



**Scottish
Ambulance
Service**

Working in Partnership with Universities



HS 002 Wellbeing Policy

Version 2

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1 Policy Statement

1.1

Scottish Ambulance Service (The Service) recognises its duty to comply with the Health and Safety at Work Act (HSWA) 1974 and all subordinate regulations, such as Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1999.

1.2

The Service is committed to ensuring, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of all its workforce and will do all that is reasonably practicable to protect the people and patients within its care.

1.3

A range of policies and practices exist which will enable us to achieve this. This policy will bring together all of those relevant policies for easy reference which will help both staff and managers to fulfil their roles. It will make it easier to find support for any issues related to wellbeing at work.

1.4

Useful links to the relevant policies, guidance and external sources of information will be contained within this policy.

2 Scope

2.1 This policy applies to all who work for or carry out work for the Service, including volunteers and work experience students. It also applies to patients within the care of the Service and any visitor to the Service.

3 Aim

3.1 The aim of this policy is to support our workforce by encouraging safe and healthy workplace settings, promoting good mental and physical health and wellbeing at work and applying non-discriminatory practices.

3.2 This policy aims to ensure that all our workforce, irrespective of the position and level they hold, and with consideration of any legally protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage & civil partnership, pregnancy & maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation) are:

- Provided with a basic understanding of health and wellbeing issues
- Protected from harm and discrimination whilst at work
- Provided with support for physical or mental health issues
- Encouraged and supported to make healthy lifestyle choices in relation to diet, smoking, alcohol intake and physical exercise
- Provided with opportunities to participate in health promotion activities

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- Provided with a workplace environment that promotes the mental & physical wellbeing of all staff
- Provided with support for drug, alcohol or substance misuse issues
- Supported to manage their financial wellbeing.

3.3 We will achieve our aims by:

- Continuing to observe all Service policies that relate to wellbeing matters
- Inform new staff members of our policies on induction
- Promote a culture based on trust, confidentiality, support and mutual respect, that will allow staff to be able to report any issues without fear of discrimination or reprisal
- Develop our managers and senior staff to deal positively with mental and physical health and wellbeing issues, and to show leadership for this policy
- Monitor data related to health and wellbeing, including those related to protected characteristics
- Continuing to achieve and maintain the gold standard for Health Working Lives
- Completing a wellbeing benchmark and regularly updating our wellbeing action plans

4. Objectives

4.1 We will develop a more proactive and preventative approach to support the health and wellbeing of our workforce with opportunities to participate in health promoting activities

4.2 We will promote positive mental health and wellbeing in the workplace and de-stigmatise mental health issues to create an open and non-discriminatory environment

4.3 We will offer a range of services and resources to support our workforce's health & wellbeing that are easy to access and are well publicised and signposted

4.4 We will assess and manage, where possible, workplace factors that may have a negative impact on our workforce's health and wellbeing

4.5 We will develop and promote training and learning opportunities that support workforce health & wellbeing and increase personal resilience

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5 Context

A wellbeing policy is an essential requirement for safeguarding employee health and wellbeing at work. The pressures and demands in the workplace today are unprecedented and directly impact on the health, wellbeing and overall morale of staff. A progressive workplace accounts for the health & wellbeing of its staff, investing in initiatives for improvement that will in turn provide benefits for both staff and the organisation.

By implementing a wellbeing policy at work in The Service, we can create a workplace culture that takes a proactive and preventative approach to our health and wellbeing, encourages the uptake of healthy initiatives, promotes healthy behaviours and provides information and resources that support our people and addresses their needs and requirements.

5.1 Physical Activity

Physical activity is essential for good health and contributes to positive wellbeing. Many of the leading causes of disease and disability in our society – such as coronary heart disease, strokes, obesity, type 2 diabetes, hypertension (high blood pressure), colorectal cancer, stress, anxiety, osteoarthritis, osteoporosis and low back pain – are associated with physical inactivity.

For general health benefit, adults should achieve at least 150 minutes a week of moderate intensity physical activity. This should be taken in bouts of 10 minutes or more to count towards your weekly total and we should try to be active on every day of the week.

