

HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY AND PRACTICE

STATEMENT OF INTENT

Wellspring is committed to safeguarding and promoting the physical and mental wellbeing and safety of all within the agency: its staff, trainees, volunteers, service users and any others who may be affected by the quality of Wellspring's environment.

Wellspring accepts that it has legal and moral duties of care and recognises that a safe and healthy working environment fosters a healthy and motivated workforce, reduces absenteeism and increases morale. To this end, Wellspring will strive to create and maintain a high standard of working conditions, competent staff, safe equipment, adequate supervision and safe working practices.

Wellspring acknowledges the importance of the involvement and cooperation of all workers in order to achieve these ends, and undertakes to provide adequate induction and the necessary information, education, ongoing training, and access to appropriate advice. We aim to create an environment in which both the spirit and the letter of the law are observed and where a high standard of practice prevails.

Signed _____ Date _____

Chair of Management Committee

STATEMENT OF ORGANISATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

The Management Committee undertakes to ensure that structures are in place and resources available to implement, maintain and review Health and Safety policies and procedures, and that these comply with current legislation and current good practice.

Wellspring recognises that the implementation of Health and Safety policies and procedures and their effectiveness depend on

- Recognition by all workers that they have a duty to act responsibly and to do everything they can to promote safety and prevent injury to themselves or to others.
- A clear definition of each person's responsibility for his or her own health and safety and that of others, and the specification of the duties, training needs, etc which relate to that responsibility.

For the purposes of this document, "staff" denotes all workers, voluntary, trainee, paid and self-employed.

Bearing in mind that Wellspring is a small organisation and that staff liaise informally, duties and responsibilities are broadly as follows:

Administrator

- Ensure the safety of the office environment
- Ensure maintenance of office equipment
- Maintain a reminder system for annual safety checks such as gas, electricity, fire extinguishers and fire blanket (kitchen), fire alarms, automatic heat and smoke detectors, and ensure that these are carried out
- Keep and update required health and safety records (liaise with Safety Officer)
- Maintain Records of Accidents
- Maintain Records of Incidents
- Monitor temperature within the building
- Maintain and update as necessary information and reference material on Health and Safety (liaise with Safety Officer)
- Review, at least annually, with Safety Officer and Clinical Co-ordinator, the policy and practice on safety and update this document whenever circumstances dictate
- Liaise with Safety Officer and Clinical Co-ordinator to ensure that all new office staff, therapists, trainees and caretaker/cleaners at induction are given the necessary health and safety information and training

Safety Officer (This role is taken by one of the therapists)

- Liaise with Administrator to establish schedules for the inspection and maintenance of equipment and ensure that inspection is carried out and appropriate records kept
- Monitor maintenance of appliances
- Take responsibility for alarm checks, weekly testing of fire alarm

- Ensure that appropriate signs, notices and information are displayed at all locations as required by statute
- In collaboration with appropriate staff carry out risk assessment (fire hazards, wiring on appliances etc) at least annually
- Ensure that arrangements with external contractors take into account health and safety issues
- Take responsibility for evacuation plan and ensure that it is known to all staff and service users
- Receive and act on feedback relating to health and safety from Wellspring workers and service users
- Carry out a review following any serious accident or incident

Housekeeping Group (Consisting of therapists)

- Monitor and maintain standards of housekeeping
- Liaise with Administrator and Safety Officer to ensure standards of safety within Wellspring
- Liaise with the caretaker/cleaner to ensure implementation of any relevant safeguards

First Aid Officer (A qualified therapist and/or the Administrator, who is required to have First Aid Training)

- Ensure that contents of the First Aid Boxes are adequate and appropriate
- Check regularly that contents are not past their use-by date
- Maintain and make accessible an up to date list of emergency numbers

It is the responsibility of All Staff to

- Cooperate with the above personnel to ensure that safe working practices are followed
- Ensure that guidelines in this policy are followed
- Bring to attention any deficiencies in or concerns about working practices, equipment, or safety arrangements
- Ask for advice or help if in doubt about the safety of a task or operation

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONAL PRACTICE

The Statements above make it necessary to undertake tasks relating to operational practice within Wellspring. Below is a checklist:

Risk assessments

- These will be undertaken and reviewed at least annually
- Safe systems of work and practice will be developed from these assessments

Accident and Incident Reporting

- All accidents or incidents must be entered in the Accident or Incident Book by a staff member as soon as possible
- Serious accidents or incidents must be swiftly reported to the Safety Officer so that a review can be carried out

Inspections and Testing

- Annual gas and electricity checks
- Annual fire extinguisher and fire blanket checks
- Annual and weekly fire alarm checks
- Annual automatic heat/smoke detector checks
- Regular safety checks

Induction

- At induction, all staff will be required to read this document and will be instructed and if necessary trained in relevant health and safety procedures
- Staff regularly using VDUs will be required to read the "Working with VDUs" booklet
- The attention of all staff will be drawn to the "Office Safety Essentials" booklet and to the file of information and reference material
- All staff will be inducted in emergency procedures
- All staff will have explained to them routine exit procedures

First Aid

- The First Aid Boxes will be accessible and contents checked regularly to ensure they are adequate and within their use-by date
- Emergency numbers will be displayed

Smoking

- Wellspring is a "No Smoking" building
- Smoking is discouraged, but if staff must smoke they should use the garden and not the area in front of the building and ensure that cigarettes are properly extinguished

Alcohol and Drugs

- No worker must carry out their duties under the influence of alcohol or non-prescribed drugs
- It is the responsibility of all staff to report any such worker

Stress/Mental Health

- Workers have a mutual responsibility of care to try to minimise the creation of stressful situations in the workplace and to try to alleviate colleagues' stress where possible

- Individuals are recommended to consult their line manager, appropriate Management Committee Member or the Clinical Co-ordinator if they are under undue stress or have a work related problem
- If workers have concerns about the mental health of a colleague they have a responsibility to raise this confidentially with the Clinical Co-ordinator or other appropriate person

The following Guidelines should be read in conjunction with this document:

- *Policy & Guidelines on Handling Violent and Aggressive Behaviour*
- *Guidelines on Lone Working and Off-Site Working*

Health & Safety Reference Material is available in the office.

APPENDIX

RISK ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

Fire safety

- Review exit routes
- Check that emergency exit and fire procedures are appropriately displayed
- Ensure annual testing of fire extinguishers/fire blanket
- Ensure annual and weekly fire alarm check
- Ensure annual testing of automatic smoke/heat detectors
- Ensure exits and passageways are clear of obstructions
- Check for materials that represent fire hazards
- Check electric cables
- Check adequacy of plugs and sockets

Passageways & stairs

- Ensure these are clear of obstructions
- Ensure these are well lit
- Ensure floor surfaces are safe and free from potential trip or slip hazards

Heating & ventilation

- Check that rooms are adequately heated in cold weather and sufficiently cool in hot
- Ensure annual check of gas/electric heating appliances
- Check for draughts/stuffiness

Other potential hazards

- Check or have regular checks carried out on electrical appliances
- Check for trailing leads

Keep a record of checks

Implement any changes or improvements required