

# GSS – Mental Health Well-Being Policy

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## 1. Policy Statement

Promoting and protecting the mental wellbeing of GSS's workforce is important for individuals' physical health, social wellbeing and productivity and our on-going commitment to our staff and organisation.

Many factors in the workplace can influence the mental wellbeing of individual employees. Understanding and addressing the factors which affect people's mental wellbeing at work have a wide range of benefits, both for individuals and our organisation. Mental wellbeing in the workplace is relevant to all employees, and those whom come into contact with our staff whether as a candidate, student or customer 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.

## 2. Aim of our Policy

To create a workplace environment that promotes the mental wellbeing of all GSS employees, students, and customers

As an employer we aim to create and promote a workplace environment that supports and promotes the mental wellbeing of all employees. We acknowledge that certain working conditions and practices can negatively affect employees' mental wellbeing, including aspects of work organisation and management, and environmental and social conditions that have the potential for psychological as well as physical harm.

Policy actions:

- We aim to give employees information on and increase their awareness of mental wellbeing.
- Provide opportunities for employees to look after their mental wellbeing, for example through physical activity, team meetings and social events.
- Offer employees flexible working arrangements where possible that promote their mental wellbeing.
- Give all staff the opportunity to influence how they do their jobs, scope for varying their working conditions as far as possible, and opportunities to develop and fully utilise their skills.
- Set employees realistic targets that do not require them to work unreasonable or unsocial hours.
- Ensure all staff have clearly defined 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 as outlined in our Bullying and Harassment policy
- Establish good two-way communication to ensure staff involvement, particularly during periods of organisational change.
- To develop a culture based on trust, support and mutual respect within the workplace.

As an employer GSS aim to create and promote a culture where employees are able to talk openly about their job and mental health problems and to report difficulties without fear of discrimination or reprisal.

### 3. Policy Actions

This policy applies equally to all employees. The implementation of this policy will also be supported by other GSS Health and Safety policies, and our Bullying and harassment policy

The aim of the policy is to create a workplace environment that promotes the mental wellbeing of all employees and this includes

- Dealing sympathetically with staff suffering from mental health problems due to circumstances outside the workplace, and who consequently find it difficult to do their jobs properly.
- Give new employees a comprehensive induction programme providing an understanding of the organisation, the established policies and procedures, and the role they are expected to carry out. To provide support and assistance for employees experiencing mental health difficulties.
- Ensure individuals suffering from mental health problems are treated fairly and consistently and are not made to feel guilty about their problems.
- Encourage staff to consult their own GP, or a counsellor of their choice.
- Investigate the contribution of working conditions and other organisational factors to mental ill health and remedy this where possible.
- In cases of long-term sickness absence, GSS will put in place, where possible, a graduated return to work.
- GSS will make every effort to identify suitable alternative employment, in full discussion with the employee, where a return to the same job is not possible due to identified risks or other factors.
- 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 positively encourage the employment of people who have experienced mental health problems by providing fair and non-discriminatory recruitment and selection procedures. As detailed in our Safer Recruitment Policy

### 4. GSS Commitment

GSS commit to show a positive and enabling attitude to employees and job applicants with mental health issues. This includes having a trained Mental Health First Aider within our staff compliment, positive statements in recruitment literature and ensuring an equal and fair recruitment process as outlined in our Safer recruitment process.

We will endeavour to ensure that all staff involved in recruitment and selection are briefed on mental health issues and the Disability Discrimination Act, and are trained in appropriate interview skills.

Ensure all Managers have information and training about managing mental health in the workplace.

We encourage staff to liaise with our trained Mental Health First aider – Veronika Eager as and when required and will provide sufficient time and resources to external training to support this.

GSS commit to recognise that workplace stress is a health and safety issue, and we acknowledge the importance of identifying and reducing workplace stressors by.

- Identify all workplace stressors and conducting risk assessments to eliminate stress or control the risks from stress.
- Provide training in good management practices, including those related to Health and Safety and stress management. •
- Provide confidential opportunity for counselling for staff affected by stress caused by either work or external factors

## 5. Responsibilities

Everyone has a responsibility to contribute to making the workplace mental wellbeing policy effective.

**GSS Management** particularly have a responsibility to:

- Monitor the workplace, identify hazards and risks and take steps to eliminate or reduce these as far as is reasonably practicable.
- Ensure good communication between management and staff, particularly where there are organisational and procedural changes.
- Assist and support employees who are known to have mental health problems or are experiencing stress outside work – for example due to bereavement or separation.
- Ensure staff are provided with the resources and training required to carry out their job. Monitor workloads to ensure that people are not overloaded.
- Monitor working hours and overtime to ensure that staff are not overworking, and monitor holidays to ensure that staff are taking their full entitlement.
- Ensure staff are provided with meaningful developmental opportunities.
- Organise training and awareness courses on workplace mental wellbeing in conjunction with suitable experts.
- Provide advice and support to employees and managers in relation to this policy.
- Monitor and report on levels of sickness absence which relate to mental health problems including stress-related illness

**GSS Employees/Staff** have a responsibility to:

- Raise issues of concern and seek help from their Manager,

- Accept opportunities for counselling when recommended.
- Treat colleagues, customers and those in interaction with GSS with dignity and respect at all times

## 6. POLICY Review and monitoring

GSS's Directors and in particular Sonia Benjamin-Leach will be responsible for reviewing the workplace mental wellbeing policy and for monitoring how effectively the policy meets its aims and objectives.

This policy will also be reviewed and updated as necessary to reflect best practice, future amendments to any other policies in relation to this and Government central and localised guidelines. Any breaches to the above could constitute gross misconduct and where found, individuals could be subject to disciplinary procedures accordingly. This policy is not exhaustive and is in conjunction with GSS Safer recruitment policies, Health and Safety policy, Bullying and Harassment and Safeguarding.



Signed by Sonia Benjamin  
Director  
V2 September 2021