Any activity during leisure, working or travel counts. Physical activity includes activities such as walking, cycling, gardening, dancing and housework, as well as participation in sport and formal exercise.

The workplace is an important setting in which people can increase their levels of activity to benefit their health and protect against illness.

Physical activity helps staff manage stress, back pain, weight and medical conditions. Physically active staff also report less illness and recover more quickly from the illnesses they do get.

Staff engaged in physical activity initiatives have reported greater enjoyment of their work, improved concentration and mental alertness and improved cooperation and rapport with colleagues.

5.2 Healthy Eating

Healthy eating is essential for good health and contributes to positive wellbeing. Many of the leading causes of disease and disability in our society – such as

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obesity, coronary heart disease, type 2 diabetes, certain types of cancer, mental ill health and osteoporosis – are associated with poor nutritional choices.

A healthy, balanced diet contains a variety of different types of food, including lots of fruit, vegetables; plenty of starchy foods such as wholemeal bread and wholegrain cereals; some protein-rich foods such as meat, fish, eggs and lentils; and some dairy foods. We should also be drinking about 6 to 8 glasses (1.2 litres) of water, or other fluids, every day to stop us getting dehydrated.

The workplace is an important setting in which people can increase their intake of healthy foods to benefit their health and protect against illness. A healthy, balanced diet also helps people to recover more quickly from illness.

The food we eat, and what we drink, not only have a physical impact on our body, but can also contribute to our mental health, resulting in improved levels of concentration, mental alertness and ability to cope with everyday stresses and strains.

5.3 Mental Wellbeing

Mental ill health and stress are associated with many of the leading causes of disease and disability in our society. Promoting and protecting the mental wellbeing of the workforce is important for individuals' physical health, social wellbeing and productivity.

Mental wellbeing in the workplace is relevant to all staff and everyone can contribute to improved mental wellbeing at work.

Addressing workplace mental wellbeing can help strengthen the positive, protective factors of employment, reduce risk factors for mental ill health and improve general health. It can also help promote the employment of people who have experienced mental health conditions and support them once they are at work.

Important aspects of mental wellbeing include providing information and raising awareness, management skills to deal with issues around mental health and stress effectively, providing a supportive work environment, offering assistance, advice and support to anyone experiencing poor mental wellbeing or returning to work after a period of absence due to poor mental wellbeing.

5.4 Financial Wellbeing

Employees who are struggling financially report at least one sign of poor mental health that could affect their ability to function at work. These include loss of sleep, poor concentration, and reduced motivation. The Service has the power to improve both the financial and emotional wellbeing of their workforce, as well as their productivity, by introducing new processes or resources that build financial

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resilience, creating a culture of support and providing essential help once problems have set in.

5.5 Work life Balance

Work–life balance supports provided by employers, often known as family-friendly practices or flexible working arrangements, are commonly thought to enable employees to better juggle the demands of domestic and other responsibilities, and perhaps reduce job demands. Work–life balance supports provided by the Service include flexitime, job-sharing, moving from full-time to part-time working, compressing working hours, home-working, term-time-only working, and paid leave to care for dependants in an emergency among others.

6 Roles and Responsibilities

This policy brings together existing Service Health related policies and guidance. Including a new Health Passport details can be found by clicking on this link (add link once we have them published). All staff have a responsibility to uphold all policies and should adhere to good practice guidance where available. Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined within each of the named policies and guidance. An appropriate Manager and employee guidance around reasonable adjustments is available (appendix 1) should any of these health issue become relevant to you; a flow chart is attached below (Appendix 2) detailing the process for considering reasonable adjustments.

- Stress and Wellbeing at Work
- Working Life Balance (Flexible working/Special Leave/Carer Leave/Parental Leave)
- No Smoking
- Violence and Aggression
- Lone working
- Manual Handling
- COSHH
- Alcohol and Substance misuse
- Management of Road Risk
- Fatigue
- Noise
- Vibration
- First Aid
- Slip/Trip/Fall
- Display Screen Equipment
- Allergy and Anaphylaxis
- New and Expectant Mothers

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- Maternity
- Promoting Dignity at Work
- Promoting Attendance
- Whistleblowing
- Menopause and period dignity (Guidance)
- Cancer (Guidance)
- All guidance Documents

7.0 Review

7.1 This policy will be reviewed every three years or sooner if there are any relevant changes to legislation or best practice.

