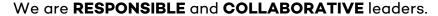
# **Leader Toolkit**

## Recognise the signs of stress



We care for our people. We build trust, communicate and support each other.

### Why use this tool

There is a difference between feeling outside of one's comfort zone and feeling overwhelmed. Both may feel "stressful". The first is positive, as you are most likely to be learning something new. The latter, however, is not OK.

#### When to use this tool

If you think you or a team member is finding things too stressful, you can use this checklist to alert you to the negative effects it is having and target solutions to help.

#### How to use this tool

We all experience stress differently in different situations.

Sometimes you might be able to tell right away when you or a team mate is feeling under stress, but other times you might keep going without recognising the signs. Stress can affect people both emotionally and physically, and it can affect the way you or they behave.

Review the signs of stress listed in the tool and make a point of having a conversation to talk through what you can do to get help or support someone who is experiencing stress.

### **Tips**

- Speak regularly with team members to check how they're doing and to reflect on what might be causing them stress.
- Poor communication can be a significant cause of stress. Where communication is clear, open, effective, manageable and responsive, staff will be able to access all the information they need to do their job while avoiding overload.
- Encourage team members to:
  - o work sensible hours
  - o take full lunch breaks
  - rest and recuperate after busy periods
  - take their full annual leave entitlement.

# Recognise the signs of stress

<ul> <li>Work performance</li> <li>declining/inconsistent performance</li> <li>uncharacteristic errors</li> <li>loss of control over work</li> <li>loss of motivation/commitment</li> <li>indecision</li> <li>lapses in memory</li> <li>increased time at work</li> <li>lack of holiday planning/usage</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>crying</li> <li>arguments</li> <li>undue sensitivity</li> <li>irritability/moodiness</li> <li>over-reaction to problems</li> <li>personality clashes</li> <li>sulking</li> <li>immature behaviour</li> </ul>	Physical signs  nervous stumbling speech sweating tiredness/lethargy upset stomach/flatulence tension headaches hand tremor rapid weight gain or loss constantly feeling cold
Withdrawal  arriving late to work  leaving early  extended lunches  absenteeism  resigned attitude  reduced social contact  elusiveness/evasiveness	Aggressive behaviour  malicious gossip criticism of others vandalism shouting bullying or harassment poor employee relations temper outbursts	<ul> <li>Other behaviours</li> <li>out of character behaviour</li> <li>difficulty in relaxing</li> <li>increased consumption of alcohol</li> <li>lack of interest in appearance/hygiene</li> <li>accidents at home or work</li> <li>reckless driving</li> <li>unnecessary risk taking</li> </ul>

