

# Getting Started with WORKPOSITIVE<sup>CI</sup>



A guide to using the Work Positive<sup>CI</sup> website for measuring workplace stress, employee psychological wellbeing and critical incident exposure in the workplace


[www.workpositive.ie](http://www.workpositive.ie)



Gníomhaireacht Bainistíochta an Chisteáin Náisiúnta  
National Treasury Management Agency

An Ghníomhaireacht um Éilimh ar an Stát  
State Claims Agency



A photograph showing a group of people sitting in a circle. In the foreground, several hands are raised in a gesture of support or agreement. The background is slightly blurred, showing a person with long blonde hair wearing a striped shirt. The overall atmosphere is collaborative and positive.

Positively supporting  
employee engagement  
and wellbeing

## What is WORKPOSITIVE<sup>CI</sup> ?

Work Positive<sup>CI</sup> (WPCI) is a free online risk assessment that helps organisations identify workplace psychosocial risks and develop ways to improve employee wellbeing. WPCI provides feedback on workplace stressors, employee psychological wellbeing and critical incident exposure in the workplace. This psychosocial risk assessment was developed by the State Claims Agency (SCA), Health and Safety Authority (HSA) and CISM Network Ireland and provides structured guidance enabling organisations to develop an action plan to manage these stressors.

WPCI has been endorsed internationally by leaders in the field of stress and critical incident stress management (CISM).

### Work Positive<sup>CI</sup> will help you:

#### Identify psychosocial risk(s) and opportunities across your workforce

WPCI assesses workplace stressors, employee psychological wellbeing and critical incident exposure in the workplace. If not properly managed these stressors can lead to poor mental health and wellbeing, increased absenteeism, presenteesim and lower productivity.

#### Receive actionable feedback

WPCI reports identify risk areas and provide clear guidance on ways to improve employee wellbeing, enabling focused action to be taken.

#### Improve performance

WPCI can help reduce absenteeism and staff turnover, and increase employee performance. Accidents and ill-health can result in significant costs which are often underestimated. Using WPCI will encourage and promote good health and wellbeing.

#### Comply with current legislation

Preparing a WPCI risk assessment can help you comply with legal obligations [Section 20 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005] to assess the level of risk, prepare risk assessments and record the findings in a safety statement.

## The four stages of WORKPOSITIVE<sup>CI</sup>

The multistage framework is based on international best practice and is aligned with the European Framework for Psychosocial Risk Management (PRIMA-EF). It involves a four stage process which is illustrated below (Figure 1):