8 .Implementation, (including raising awareness)

8.1 The policy will be implemented and communicated to managers and staff within the Service via the Chief Executive Weekly Bulletin. Emails will also be sent to senior managers asking them to bring the existence of the policy to their staff.

9 Further Guidance and Support

9.1 Information to support the application of this policy are available in the guidance note as appendix 1 and, on your HR, and H&S pages on the @SAS.

9.2 Support Contacts are listed below

Occupational Health – confidential service for health or work-related health issues via both self or management referrals Available to: All Scottish Ambulance Service staff

Phone: 0131 275 7890 (Then press Option 1) Access Monday – Friday 9am – 5pm with voicemail service operating out with these hours

Email: nss.sasoccupationalhealth@nhs.scot

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Part of this service includes an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) offering counselling: details below

Employee Assistance Programme

Help – employee counselling service provided by trained counselling & welfare practitioners Available to: All Scottish Ambulance Service staff & family members residing at home address

Phone: 0800 032 9849 Access 24hrs a day, 7 days a week

Information and guidance can also be found on their website at <https://sgcp.helpeap.com/>

- [Union Contacts](#)
- [Confidential Alert Line](#)

Other support/advice is available (the list is not exhaustive but please ensure you only read information from a trusted source)

- [Wellbeing Strategy](#)
- [NHS inform - Scottish health information you can trust | NHS inform](#)
- [Home - Healthy Working Lives](#)
- [Breathing Space is a free confidential service for people in Scotland. Open up when you're feeling down - phone 0800 83 85 87](#)
- [Samaritans Scotland](#)
- [Mind | Mind, the mental health charity - help for mental health problems](#)
- [National Debtline - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- <https://www.moneyandmentalhealth.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Best-practice-checklist-Employers.pdf>
- [Macmillan Cancer Support - Macmillan Cancer Support](#)
- [Cancer Research UK](#)
- [British Heart Foundation - Beat heartbreak forever \(bhf.org.uk\)](#)
- [Diabetes UK - Know diabetes. Fight diabetes. | Diabetes UK](#)
- [Home - Chest Heart & Stroke Scotland \(chss.org.uk\)](#)
- [Men's health - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#)
- [Women's health - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#)
- [Menopause symptoms & treatment - Illnesses & conditions | NHS inform](#)

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Appendix 1

Guidance to support The Wellbeing Policy – Reasonable Adjustments.

In a government survey, one in five people in the UK (13.9 million) said they had a disability. Under the Equality Act 2010, a person is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Impairment means condition. It may be physical, mental or both. But whether a condition is a disability will, in most cases, depend on all the facts and circumstances of the individual case. Long-term means lasting at least a year or likely to be for the rest of the person's life or recurring.

The Service must make adjustments for a disabled worker or job applicant if they are reasonable.

What is a reasonable adjustment?

Just one of two small changes at work could be all it takes to help staff stay in work. Remember what counts as a reasonable adjustment will always depend on the situation. Reasonable adjustments are meant to remove or minimise disadvantages experienced by disabled people. The Service should also make sure policies and practices do not put disabled people at a disadvantage.

When must The Service make reasonable adjustments?

The Service must consider making reasonable adjustments, involving the disabled worker or successful job applicant in the discussion about what can be done to support them and the decision, if:

- it becomes aware of their disability
- it could reasonably be expected to know they have a disability
- the person asks for adjustments to be made
- the person is having difficulty with any part of their job
- Either the person's sickness record, or their delay in returning to work, is linked to their disability.

What does reasonable mean?

What is reasonable will depend on the circumstances of each individual case. And it will depend on an assessment of factors including:

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- Is the adjustment practical to make?
- Does The Service have the resources to pay for it?
- Will the adjustment be effective in overcoming or reducing the disadvantage in the workplace?
- Will the adjustment have an adverse impact on the health & safety of others?

