Policy:	Mental Health & Wellbeing Policy Statement	Reference:	MHWSSES0087
		Review Date:	01/2023

Purpose.

The purpose of this policy is for SES Engineering (Newark) Ltd to establish, promote and maintain the mental health and wellbeing of all staff through workplace practices, and encourage staff to take responsibility for their own mental health and wellbeing. We pursue this aim using a whole organisation approach which includes promoting positive mental health for all staff, recognising and addressing sources of stress in the workplace, and supporting those staff who are experiencing poor mental health.

This policy sets out what help is available to support all staff to have positive mental health and wellbeing. By developing a positive culture and by implementing practical, relevant and effective practices we can contribute to SES Engineering (Newark) Ltds' success and sustainability.

Overall, this policy aims to:

➢ Build and maintain a workplace environment and culture that promotes positive mental health and wellbeing and prevents discrimination (including bullying and harassment)
➢ Increase employee knowledge and awareness of mental health and wellbeing issues and behaviours
➢ Recognise and address sources of stress in the workplace
➢ Support those staff who are experiencing poor mental health
➢ Reduce stigma around depression and anxiety in the workplace
➢ Facilitate employees' active participation in a range of initiatives that support and promote mental health and wellbeing for all staff.

Scope.

Mental health conditions and the effects of stress can affect anyone, regardless of their position in the organization. This applies to all SES Engineering (Newark) Ltds locations.

This policy is part of SES Engineering (Newark) Ltds overarching plan to promote positive mental health and wellbeing in the workplace. Whereas the strategy outlines several areas of improvement over the next 5 years and might include specific plans, the focus of this policy is on what values we hold, what responsibilities we have, what we will undertake and in turn what we expect from our staff.

Why it Matters?

Whilst most of us have positive mental health and wellbeing most of the time, our mental health can change. There may be times when we are 'thriving', times when we start to struggle, and times when we develop a diagnosable mental health condition. 1 in 6 UK workers are currently experiencing a mental health condition, and 1 in 4 workers will have some form of mental health condition in any one year. So, in SES Engineering (Newark) Ltd we might have 25% staff who are experiencing some mental health condition such as anxiety, depression, or feeling the effects of undue stress. These conditions might last a long or a short time or they might come and go. And just as we help our employees to keep physically well and support them through physical illness or disability, we undertake to do the same for our staff with respect to mental health and wellbeing. We aim to help all staff keep mentally well and to support them through periods of poor mental health whether they remain at work or take time off.

How to promote positive mental health for employees.

SES Engineering (Newark) Ltd is committed, through the implementation of this policy and our own actions, to promoting positive mental health for all staff. Equally, we want to provide staff with information and resources on how they can look after their own wellbeing and to lead by example in this regard - through our day-to-day behaviours, through providing activities within work that support individual wellbeing, and through promoting a healthy work/life balance.

The following five evidence-based steps are recognised as being important for our individual wellbeing. These may help stimulate ideas for activities (inside and outside the workplace) that support this aim:

1. *Connect:* Connect with the people around you. With family, friends, colleagues and neighbours. At home, work, school or in your local community. Think of these as the cornerstones of your life and invest time in developing these relationships. Building these connections will support and enrich you every day.
2. *Be Active:* Go for a walk or run. Step outside. Cycle. Play a game. Garden. Dance. Exercising makes you feel good. Most importantly, discover a physical activity you enjoy and that suits your level of mobility and fitness.
3. *Take Notice/Be mindful*: Be curious. Catch sight of the beautiful. Remark on the unusual. Notice the changing seasons. Savour the moment, whether you are walking to work, eating lunch or talking to friends. Be aware of the world around you and what you are feeling. Reflecting on your experiences will help you appreciate what matters to you.
4. *Keep Learning:* Try something new. Rediscover an old interest. Sign up for that course. Take on a different responsibility at work. Fix a bike. Learn to play an instrument or how to cook your favourite food. Set a challenge you will enjoy achieving. Learning new things will make you more confident as well as being fun.
5. *Give:* Do something nice for a friend, or a stranger. Thank someone. Smile. Volunteer your time. Join a community group. Look out, as well as in. Seeing yourself, and your happiness, linked to the wider community can be incredibly rewarding and creates connections with the people around you.