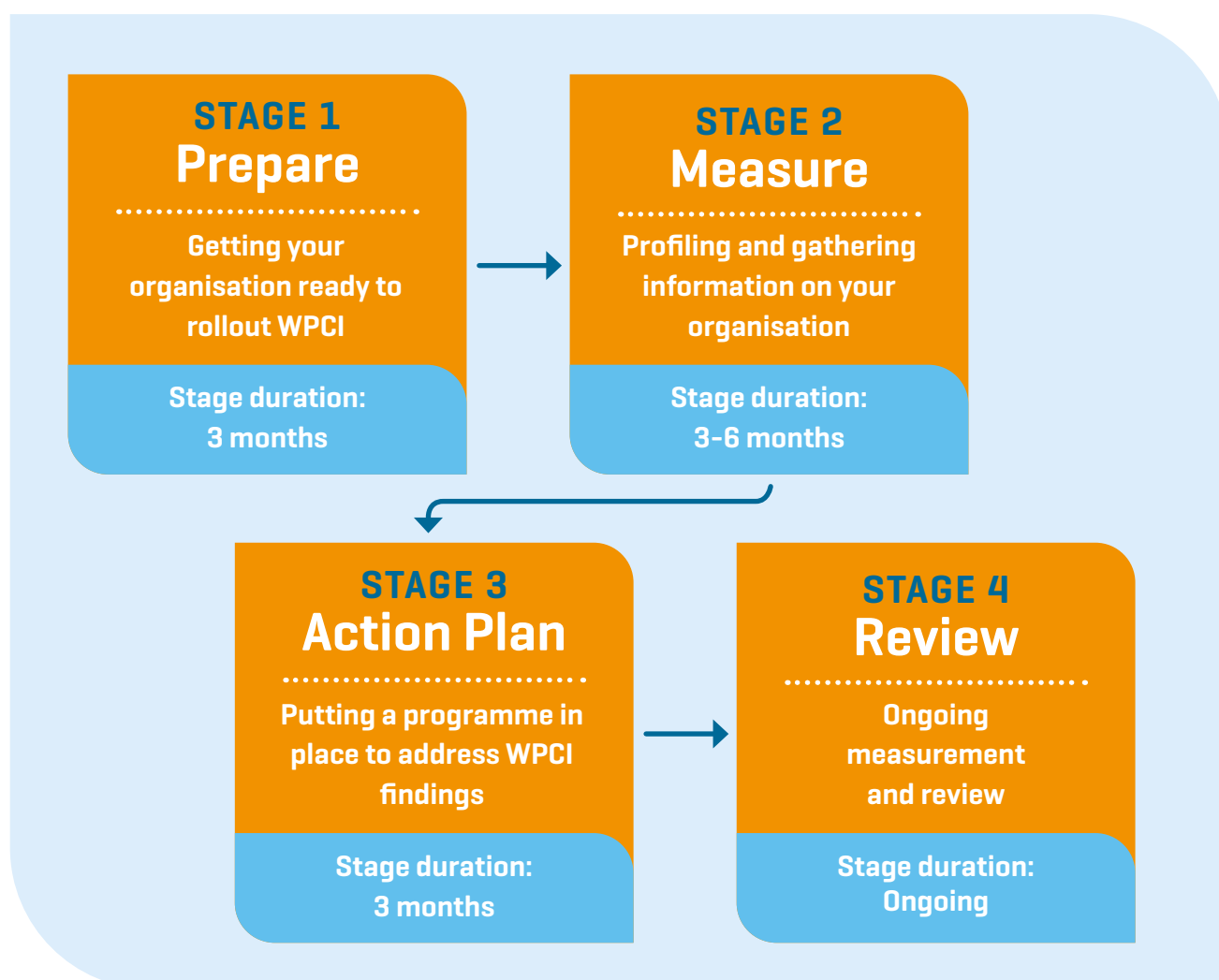


Figure 1: The four stages of Work Positive<sup>CI</sup>

Note: Stage durations are estimates only and dependant on organisation size.

# Stage 1: Prepare

## Identify stakeholders

A stakeholder is anyone who can affect or be affected by the running of your WPCI project. Commitment at all hierarchical levels is paramount for WPCI to run successfully within an organisation.

## Create your Steering Group

After securing commitment from the key stakeholders, a steering group should be formed to:

- Guide, oversee and support the WPCI project
- Provide leadership, strategic direction and make decisions
- Evaluate progress through scheduled meetings at key stages of the project
- A WPCI Coordinator should also be appointed to oversee the project.

### Did you know?

**Your steering group should ideally consist of 5-7 people. This should include senior management, line management, employee representatives, human resources, etc.**

## Create a WPCI project plan

A project plan is vital to maintaining momentum, timelines, targets and ensuring availability of resources. The WPCI project plan should include:

- An overview of the project [e.g. definition, scope, goals]
- Project milestones and associated tasks
- A breakdown of task owners, whose input is needed and what resources are required
- Timeframes for delivery of the key stages
- Project risks assessment- which identifies any issues that can be anticipated.

## Choose your Work Positive<sup>CI</sup> employee survey

When choosing your Work Positive CI employee survey, the steering group must reflect on their own organisation, its context and environmental factors before selecting which survey best suits their organisation. There are two employee survey versions of WPCI to choose from:

### WORKPOSITIVE<sup>CI</sup> Standard

Select for general workplace stress

### WORKPOSITIVE<sup>CI</sup> Critical Incident

Select for general workplace stress and critical incident stress.

In the event that an exposure to critical incidents exists in the workplace, the Work Positive<sup>CI</sup> Critical Incident survey should be utilised. In all other cases, the Work Positive<sup>CI</sup> Standard survey can be selected.

Examples of persons that are typically exposed to critical incidents in the workplace include frontline staff, such as those who work in healthcare, emergency, military, security, rescue, public sector and others who operate in similar industries.

Some examples of critical incidents include:

- ▶ Threat to personal safety (physical or verbal assault/attacked while on duty/at work).
- ▶ Clinical staff traumatised as a result of their unconscious error or omission in their line of work causing harm to a patient.