The size of an Organisation can be a factor. An employment tribunal may expect more from a large organisation than a small one because it may have greater means.

Also, whether The Service has access to other funding, such as the Government's Access to Work scheme, could be another factor. The Service is responsible for paying the cost. Find out more about Access to Work at www.gov.uk/access-to-work - it can help with advice and, depending on circumstances, some costs.

The Service is not required to change the basic nature of a job. And if there are times when suggested adjustments are unreasonable, The Service could lawfully refuse to make them. However, before refusing, it should be sure of its case. The ACAS Helpline on 0300 123 1100 can offer advice.

Deciding what reasonable adjustments need to be made

In assessing what reasonable adjustments need to be made, the three main questions The Service should consider are:

- Does it need to change how things are done - for example, any work practices or policies?
- Does it need to physically change the workplace?
- Does it need to provide extra equipment or get someone to assist the disabled worker or job applicant in some way?

What might some reasonable adjustments look like?

Many adjustments will be simple and inexpensive. Some examples might include:

- Changing the recruitment process so a candidate can be considered for a job
- Giving time off to attend medical appointments or for rehabilitation (this may already be covered in other policies)

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- Providing an accessible toilet
- A special chair because of back, neck, or hip problems
- A specialist piece of equipment or an adjustment to existing equipment
- A special keyboard because of arthritis, RSI etc
- A ramp for a wheelchair user
- Changing working hours or patterns of work, home working or allowing additional breaks
- Allowing staff who become disabled to make a phased return to work, including flexible hours or part-time working
- Making physical changes to the workplace, like installing a ramp for a wheelchair user or an audio-visual fire alarm for a deaf person
- Letting a disabled person work somewhere else, such as on the ground floor for a wheelchair user or someone on crutches.
- A designated car park space
- Modifying sickness absence triggers - these are the number of days' absence when managers consider warnings, and possible dismissal, unless attendance at work improves
- Modifying performance targets, to take into account time off for medical appointments, fatigue etc
- Reallocation of a working duty or modification of contract
- Redeployment to another role – e.g. non-public facing role
- Offering staffs retraining opportunities
- Providing a mentor/Buddy to assist e.g. to assist with fire evacuation.

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- Doing things another way, such as allowing someone with social anxiety disorder to have their own desk instead of hot-desking

More detailed Reasonable adjustments may include:

Examples of steps it might be reasonable for you to have to take include:

Making adjustments to premises:

For example:

The Service makes structural or other physical changes such as widening a doorway, providing a ramp or moving furniture for a wheelchair user; relocates light switches, door handles, or shelves for someone who has difficulty in reaching; or provides appropriate contrast in decor to help the safe mobility of a visually impaired person.

Allocating some of the disabled worker's duties to another employee:

For example:

The Service reallocates minor or subsidiary duties to another employee as a disabled employee has difficulty doing them because of their disability. For example, the job involves occasionally going onto the open roof of a building but The Service transfers this work away from an employee whose disability involves severe vertigo.

Transferring the employee to fill an existing vacancy:

For example:

The Service should consider whether a suitable alternative post is available for an employee who becomes disabled (or whose disability worsens), where no reasonable adjustment would enable the employee to continue doing the current job. This might also involve retraining or other reasonable adjustments such as equipment for the new post or a transfer to a position on a higher grade.

Altering the employees hours of working or training:

For example:

The Service allows a disabled person to work flexible hours to enable them to have additional breaks to overcome fatigue arising from their disability. It could also include permitting part-time working, or different working hours to avoid the need to travel in the rush hour if this is a problem related to impairment. A phased return to work with a gradual build-up of hours might also be appropriate in some circumstances.

Assigning the employee to a different place of work or training:

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For example:

The Service relocates the work station of a newly disabled employee (who now uses a wheelchair) from an inaccessible third floor office to an accessible one on the ground floor. If The Service operates from more than one workplace, it may be reasonable to move the worker's place of work to other premises of the same organisation if the first building is inaccessible and the other premises are not.