How to recognize signs of mental health problems at work.

We may become aware of signs which indicate that a colleague is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing difficulties. These warning signs should always be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should communicate their concerns to their line manager.

Possible warning signs include:

➢ Changes in productivity e.g., deterioration in performance at work, lethargy in a previously energetic person, new pattern of unexplained lateness or absences, recent inability to concentrate on work, recent inability to complete work.
➢ Changes in social functioning e.g., deterioration in social functioning, withdrawal from colleagues, isolation.
➢ Changes in personality or behaviour e.g., extreme mood swings, acting anxious or agitated, showing rage, uncontrolled anger, behaving recklessly.
➢ Increased alcohol or drug use.
➢ Changes in eating and sleeping patterns.
➢ Signs of (self-inflicted) physical harm.

How to identify areas of stress at work.

The HSE defines stress as *'the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them'*. This makes an important distinction between pressure, which can be a positive state if managed correctly, and stress which can be detrimental to health.

They identify **6** main areas of work design which can affect stress levels, and which should be managed carefully and proactively. These are:

1. *Demands:* workload, work patterns, environment.
2. *control:* how much say you have in the way you do your work.
3. *support:* encouragement, sponsorship and resources provided by organisation, line management and colleagues.
4. relationships: promoting positive working to avoid conflict and dealing with unacceptable behaviour.
5. *role:* understanding your role within the organisation and whether the organisation ensures that you don't have conflicting roles.
6. *change:* how organisational change is managed and communicated.

Support is given to:

➢ Monitor workloads to ensure that people are not overloaded.
➢ Monitor working hours and overtime to ensure that staff are not overworking.

- ➢ Monitor holidays to ensure that staff are taking their full entitlement.
- ➢ Ensure that staff are fully trained to discharge their duties.
- ➢ Ensure that staff are provided with meaningful developmental opportunities; ensure that good communication between management and staff, particularly where there are organisational and procedural changes.
- ➢ Attend training as requested.
- ➢ Ensure that bullying and harassment is not tolerated within their jurisdiction.
- ➢ Be vigilant and offer additional support to a member of staff who is experiencing stress outside work e.g., bereavement or separation.
- ➢ Conduct and implement recommendations of risks assessments.

How to support an employee experiencing poor mental health.

Staff may notice signs of possible mental health problems in a colleague and are encouraged to approach the colleague concerned and offer to talk and to help them speak to their line manager as early as possible. Line managers will arrange a time to talk privately and listen non-judgmentally to the employee's current concerns and situation, whether this arises from problems inside or outside of work. They will assess the impact on their work and if the person is well enough to be at work; whether work stressors are contributing to the current condition and, with the employee, agree what next steps will be most appropriate in the short term and in the medium term. They will confirm who else needs to know and make arrangements for how best to support the employee and how often.

How to make reasonable adjustments.

- ➢ Schedule modification – start earlier/later, use leave (or be provided with additional leave) to attend appointments, work part time initially
- ➢ Job modification – job sharing, reassigning work, redeployment to vacant position
- ➢ Environmental modification – sound proofing, screens to increase privacy, bright lights, reserved parking space, increased personal space, all of these are examples and may not be conducive to the workplace or the individuals specific job role.
- ➢ Policy changes – e.g., additional leave to attend appointments, compassionate leave, additional time to reach deadlines/milestones.
- ➢ Human assistance - e.g., allowing a job coach to come to the workplace.
- ➢ Providing mental health training for work colleagues
- ➢ Technological assistance – e.g., allowing computer for home working, providing software to assist with structure or prompts during the day, dependant upon job role within the organisation.
- ➢ Supervisory assistance – e.g., extra supervision, additional training, adjusted training in the person's preferred learning style.