Guidance on Completion of the Stress Risk Assessment

1. Job type

What sort of jobs place individuals under stress?

Examples

- Front-line reception
- Help-desk
- Client-facing jobs
  - EM plumbers
  - Electrical testing technicians
  - Personnel consultants
- Lone workers
- Help-desk
  - Custodian
  - Van driver
- Emergency help
  - First aider
  - Invigilator
  - Nurse

2: Hazards and stressors

What sort of stressors or hazards may be faced, what are the issues?

Examples

- angry or stressed customers
- injured person
- difficult colleagues
- poor working conditions (e.g. cramped, lack of equipment)
- client expectations (e.g. that they’ll solve the problem)
- personal risk (e.g. money, lone working)
- unreasonable deadlines
- lack of training
3: Risk evaluation

- Does the type of job in combination with the working environment and organisation result in a high, medium or low risk?
- What does history/experience tell us?
- What are the worst problems?

A brief example scenario:

A departmental receptionist deals with lots of callers by phone and in person. The reception is part of a busy and cramped departmental office and callers predominantly need speedy help. Receptionists don’t stay in post for longer than 2 or 3 months, and sickness absence is high.

The risk would be rated as high.

The job involves agitated callers, probable distractions and conflicts with other work functions e.g parcel receipt and staff turnover suggests a problem.

Personal risk factors may also need to be taken into account: these should be considered as part of recruitment, selection, appraisal and training.

4: Control measures

What will help?

- Training for job
- Job organisation
- Rest and meal break arrangements
- Job rotation
- Good working environment
- Security measures such as alarms, or buddying
- Local policy defined and upheld
- Counselling (last resort as this is not preventive action)

5: Priority & timescale

How urgently must issues be addressed?

Some suggested goals:

**High risk: Priority 1 (fix first)**
Initiate simple actions immediately, and devise a plan to review longer term other actions within 3 months.

**Medium risk: Priority 2 (fix after all priority 1 have been attended to)**
Systematically review and initiate actions within 12 months.

**Low risk: Priority 3 (fix last)**
Document the risk assessment and revisit after 12 months.