Allowing the worker to be absent during working or training hours for rehabilitation, assessment or treatment.

For example:

The Service allows a disabled person who has recently developed a condition to have more time off work than would be allowed to non-disabled workers to enable them to have rehabilitation. A similar adjustment would be appropriate if a disability worsens or if a disabled employee needs occasional treatment anyway.

Giving, or arranging for, training or mentoring (whether for the disabled employee or any other employee). This could be training in particular pieces of equipment which the disabled worker uses, or an alteration to the standard workplace training to make sure it is accessible for the disabled worker.

For example:

All workers are trained in the use of a particular machine but The Service provides slightly different or longer training for an employee with restricted hand or arm movements, or training in additional software for a visually impaired person so that they can use a computer with speech output.

For example:

The Service provides training for workers on conducting meetings in a way that enables a Deaf staff member to participate effectively.

For example:

A disabled person returns to work after a six-month period of absence due to a stroke. The Service pays for them to see a work mentor, and allows time off to see the mentor, to help with their loss of confidence following the onset of their disability.

Acquiring or modifying equipment:

For example:

The Service might have to provide special equipment (such as an adapted keyboard for someone with arthritis or a large screen for a visually impaired workers), an adapted telephone for someone with a hearing impairment, or other modified equipment for disabled workers (such as longer handles on a machine).

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You do not have to provide or modify equipment for personal purposes unconnected with an employees job, such as providing a wheelchair if a person needs one in any event but does not have one. This is because the disadvantages do not flow from things you have control over.

Modifying instructions or reference manuals:

For example:

The format of instructions and manuals might need to be modified for some disabled workers (such as being produced in Braille or on audio CD) and instructions for people with learning disabilities might need to be conveyed orally with individual demonstration or in Easy Read.

Modifying procedures for testing or assessment:

For example:

An employee with restricted manual dexterity who was applying for promotion would be disadvantaged by a written test, so The Service gives that person an oral test instead.

Providing a reader or interpreter:

For example:

The Service arranges for a colleague to read hard copy post to a worker with a visual impairment at particular times during the working day. Alternatively, The Service might hire a reader.

Providing supervision or other support:

For example:

The Service provides a support worker or arranges help from a colleague, in appropriate circumstances, for someone whose disability leads to uncertainty or lack of confidence.

Allowing a disabled worker to take a period of disability leave:

For example:

An employee who has cancer needs to undergo treatment and rehabilitation. The Service allows a period of disability leave and permits them to return to their job at the end of this period.

Participating in supported employment schemes, such as WORKSTEP.

For example:

A person applies for a job as an office assistant after several years of not working because of depression. They have been participating in a supported employment scheme where they saw the job advertised. As a reasonable adjustment the person

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asks The Service to let them make private phone calls during the working day to a support worker at the scheme.

Employing a support worker to assist a disabled worker:

For example:

An adviser with a visual impairment is sometimes required to make home visits to clients. The Service employs a support worker to assist them on these visits.

Modifying disciplinary or grievance procedures:

For example:

An employee with a learning disability is allowed to take a friend (who does not work with them) to act as an advocate at a meeting with The Service about a grievance. Normally The Service allows workers to be accompanied only by work colleagues. The Service also makes sure that the meeting is conducted in a way that does not disadvantage or patronise the disabled worker.

Adjusting redundancy selection criteria:

For example:

A worker with an autoimmune disease has taken several short periods of absence during the year because of the condition. When The Service is taking the absences into account as a criterion for selecting people for redundancy, they discount these periods of disability-related absence.

Modifying performance-related pay arrangements:

For example:

A disabled employee who is paid purely on their output needs frequent short additional breaks during their working day – something The Service agrees to as a reasonable adjustment. It is likely to be a reasonable adjustment for The Service to pay them at an agreed rate (e.g. their average hourly rate) for these breaks.

It may sometimes be necessary for The Service to take a combination of steps.

For example:

A woman who is blind is given a new job with The Service in an unfamiliar part of the building. The Service:

- Arranges facilities for her assistance dog in the new area
- Arranges for her new instructions to be in Braille, and
- Provides disability equality training to all staff.

