthy Workplaces

POTENTIAL WORKPLACE STRESSORS

- ◇ DEMANDS
- ◇ CONTROL
- ◇ SUPPORT
- ◇ RELATIONSHIPS
- ◇ ROLE
- ◇ CHANGE
- ◇ OTHERS

PREVENTION

This information sheet describes the second stage of the Cycle of Stress Management. Here you will find information on preventing unhealthy stress and the tools to enable you to reduce the risk.

It is vital that the organisation has a method in place for identifying and managing workplace stress. The identification of stress has already been discussed in Information Sheet No 1. Once identified a risk assessment must be undertaken [section 19, Safety Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005].

The risk assessment process will provide managers and employees with the opportunity to reflect on what is currently being done to reduce work related stressors and identify what more needs to be done.

The approach taken to managing risks that may cause stress is the same as it would be for all other health and safety risks.

To aid managers and help identify harmful work related stressors in the workplace the HSE has developed a specific [risk assessment tool on stress](#).

Managers and staff should remember that the whole purpose of risk assessment is to allow a preventative approach to be taken to eliminate or at least reduce the risk from workplace hazards and therefore providing the safe and healthy workplace that we all want and the law requires. The Health and Safety Authority (HSA) and the HSE identifies a 3 stage approach that emphasises the importance of the preventative approach in their Employers Guide to Work Related Stress.



THE LITTLE THINGS CAMPAIGN



- ◆ Talking to someone about what's troubling you can make a big difference to how you feel.
- ◆ Confide in someone you trust and what's troubling you can seem more manageable.
- ◆ You can always call the Samaritans for a listening ear. **Free call 116 123.**
- ◆ We all go through tough times.

When we do, little things can make a big difference to how we feel.

Find the little things that work for you.

FOR YOU AT WORK

As an employee you have a right to have your health & safety at work protected. You can be involved in this process and you should:

- Familiarise yourself with the HSE's risk factors and the Cycle of Stress Management so that you can contribute more fully to discussions around this topic.
- Try and identify the causes (as described in Information Sheet 1) and what can make things better for you.
- Talk to your manager at an early stage, if your stress is work related this will give them an opportunity to help and prevent the situation/circumstances from becoming worse. Even if it isn't work related they may be able to do something to assist you to deal with how you are feeling.
- Talk to your safety representative about any concerns/issues you may have in relation to the management of this issue.
- Ensure you have enough time and autonomy to manage your work
- Clarify roles and tasks providing regular constructive feedback
- You can be referred or self refer to: HR coaching network , Employee Assistance and/or Occupational Health.
- Attend training and be informed about changes and get involved in decision making
- Ensure fair work distribution and rewards
- Help to develop and put in place effective plans by taking part in discussion or stress risk assessments. Your manager will need this information from you so ensure that you take part in questionnaires and provide honest and open answers
- Implement policies to prevent work related stress
- Facilitate open two way communications
- For more information please refer to the Policy for Prevention and Management of Stress in the Workplace, HSAG 2012/2.

FOR YOU AT HOME—STRESS PREVENTION AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

In terms of managing stress in our lives it is very useful when we appreciate what our personal stress triggers are as well as what works for us in terms of alleviating stress. By engaging in physical activity you can reduce and better manage stress that is harmful to you. Help yourself where possible with an active lifestyle that promotes physical and mental health. This will help you to create a buffer against the negative effects of stress.

Get Ireland Active

The HSE have developed a website to promote physical activity www.getirelandactive.ie This web site gives direction, support and resources to anyone wishing to get physically active. It also has an event log that can be used to highlight an event in your area. It contains great tips on how to get started and also has useful tips to create work place challenges around physical activity which can support both individual physical health but also increase wellbeing in the workplace.

Show us what your doing and log your event!



- ◆ Keeping active is a great way to protect both your health and your mood.
- ◆ Even a quick walk every day will make a difference to how you feel.
- ◆ We all go through tough times.

When we do, little things can make a big difference to how we feel.

Find the little things that work for you.

PROMOTING WELLBEING AND PREVENTING STRESS IN THE WORKPLACE

HSE Health Promotion and Improvement have a broad remit around promoting the health of the population. This function has developed some useful resources that can be utilised to maintain health and wellbeing and prevent stress. In terms of stress prevention developing a healthy lifestyle is a major factor that will increase your resilience to stress and assist in recovering from a stressful episode.

Research shows consistently that people who manage their stress effectively:

- exercise regularly
- have social support and make use of it
- have found ways of reducing anger and excessive worry
- are optimistic
- have a balanced diet
- avoid too much alcohol, recreational drugs and other drugs



Much of this information and more tips to stay mentally healthy are included in the Little Things Campaign. This campaign aims to change attitudes and behaviour with regard to mental health by spreading the word that ups and downs are normal and experienced by everyone. It also aims to inform people that there are things they can do to help themselves and help others. The advertisements and communications relating to the campaign signpost people to www.yourmentalhealth.ie and the **Samaritans' new Freephone 116 123** for a listening ear and emotional support.

What you can do for yourself in terms of stress prevention is to log onto yourmentalhealth.ie and find out more about the little things that work for you. You can also obtain promotional material on the campaign for display in your workplace where you may wish to promote the messages to colleagues. The campaign also invites people and groups to share their own **Little things**, either online [@littlethingshub](https://twitter.com/littlethingshub) and/or in words, pictures, videos, with their friends and loved ones.

MANAGING STRESS THE BENEFITS FOR:

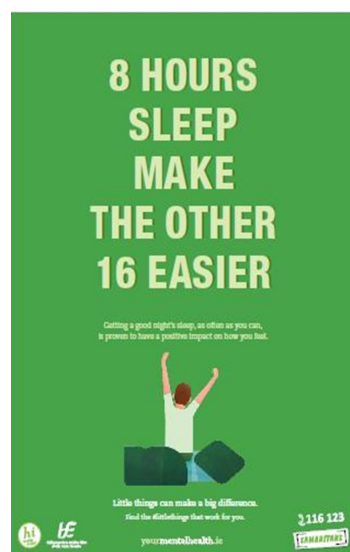
Employees: obtain greater wellbeing and job satisfaction

Managers: obtain a healthier more motivated and productive workforce

Workplaces results in:

- improved performance,
- reduced accident and injury rates and
- lower absenteeism

Society: results in lower costs and reduced burden on services



- ◆ We all feel better after a good sleep and even better if we do it regularly.
- ◆ Get the 7 or 8 hours a night that we all need.
- ◆ We all go through tough times.

When we do, little things can make a big difference to how we feel.

Find the little things that work for you.