MENTAL HEALTH

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1. Purpose

This policy is to be accepted and observed by all members, staff and volunteers within Four Pillars. Breaches of the policy may be regarded as gross misconduct.

2. Ownership

This is the Mental Health Policy of Four Pillars. The ownership of this policy is to that of the Four Pillars board of trustees, who discharges its implementation to the management of Four Pillars. The management may discharge duties to a nominated member of staff or volunteer.

3. Statement of policy

Our policy is to provide guidance on mental health support to employees, volunteers and service users. We also accept responsibility for all other people who may be affected by our activities.

4. INTRODUCTION

4.1 We understand the positive impact that healthy and engaged employees make to the success of our organisation and that mental health will play a significant role in an employee's state of mind.
4.2 We appreciate that individuals can experience periods - sometimes prolonged periods - of poor mental health in the same way as with physical health.
4.3 We commit to providing support for employees going through mental health problems because we recognise such employees can provide a substantial contribution to the success of this company.
4.4 For the purposes of this policy, the term 'mental health problem' includes mental health conditions that have been diagnosed by a medical professional as well as signs of stress and anxiety.

5. LEGAL OBLIGATIONS

5.1 We understand that, as a charity, we must comply with health and safety legislation.
5.2 We undertake to create a safe workplace in which we will actively take measures to limit risks to mental health and wellbeing.
5.3 We also acknowledge our obligations under the Equality Act 2010 in respect of making reasonable adjustments for employees suffering from a disability.

6. Manager Responsibilities

6.1 Where necessary, managers will invite the employee to regular private meetings and ask them to talk openly about their mental health problems.
6.2 The manager will not make presumptions about how the mental health problem is impacting on the employee personally and professionally.
6.3 Initial action will include checking how the employee is getting on at work, in the same manner as if the employee was suffering from a known physical health problem.
6.4 In a more general sense, managers will strive to create an environment in which employees feel capable of approaching their manager to discuss their mental health.

7. Employee Responsibilities

7.1 Any support required by the employee is likely to be known by the employee themselves.
7.2 We actively encourage employees to be open and honest about their mental health and to inform their manager of any issues at an early opportunity to allow these to be addressed.
7.3 There is also an expectation on all employees to conduct themselves in a helpful and open-minded manner towards colleagues who have mental health problems.

7.4 Behaviour which is deemed by us as being harassing or bullying in nature which is either a contributory factor to an employee's poor mental health, or is in reaction to the employee's current situation, is unacceptable and will be dealt with under our disciplinary procedure.

8. WELLBEING PLAN

8.1 Employee action plan

8.2 If a manager identifies a mental health issue, they will work alongside the employee to create a personal action plan that provides for proactive management of their mental health.

8.3 This will support ongoing open communication between the manager and the employee and will result in mutually agreed steps being set in place that can be monitored on an ongoing basis.

8.4 The manager will ask the employee to draft the plan to ensure it meets their requirements, with medical support as necessary, and then it will be set in place with their manager.

8.5 Any information in the plan, and the plan itself, will be kept confidential and reviewed on an ongoing basis by both the employee and their manager.

9. Workplace adjustments

9.1 We will endeavour to consider all reasonable workplace adjustments for any employee who is experiencing a mental health problem to ensure their situation does not create a barrier to actively contributing to the workplace.

9.2 Once the adjustments are agreed, they will be reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure they are having the required effect.

10. Occupational health referral

10.1 With the employee's consent, a referral will be made to an external occupational health expert who will undertake an assessment on the employee's current condition in order to ascertain how we may provide appropriate support to the employee.

11. Managing absence and return to work

11.1 Where the employee is absent by reason of their mental health concerns, their manager will communicate with the employee at regular intervals during their absence as agreed with the employee.

11.2 Our sickness absence policy will apply to the employee's absence as normal, subject to any reasonable adjustments in place for the employee.

11.3 Upon the employee's return from absence, a return to work meeting will take place and any return to work plan agreed between the manager and the employee to ensure necessary steps can be taken to support the employee to remain in work.

12. CONFIDENTIALITY

12.1 Information concerning an employee's mental health is defined as special category data.

12.2 This information will be processed in line with current data protection legislation and only disclosed to others where necessary.

12.3 You may read more about the data we hold on you, why we hold it and the lawful basis that applies in the employee privacy notice.

13. TRAINING

13.1 In order to be able to provide valuable support to an employee experiencing poor mental health, managers and other relevant members of staff will attend training in how

to support positive mental health and how to deal with poor mental health in employees, including how to identify the signs of poor mental health in employees and how to take appropriate measures to proactively deal with it.

13.2 Training will also include the taking of swift and appropriate action to discover whether the cause of the concern is work-related.

14. MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AIDER(S)

14.1 Employees who are experiencing mental health issues are encouraged to speak to our dedicated mental health first aider(s) who will listen to your concerns and signpost you to appropriate professional help.

14.2 We wish to assure you that they will treat the matter with the utmost confidence.

14.3 Mental health first aiders undertake their role on a voluntary basis.

14.4 If you are interested in becoming a mental health first aider, you should contact your Manager.

14.5 Appropriate training will be given to anyone undertaking the role.

15. Responsibilities

Overall and final responsibility for Mental Health Policy is shared collectively by the trustees.

The trustees delegate the responsibility of following this policy to the management team.

The management will:

- Arrange for the implementation of this policy in consultation with staff and volunteers
- Arrange for the adequate instruction and training of staff and volunteers in all matters related to this policy
- Arrange for the contents of this policy to be known to all staff and volunteers

The staff and volunteers of Four Pillars have a duty to:

- Follow this policy
- Co-operate with the management to ensure that the requirements of relevant statutory provisions are complied with
- Report potential or actual hazards as soon as possible

16. Risk Assessment

The trustees will ensure that all risk assessments are undertaken for any part of the charity's activities to which they are applicable, copies of these risk assessments are available upon written request.

17. Premises

The management team will ensure that all premises used by Four Pillars whether owned, leased or rented are:

- Health and safety compliant
- A full risk assessment has been completed
- Insurances are in place and displayed
- Fences are erect and secure at all times, if applicable
- Gates are manned at all times, if applicable
- Any potential danger is reported to the management

18. Reports

The delegated manager/person in charge at each event shall be responsible for making any necessary reports relating to this policy or ensuring that others make such reports.

19. Policy Development

The trustees shall endeavour to progressively develop the charity's policy on Mental Health Policy in response to risks and hazards identified. Specific procedures and policies so developed shall be appended to this document and form part of the charity's statement on mental health support.

20. Review

The effectiveness of this policy will be reviewed annually by a member of the Four Pillars board of trustees. If appropriate, action will be taken as necessary to update this policy to ensure effective delivery on the objectives laid out at the start of this document.