In some situations, a reasonable adjustment will not work without the co-operation of other employees. Your other employees may therefore have an important role in

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helping make sure that a reasonable adjustment is carried out in practice. You must make sure that this happens. It is unlikely to be a valid 'defence' to a claim under equality law for a failure to make reasonable adjustments to argue that an adjustment was unreasonable because your other staff were obstructive or unhelpful when you tried to make an adjustment happen. You would at least need to be able to show that you took all reasonable steps to try and resolve the problem of the attitude of your other staff.

For example:

The Service makes sure that a worker with autism has a structured working day as a reasonable adjustment. As part of the reasonable adjustment, it is the responsibility of The Service to make sure that other workers co-operate with this arrangement. If the employee does not agree to your involving other employees, you must not breach their confidentiality by telling the other workers about the disabled person's situation.

If an employee is reluctant for other staff to know, and you believe that a reasonable adjustment requires the co-operation of the worker's colleagues, explain that you cannot make the adjustment unless they are prepared for some information to be shared. It does not have to be detailed information about their condition, just enough to explain to other staff what they need to do.

Also, the Equality and Human Rights Commission's Employment Statutory Code of Practice gives examples of reasonable adjustments on www.equalityhumanrights.com.

The Service should remember the aim of an adjustment is to take away or minimise the disadvantage because of the person's disability so they can do their job or apply for one.

How can an employee request a reasonable adjustment?

Employees should bear in mind that The Service only has to make reasonable adjustments for an employee when it is aware, or could be expected to know, they have a disability.

An employee should ask to talk to their manager/The Service about the matter. A meeting can provide an employee with the opportunity to explain the situation more clearly and suggest possible adjustments. It will help the Line Manager/the Service understand how best they can support and help the employee. It is likely to be beneficial to have an agreed outcome confirmed in writing.

The passport is a place where you can store any information you would like to about a disability, long term health condition, mental health issue or learning disability/difficulty.

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You can use this passport to tell a new line manager about your health and anything you have in place in the workplace which enables you to carry out your role.

For example, this could be:

- a different start and finish time
- ways of communicating at work
- more regular breaks at work
- a specific seat at your desk
- modifications to your desk
- any appointments you regularly need to attend to stay well at work.

These changes may be those you need all the time, or changes you have in place to accommodate fluctuations in your health. This passport contains four sections for you to provide details about yourself and your preferences in the workplace:

- Things to know about my health condition or disability
- Things that help me to do my role
- Things to avoid or that make my work more difficult
- Additional information You can make changes to the information within the passport when you need to.
- These should be shared with your line manager, and then recorded on the back page of the passport.

Making reasonable adjustments for job applicants

Supporting Disabled Candidates

Managers guide to making reasonable adjustments

As standard practice, The Service should ask all job applicants whether they need any reasonable adjustments for any part of the recruitment process. The Service must make reasonable adjustments to the recruitment process if the:

- job applicant has indicated a disability in their application, or told The Service they have a disability
- The Service becomes aware of the disability
- The applicant asks for reasonable adjustments.

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But The Service should bear firmly in mind that none of this is the same as asking an applicant if they are disabled - which they should not do, as asking could imply potential discrimination.

Before offering a job, The Service must only ask a disabled applicant what reasonable adjustments are needed:

- for any part of the recruitment process and, once those are in place, whether they are suitable, and/or
- to determine whether the applicant could carry out a function essential to the role with the reasonable adjustments in place.

Only after offering the job, should The Service ask the successful applicant what adjustments they will need to do the job and progress at work.

Failure to make reasonable adjustments

The Service failing to make reasonable adjustments for a disabled job applicant or worker is one of the most common types of disability discrimination.

If an employee or job applicant feels they have been discriminated against, they can make a claim of disability discrimination to an employment tribunal. However, its best they talk to The Service first to try to resolve the issue informally. Having a discussion can often help The Service to understand the issues and concerns, and help to resolve the matter quickly and before it escalates further.

