

DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: SOCIAL WORK AND HEALTH COMMITTEE - 22 OCTOBER 2007

REPORT ON: HEALTH AND MENTAL WELL-BEING POLICY FOR SOCIAL WORK DEPARTMENT STAFF MEMBERS

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK

REPORT NO: 504 - 2007

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report brings to the attention of the Committee the proposed Health and Mental Well-being Policy for Social Work Department staff members, and proposals for its implementation. A copy of the Health and Mental Well-being Policy has been passed to each of the Group's Secretaries and is available for inspection in the members lounge.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to:
- approve the policy; and
 - agree the proposals for implementation and training.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 There will be no major financial implications. The proposed Induction input and training will be designed and run by current staff, in consultation with the policy planning group. Consideration is being given to including mental health service users in the training. This will be costed and, if agreed, discussions will be undertaken with Staff Development to fund this. There will be no additional costs incurred.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 This report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of Sustainability, Strategic Environment Assessment, Anti Poverty, Equality, Impact Assessment and Risk Management.
- 4.2 In terms of Targeting Resources this policy targets the population group of social work department staff members affected by poor mental health where there is evidence of poorer health status and outcomes. In promoting the health and mental well-being of social work department staff members the impact will have a positive affect on their families and wider communities in which they live.
- 4.3 In terms of Social Inclusion the policy focuses on developing personal capacity, interests and opportunities and integrating the person in a supportive social environment.
- 4.4 Action is taken to improve awareness of diversity and equality issues amongst City Council staff and the citizens of Dundee. An EQIA screening has been undertaken and the policy meets required criteria with its focus on mental health and well-being needs support for all

staff members in social work, regardless of gender, age, disability, race, religion, sexual orientation, caring responsibility or offending history.

- 4.5 The policy promotes mental well-being for all social work staff as well as positive support of staff members who have experienced mental health problems. It takes into account the appropriate legislation the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974, Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, The common law duty of care, and The Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

5.0 MAIN TEXT

5.1 Background:

Dundee City Social Work Department is working towards a comprehensive, integrated health and mental well-being approach within the work environment, which combines both individual and organisational level interventions. The introduction of this mental health policy would strengthen an organisational commitment to the pursuit of health and mental well-being for all staff members.

The policy represents an important strand of the Social Work Department's Promoting Health Strategy, which includes "Healthy Working Lives" (previously SHAW).

Dundee City Council Social Work Department recognises that good mental well-being is as important as physical health. We also recognise that, on average, one in four people will experience a mental health problem in the course of a year. We know that the majority of people who experience mental health problems can recover from them or learn to live with them, especially if they are supported in the early stages.

Research tells us that stigma and discrimination surrounding mental health issues in Scottish workplaces is still all too common. Stigma is morally and legally unacceptable and each member of staff has a responsibility to help to challenge and defeat it.

This policy and proposed training will:

- promote a positive attitude and culture to the promotion of mental well-being for all staff and an anti-stigma ethos;
- foster a positive approach to workers experiencing mental health problems or mental illness, currently and in the future;
- provide information for all staff members on promoting their own, and colleagues' mental well-being and;
- provide guidance for managers on promoting mental well-being in the workplace and on helping to prevent, or manage and support, workers experiencing mental health problems or mental illness in, or returning to, their workplace

5.2 Action to be Taken:

To support the introduction of this policy it is proposed that suitable information/training packages will be developed and run including:

- An insert on Well-being for the Employee Support Handbook;
- Induction: a half hour presentation is being designed which will ensure each service will receive an input on Health and Mental well-being within their Healthy Working Lives section of the Induction Programme. This will be normally be delivered by staff members from the Strategy, Performance and Support Service;
- Training for all non-supervisory staff: A 2hour training input on Mental well-being is being designed. This will cover raising awareness on mental well-being, self evaluation, preventative measures, self help and, using case discussions, stigma and support issues.

The training for current staff members will be piloted before the end of 2007, and following evaluation, will be run again in Spring 2008.

- Training for managers - anyone with a supervisory responsibility will be required to undertake a half-day (3 hour) training session on the health and mental well-being policy. This will also include issues of challenging stigma and ensuring effective support. Consideration is being given to including an input from mental health service users to cover the issues of what hinders and what helps people stay in, or return to, work. This training will be piloted by the end of 2007.
- Thereafter annual training events will be required to ensure new managers receive training on the policy.

6.0 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 The Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive (Finance), Depute Chief Executive (Support Services) and Head of Finance have been consulted on this report.

The policy was compiled by a group of staff members representing the range of Social Work services across Dundee. Several individual staff members' also informed it, by sharing their personal experiences of both good and poor practice in this area. Prior to being finalised the policy was sent out to all staff for consultation.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1

Alan G Baird
Director of Social Work

Date: 21 September 2007