## Stage 2: Measure

### Review employee profile and roles

The measure stage involves profiling the organisation to identify and assess psychosocial risk across the workforce.

The steering group should consider geographical location, occupational role and the working environment to identify risks.

### Job Content CI Audit

If employees are exposed to critical incidents in their role, a Job Content CI Audit should be carried out. Further information on the Job Content CI Audit, including a downloadable template, is available on the WPCI website.

#### Did you know?

**If various roles within the organisation are exposed to critical incidents a Job Content CI Audit should be carried out for each role.**

Primary CI related stressors	Likelihood of occurrence				
	Almost certain (at least monthly)	Very likely (6 months to 1 year)	Likely (1-2 years)	Unlikely (2-5 years)	Almost impossible (not foreseeable)
1a). Witnessed <sup>1</sup> suffering and injury <sup>2</sup> to an adult (pt/client/service user/member of the public)	Red	Red	Orange	Green	Green
1b). Witnessed death to an adult (pt/client/service user/member of the public)	Red	Red	Orange	Green	Green
2a). Witnessed suffering or serious injury to a child (pt/client/service user/member of the public)	Red	Red	Orange	Green	Green
2b). Witnessed Death to a child (pt/client/service user/member of the public) (i.e. Sudden infant death syndrome - SIDS)	Red	Red	Orange	Green	Green
3a). Witnessing Line of work/duty serious injury to a colleague	Red	Red	Orange	Green	Green
3b). Witnessing Line of work/duty death to a colleague	Red	Red	Orange	Green	Green
4). Events with extreme threat to personal safety (Physical or verbal assault/attacked while on duty/work)	Red	Red	Orange	Green	Green
5). Witnessing events with extreme threat to the safety of others in the line of one's work/duty	Red	Red	Orange	Green	Green
6). Attended a particularly disturbing suicide or a number of suicides (pt/client/service user/member of the public/work colleague)	Red	Red	Orange	Green	Green
7). Involvement in disaster work <sup>3</sup>	Red	Red	Orange	Green	Green
8). Involved in an adverse event <sup>4</sup>	Red	Red	Orange	Green	Green
<b>Secondary CI Related Stressors</b>					
a) Knowing the pt/client/service user personally	Red	Red	Orange	Green	Green
b) Significant "hands on" contact with human remains (e.g. a severely burned individual or dismembered /badly decomposed body)	Red	Red	Orange	Green	Green
c) Spent an unusually long period of time <sup>5</sup> with a pt/client/service user	Red	Red	Orange	Green	Green
d) The incident involved high media coverage	Red	Red	Orange	Green	Green

Figure 2: Job content CI audit template

### Work Positive<sup>CI</sup> employee survey

The survey uses verified and validated indicators to measure employee wellbeing across six key work areas [Demands, Control, Support, Relationships, Role, and Change]. It also measures employee wellbeing using a composite wellbeing index created through a combination of two validated tools, the Patient Health Questionnaire [PHQ-4] and the World Health Organisation - Five Well-Being Index [WHO-5]. The critical incident survey assesses critical incident exposure in the workplace. This includes questions exploring the frequency and type of critical incidents experienced within their role and the types of support measures that may be most helpful.

The WPCI website has further information covering topics such as the number of employees to survey, when to launch the survey, how long it should stay open for, increasing engagement, preparing pre-survey communications, sending survey invitations and survey reminders as well as providing useful communication templates.

#### Did you know?

**Employee surveys can be created once you register online at [www.workpositive.ie](http://www.workpositive.ie)**

## Analyse current Workforce Outcome Indicators

Compiling workforce outcome indicators will help determine if work-related stress, psychosocial distress and critical incident stress are possible issues for the organisation.

POSSIBLE WORKFORCE OUTCOME INDICATOR	FREQUENCY / % RATE	RATE (higher / lower than norms within the organisation / Irish working population norms)
Absenteeism (Short-term / long-term)	e.g. 8%	
Staff turnover data	e.g. 5%	
Accident rates and errors	X accidents in past 12 months	
Employee on the job errors	X errors in past 12 months	
Complaints	X complaints in past 12 months	
Workers compensation claims	X claims in past 12 months	
Occupational health referrals	X no. referrals in past 12 months	

Figure 3: Assessing current workforce outcome indicators

### Did you know?

To save time, consider gathering workforce outcome indicators while the employee survey is ongoing.