References:

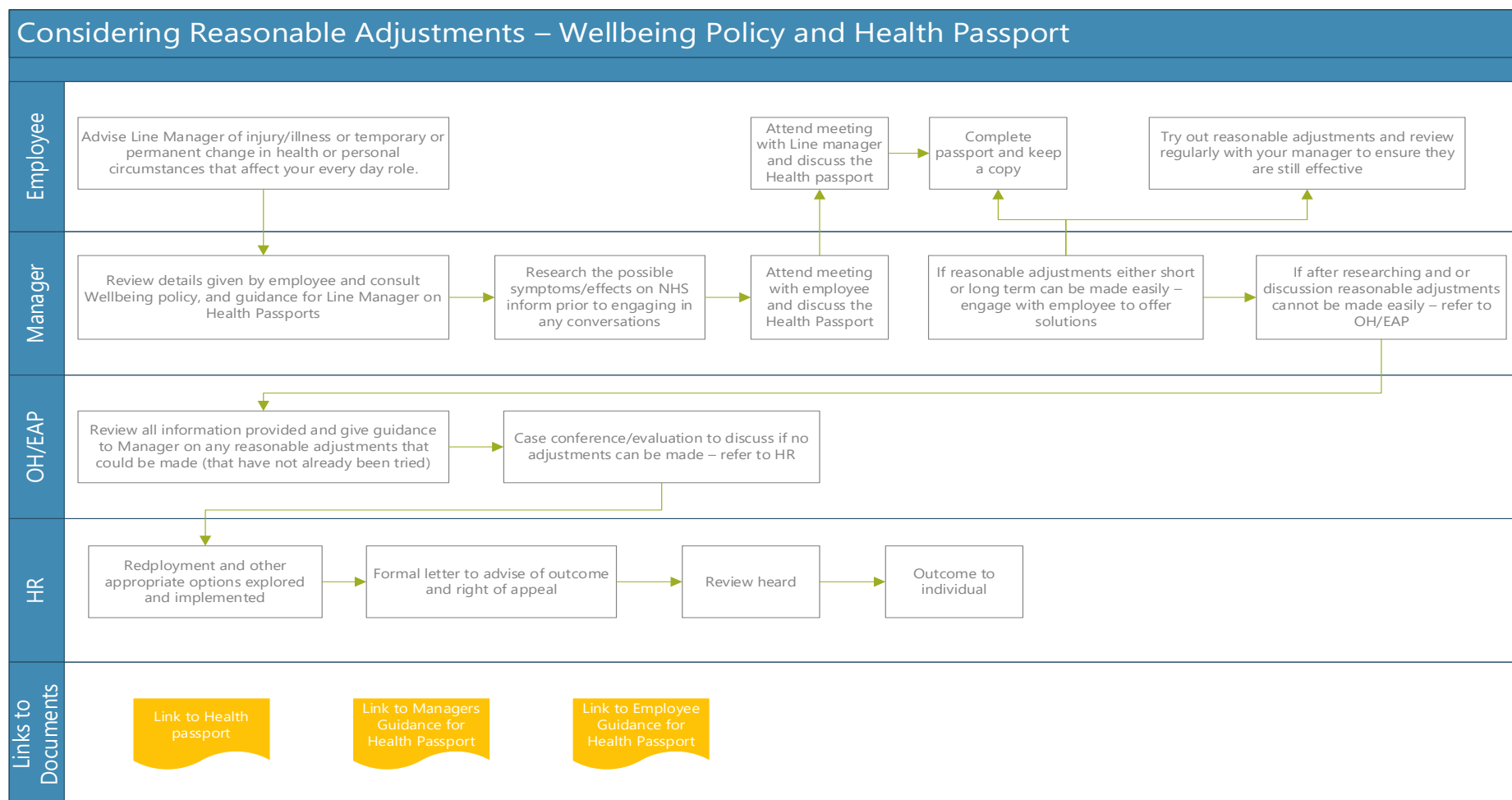
ACAS: Reasonable adjustments in the workplace

Equality and Human Rights Commission – What are reasonable adjustment

Macmillan Cancer Support- Managing cancer in the workplace

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Appendix 2



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