

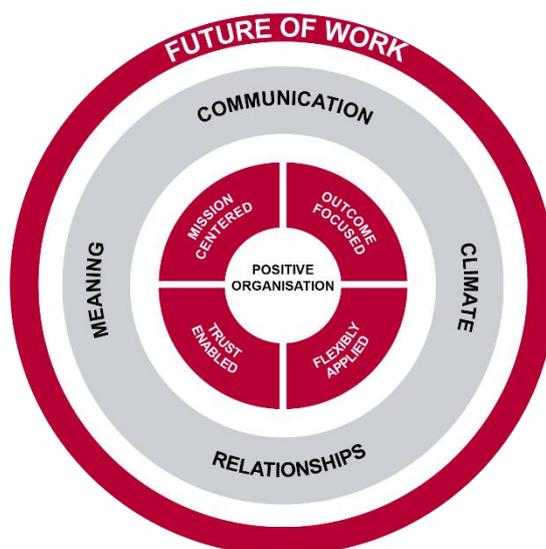


# RCSI

## Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

### Positive Organisation

Our vision is that RCSI can be a Positive Organisation within which principles of positive organisational psychology are practically applied in the workplace to allow our people and their performance to not only survive but also thrive. We are committed to executing a range of targeted activities and interventions aligned with the 4 pillars of positive leadership to help embed a workplace culture that is characterised by strong relationships, authentic communication, meaning and a sense of purpose.



**Positive climate** -Fostering an emotional climate where positive emotions dominate over negative emotions inside and outside the workplace.

**Positive communication** -Engaging in positive communication where affirmative, supportive and inclusive language replaces negative and critical language.

**Positive relationships** -Building positive relationships that enhance trust and are a source of enrichment to the individual, their team and throughout the organisation.

**Positive meaning** -Reinforcing positive meaning where people feel like they are engaging in purposeful work and positive outcomes that bring value to the organisation.

This Mental Health and Wellbeing policy forms part of our Positive Organisation commitment to support our staff and create a healthy and positive work environment. Our aim is to ensure everyone working at RCSI feels safe, valued, and is treated fairly.

## **Policy Purpose**

RCSI prioritises the health and wellbeing of our staff and is committed to creating a supportive and psychologically safe environment where our staff can flourish.

This Mental Health and Wellbeing policy outlines our provisions to prevent and address mental health issues among our staff. Mental health is just as important as physical health. Mental illness may be detrimental to a person, which can impact our happiness, productivity, and collaboration.

## **Scope**

This policy applies to all staff members of RCSI.

## **Statement of Commitment**

We understand that mental health is impacted on by a range of individual factors, and factors including the working environment, and our workplace relationships with others.

As such we are committed to:

- Actively promoting positive mental health.
- Enabling individuals to develop and manage their own mental health.
- Helping those experiencing mental health difficulties, as far as possible, to recover.
- Building and maintaining organisational systems that impact positively on mental health, promote equality and reduce stigma around mental health.

## **Values**

The values that inform our behaviour in relation to mental health mirror our organisational values of respect, underpinned by our equality, diversity, and inclusion commitments.

## Policy Objectives

The objectives of this policy are to outline how RCSI complies with legal obligations contained in the:

- Employment Equality Acts 1998–2011 and the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005.
- Raise awareness across the organisation and at all levels about the importance of promoting mental health in the workplace.
- Help each individual learn how to take responsibility for managing their own mental health effectively, and learn how they can enable/support the mental health of others.
- Eliminate or reduce organisational risk factors in relation to mental health (e.g. bullying, stress, discrimination or harassment), wherever possible.
- Enable positive mental health and equality in practice through the provision of timely and appropriate reasonable accommodation and supports for individuals who are experiencing mental health difficulties or mental illness.

## Policy Definitions

### Mental Health

The World Health Organisation defines mental health as:

A state of well-being in which the individual realises their own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully and is able to make a contribution to their community.

### Legal Responsibilities

We are fully committed to complying with our responsibilities under the Employment Equality Acts 1998–2011.