## Review existing practices

Organisations should review current support services, policies and resources to determine what practices are currently in place for workplace stress and critical incident stress management.

There are templates and tools available on [www.workpositive.ie](http://www.workpositive.ie).



## Stage 3: Action Plan


At this stage a survey has been completed and an assessment of the WPCI employee survey report has been carried out. The next task is to develop an action plan.

This process involves:

- Identifying intervention priorities via follow-up consultation
- Identifying the various roles where different interventions are required
- Identify wellbeing initiatives to help meet your wellbeing objectives
- Providing feedback on the survey

### Creating and launching your action plan

The organisations steering group, led by the WPCI Coordinator, is responsible for collating everything into an overall action plan for the organisation. The action plan should be presented to senior stakeholders to secure their commitment.



### Work Positive<sup>CI</sup> Action Plan

*Insert organisation logo here*

**Organisation name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Department:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date completed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Completed by:** \_\_\_\_\_

No.	Section A			Section B				
	Priorities/Goals	Objectives	Initiatives	Target Group	Key Person(s)	Required Resources	Key Metrics	Completion/Review
	<i>What are you planning to do to improve the situation?</i>	<i>Set key objectives the organisation wants to achieve</i>	<i>What initiatives can employees expect over the coming year(s)</i>	<i>Who is this initiative targeting (e.g. the whole workforce, a department or a occupational role)?</i>	<i>Which department / function is responsible and who is the key contact for driving this initiative?</i>	<i>What resources will be required to run this initiative</i>	<i>How can the success of this initiative be measured?</i>	<i>What is the timescale for this initiative,</i>

Figure 4: Action plan template

## Stage 4: Review

The steering group should carry out a review on a recurring basis to ensure the programme implemented is operating effectively. It is recommended that organisations re-run the WPCI process to promote continuous improvement.

### WPCI Checklist

#### 1. Prepare

- Identified the key stakeholders and secured their commitment to support roll out
- Established a Work Positive<sup>CI</sup> Steering Group to oversee the WPCI project
- Developed a project plan
- Determined which employee survey to run
  - WPCI Standard
  - WPCI Critical Incident

#### 2. Measure

- Considered employee profiles and occupational roles
- Completed Job Content CI Audit for roles exposed to critical incidents
- Deployed your chosen Work Positive<sup>CI</sup> employee survey
- Assessed your current Workforce Outcome Indicators
- Reviewed existing support services, policies and resources

#### 3. Action plan

- Consulted senior management and secured commitment
- Communicated your survey results to employees
- Developed and rolled out action plan with key objectives and deliverables

#### 4. Review

- Review and repeat the WPCI process to promote continuous improvement

## WPCI terms and definitions

### Absenteeism:

Temporary, extended or permanent incapacity for work as a result of sickness or infirmity [European Foundation, 2007].

### Critical incidents:

A workplace critical incident is a traumatic event that a person is involved with in their course of work. It can be described as an event out of the range of normal experience, which is sudden and unexpected, involves the perception of a threat to life and can include elements of physical and emotional loss [WHO, 2006].

Examples of these incidents include witnessing death and/or serious injury to a child, patient, service user or colleague in the workplace.

Examples of persons that are typically exposed to critical incidents in the workplace include frontline staff, such as those who work in healthcare, emergency, military, security, rescue, public sector and others who operate in similar industries.

### Employee profile:

Employees' age, gender, geographical location, occupational role and working environment.

### Employee wellbeing:

Employee wellbeing relates to all aspects of an employee's working life [i.e. the quality and safety of the physical environment and how workers feel about their work environment] incorporating personal, family and social factors.

### Psychosocial risks:

The interactions of:

- 1) job content, work organisation and management, and other environmental and organisational conditions
  - 2) employees' competencies and needs.
- Whereby the above interactions have a hazardous influence over employees' health through their perceptions and experience [ILO, 1986].

### Steering group:

A group that decides on the priorities or order of business of an organisation and manages the general course of its operations.

### Stress:

Stress is a mental and physical condition which results from pressure or demands that strain or exceed your capacity or perceived capacity to cope [HSE, 2012].

### Wellbeing index:

A tool developed to measure an individual's wellbeing and/or psychological distress.

### WPCI Co-coordinator

A nominated person within an organisation to oversee and run the WPCI project.

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