Title of Policy:	**Stress Management**
Section:	**Health and Safety**

Purpose

Stress is the cause of a great deal of employee absence. This policy statement discusses the causes of stress, the means by which it may be avoided, with the potential benefits for everyone.

Statement

Carers Choices acknowledges that the nature of its services, and therefore the nature of the work undertaken on behalf of some of the more vulnerable members of society can lead to a stressful environment. Carers Choices cannot change the nature of the work, but it can and will take steps to ensure that the management of the causes of unnecessary stress within its workforce is a high priority.

Procedure and Guidance

Definition of stress

The Health and Safety Executive defines stress as “the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them”. This makes an important distinction between pressure, which can be a positive state if managed correctly, and stress which can be detrimental to health. The effects of long-term stress can be seen in physical, intellectual, emotional and behavioural signs.

Physical Signs	Emotional Signs
Headaches	Frequent colds, flu, other infections
Crying	Constipation/diarrhoea

Tension	Palpitations
Indigestion	Difficulty in making decisions
Breathlessness	Inability to concentrate
Nausea (feeling sick)	Worrying
Tiredness/can't relax	Bad dreams
Weight gain/loss	Impaired judgement
Fainting	Making mistakes
Excessive sweating	Persistent negative thoughts

Emotional Signs	**Behavioural Signs**
Anger	Restlessness
Irritability	Disturbed sleep/insomnia
Moodiness	Drinking more alcohol
Tension	Smoking more
Sensitivity to criticism	Not looking after oneself
Drained/no enthusiasm	Lying to cover up mistakes
Job dissatisfaction	Reckless driving
Reduced self-esteem	Anti-social behaviour
Loss of confidence	Reduced sex drive

The presence of any of the above is not in itself a definitive result of being stressed – but they are assessed by experts as indicators that stress may be present. A stressed individual is unlikely to be able to give their best, may have significant amounts of time off and eventually leave The Service. For these two reasons it is essential that Carers Choices alleviates all causes of stress over which it has control, and within its resources.

Responsibilities

Managers

- Conduct and implement recommendations of risks assessments within their jurisdiction
- Ensure good communication between management and staff, particularly where there are organisational and procedural changes
- Ensure staff are fully trained to discharge their duties

- Ensure staff are provided with meaningful developmental opportunities
- Monitor workloads to ensure that people are not overloaded
- Monitor working hours and overtime to ensure staff are not overworking
- Monitor holidays to ensure staff are taking their full entitlement
- Attend training as requested in good management practice and health and safety
- Ensure that bullying and harassment is not tolerated within their jurisdiction
- Be vigilant and offer additional support to a member of staff who is experiencing stress outside work, e.g., bereavement or separation

Employees

The most important responsibility for employees within Carers Choices is to be honest about issues which they believe are causing stress and to raise concerns with their line manager or other appropriate individual within Carers Choices.

CQC Registration and Inspection Compliance

Key Questions and Quality Statements applicable to this Policy	Care Quality Commission (Registration) Regulations 2009 applicable to this Policy
Safe • **Safe and Effective Staffing** **Well-Led** • **Capable, compassionate and inclusive leaders**	

Legislative Compliance

	Other legislation relevant to this Policy

Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014 applicable to this Policy	
Regulation 12: Safe care and treatment	

Policy Reviewed on Date of Implementation by the Following Company Officer:

Full name:

Paul Ramsden

Job Title:

CEO

Signature:

P. Ramsden