We recognise that mental health difficulties (e.g. stress, anxiety, and depression) are covered by the Disability ground under the Employment Equality Acts, and we are committed to the provision of reasonable accommodation, where appropriate and necessary.

We are also committed to our legal responsibilities under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005, including identifying and assessing psychosocial risk (e.g. stress or bullying), and reducing such risks.

In the event that we are aware of individual employees with mental health difficulties we will work with them to identify particular risks and seek to implement measures to reduce those risks.

## Disclosure

There is no obligation on any staff member to disclose that they have a mental health difficulty. A mental health difficulty may not impact on a person's capability to carry out the demands of their job and in this case, they may feel there is no reason to disclose.

However, it is difficult for us to support appropriately a staff member if we are unaware of any difficulties they are experiencing. We are committed to working positively with anyone disclosing information about their mental health difficulties, so that we can identify what may help them to function productively in work.

A disclosure will usually take place between a staff member and their line manager in the first instance; however, a staff member may choose to speak directly to their HR Partner.

In the case of a disclosure that has arisen due to a mental health difficulty interfering with the individual's ability to do their job, we will adopt a partnership approach with the individual to explore and clarify the following:

1. What difficulties is the person experiencing, and how is this stopping/hampering the person doing their job?
2. What supports (reasonable accommodations) would be needed to "close the gap" and enable the person to be fully capable to carry out the demands of their job?
3. How do we make a decision about reasonable accommodation, and how do we effectively and sensitively communicate that decision?
4. How do we effectively and sensitively implement a reasonable accommodation?

In order for this partnership approach to be successful, it is necessary for the individual to be open to disclosing their current difficulties and to exploring options through conversation. The aim of this supportive conversation is to explore and identify how we can work together in order for them to be able to carry out their work in a safe and supported way. It is difficult to help a staff member if they are unwilling to engage with the supports and resources that are available to them, or talk through how solutions can be found.

We are committed to respect for individual privacy and confidentiality. Information that is disclosed to us will be treated sensitively and will be stored in accordance with our legal responsibilities under the Data Protection legislation.

## Case by Case Basis

No two people will experience a mental health difficulty the same way. Each person will be supported on a case-by-case basis. We will adopt a partnership approach, through conversation, working with each individual to explore what support options are most suitable for them.

In some cases, this may be to signpost counselling supports; reorganise workload;

an individual may require some leave on compassion grounds; or they may be referred (with explicit consent) to our Occupational Health provider who will perform a health assessment and map out how best to support the individual.

## **Manager Guidance**

We ask Managers to stay connected to their team and remain vigilant in relation to the wellbeing of team members. We advise all people managers to familiarise themselves with our 'talking about wellbeing with your team' [conversation guide](#). Discussing wellbeing with your team members should form part of your regular conversations, and could form part of your formal Professional Development Planning (PDP) conversations. This guidance document will help you prepare for the conversation, what you can expect and how to signpost to different support resources.

### **If a staff member makes a mental health difficulty or illness disclosure to you**

Discuss together with the individual the questions as set out in the 'Disclosure' part of this policy adopting a partnership approach.

Work through the supports and resources available to the individual and explore options that may help such as the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), [Staff Wellbeing Resources](#) and Social pages of the staff portal, their HR Partner or Occupational Health, or their own GP/counselling service who may be aware of their difficulty.

Where you have agreed on any reasonable accommodations that could be introduced to help support the staff member at this time, develop an action plan and agree to check in regularly to ensure the current arrangements are working for everyone.

Your HR partner is available to support you during this time.

### **If a staff member has not made a disclosure to you but you are concerned about their mental health**

If you perceive that a staff member is in a state of emotional or psychological distress due to observed behaviours (conflicts with colleagues, erratic behaviour, absences, struggling to carry out duties) as a first step, reach out to them.

If a Manager has tried to engage with the team member on multiple occasions with no response to discuss their observations and genuine concerns, and there is a continued concern for their welfare, managers are advised to contact their HR partner. Where HR are made aware of, and are concerned about a team member's health and safety, HR will reach out to meet with the team member, possibly leading to advice to speak to our occupational health provider.

## **Occupational Health**

Where an individual agrees to be referred to Occupational Health, a referral form is

filled in in partnership with the individual and their HR Partner. Occupational Health will carry out an assessment and provide a recommendation report on how best to support the individual.

RCSI will follow all reasonable recommendations set out in the assessment report. This report is shared with the individual and will map out the partnership approach to be taken by RCSI and the individual to best support the staff member to be able to carry out their role, where it is deemed safe to do so, and with any required reasonable accommodations in place. This will be an on-going conversation and partnership and can be revisited as often as required.

If an absence from work is recommended by Occupational Health, the Absence and Sick Leave policy will apply.

## Related Policies

Sick Leave  
Dignity at Work  
Grievance Procedure  
Compassionate Leave  
Supporting Staff with Disabilities  
Right to Disconnect  
Equal Opportunities Policy  
Health and Safety Policies & Procedures

Policies listed can be found [here](#). This list is not exhaustive. All of these policies aim to preserve a harmonious workplace and promote our positive culture where staff can flourish and balance their jobs with their personal lives.

## Additional Resources for Individuals

For information on health and wellbeing supports available to you visit the [‘Supporting your Wellbeing’](#) staff portal pages.

We offer an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) that gives our staff the support that they need to help them manage their health and wellbeing issues effectively. Our Spectrum.Life EAP provides free, confidential, professional counselling available to you and your family (16 years old+) 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. **Freephone ROI: 1800 903 542**

Download the Spectrum.Life Digital App for resources curated by experts on areas of our wellbeing and lifestyle such as sleep, nutrition, anxiety, exercise videos and more. More information is [available here](#).

## Additional Resources for Managers

You HR partner is available to speak to if you have concerns about a member of your team's mental health or performance where it could be related to a mental health issue.

We have created a guide on [Talking about Wellbeing on your Team](#) to help support

managers in initiating a conversation.

The EAP phone service is also available for our people managers to speak to an advisor on a range of topics such as coaching, time management and conflict resolution. Freephone ROI: 1800 903 542 for phone support.

## Mental Health Awareness

To raise mental health awareness and combat the stigmas associated with them, we have committed to:

- **Providing Mental Health Awareness Training.** These workshops are being scheduled bi-annual through Irish Life, our sick leave insurers, for both managers and employees explaining important elements of mental health. Suicide Awareness Training is also available and promoted throughout the year.
- **Promoting Mental Health Awareness initiatives** such as See Change Green Ribbon month and World Mental Health Day.
- **Proactively support staff wellbeing.** Through periods of change such as Maternity Matters workshop for staff returning from maternity leave, individual retirement support; and through peer-to-peer social support forums through the [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Staff Networks](#).
- **Keep employees informed.** This policy will be reviewed and updated as required annually by the HR Policy Review Group. Any changes will be communicated to staff.
- **Continue to create resources to support our health and wellbeing.** Through our Centre for Positive Psychology and Health, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion, Staff Learning and Development, Human Resources, Health & Safety and RCSI Inspire teams. Resources can be found in the [Staff Wellbeing](#) section of the staff portal.

## Getting Further Help

The Human Resources Department is available to support any member of staff in understanding the content of this policy and procedure.

HR Partners

- Cathy Buffini [cathybuffini@rcsi.com](mailto:cathybuffini@rcsi.com) or via MS Teams
- Maire Ryan [maireryanhr@rcsi.com](mailto:maireryanhr@rcsi.com) or via MS Teams
- Mark O'Dea [markodea@rcsi.com](mailto:markodea@rcsi.com) or via MS Teams
- Rachel Hipwell [rachelhipwell@rcsi.com](mailto:rachelhipwell@rcsi.com) or via MS Teams

## Policy Review

The Human Resources Department will ensure that this policy will be monitored and kept under review.