Healthcare Workforce Wellbeing Policy

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1. Policy Purpose and Brief

This policy outlines the Department of Health (DoH) expectations for healthcare providers to establish and maintain a Comprehensive Workforce Wellbeing program aimed at promoting and protecting the wellbeing of their workforce.

2. Definitions and Abbreviations

No.	Term / Abbreviation	Definition
2.1	Department of Health (DoH)	The regulative body of the Healthcare Sector in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, established based on Law No. (10) of 2018.
2.2	Comprehensive Workforce Wellbeing Program	A term that encompasses a set of evidence-based initiatives implemented by a healthcare provider to improve staff wellbeing, supported by organizational policies aimed at achieving specified outcomes.
2.3	Healthcare provider	Refers to any individual or legal entity responsible for operating a healthcare facility.
2.4	Objective Workplace Wellbeing	A construct that can be assessed through measurable organizational indicators. Examples include absenteeism, presenteeism, turnover, productivity, and injury claims [1 (p.27), 2].
2.5	Organizational Key Wellbeing Indicators	A set of prioritized qualitative and quantitative measurements that are crucial for reflecting the status, progress, outcomes, or impact of an organization's Workforce Wellbeing Program.
2.6	Professional wellbeing	The state achieved when an individual is satisfied with their job, derives meaning from their work, feels engaged in their tasks, experiences a high-quality working life, and attains a sense of professional fulfillment [3 (p.xiv)].
2.7	Subjective Workplace Wellbeing	A self-reported construct that can be assessed through subjective indicators that reflect: "job satisfaction, workplace affect, and meaning and purpose at work"[4 (p.7)]

| 2.8 | Wellbeing | A construct that encompasses two dimensions: subjective and objective. It includes both an individual's personal experiences and perceptions of their life, along with an assessment of life circumstances against social norms and values [5] |
| 2.9 | Wellbeing Domains | Refer to the various aspects of wellbeing, as a comprehensive concept, including psychological, mental, emotional, social, physical, cognitive, financial, spiritual, and environmental aspects[1 (p.9)] |

3. Policy Content

3.1 Policy Statement

It is of strategic importance to the Department of Health (DoH) that organizations develop and maintain a Comprehensive Workforce Wellbeing Program. This endeavor ensures that healthcare professionals work in a safe, supportive, and positive environment, reinforced by an organizational framework of policies and interventions specifically designed to promote the highest levels of professional wellbeing.

3.2 Comprehensive Workforce Wellbeing Program

To achieve the objectives of this policy, healthcare providers must design, develop, and implement a comprehensive workforce wellbeing program, comprising both a general wellbeing policy and targeted interventions.

3.2.1 Principles

The Comprehensive Workforce Wellbeing Program must be guided by the following principles.

3.2.1.1 Risk-based: Prioritize organizational policies and interventions that address the most significant threats to staff wellbeing.

3.2.1.2 Outcomes-based: Develop interventions aimed at achieving specific outcomes to effectively meet identified needs.

3.2.1.3 Evidence-based: Base policies and interventions on valid and reliable research findings.

3.2.1.4 Inclusive: Cater to the diverse wellbeing needs of all staff members.

3.2.1.5 Collaborative: Engage the workforce early in the development, implementation, and refinement of policies and interventions to address their concerns.

3.2.1.6 Comprehensive: Address all the determinants of professional wellbeing including

the workplace environment, job characteristics, and individual factors[6, 7, 8, 9, 10]

3.2.1.7 Measured: Set clear policy goals and outcomes, establish key performance indicators, regularly monitor progress, and continuously improve interventions.

3.2.2 The Wellbeing Policy

Healthcare providers must develop and implement a formal policy that demonstrates leadership commitment to workforce wellbeing. This policy can either be a standalone document or integrated into broader existing organizational policies, such as occupational health and safety policy, workforce mental health policy, employee handbooks, or similar policy tools.

The policy must:

3.2.2.1 Foster a culture of openness and engagement to ensure that wellbeing interventions effectively address the needs of the workforce.

3.2.2.2 Mandate a risk-based approach to prioritize actions and achieve desired outcomes.

3.2.2.3 Require the implementation of evidence-based interventions that address all aspects of workforce wellbeing across organizational levels. These interventions should consider both physical and mental health, and account for various individual and job-related factors impacting wellbeing.

3.2.2.4 Establish the necessary arrangements to ensure the successful implementation and realization of the policy's goals. These arrangements may include:

3.2.2.4.1 A designated organizational structure (e.g. a team, taskforce, or committee).
3.2.2.4.2 Budget or funding sources.

3.2.3 Wellbeing interventions

Healthcare providers must implement their policy by identifying the wellbeing needs of their workforce and initiating the necessary interventions to address those needs.

3.2.3.1 Identify, analyze, and evaluate wellbeing risks.

3.2.3.2 Assess the baseline status of workforce wellbeing considering both subjective aspects (see Subclause 4.2.4.1) and objective aspects (see Subclause 4.2.4.2).

3.2.3.3 Plan interventions to address the identified wellbeing needs. Define the desired outcomes and identify key wellbeing indicators to be monitored in addition to baseline indicators already established.

3.2.3.4 Launch targeted interventions.

3.2.3.5 Track and analyze wellbeing data and key indicators. Adjust interventions, as necessary.

Note: Interventions should be practical and sustainable. Recognizing that healthcare facilities differ in size and operational capacity, the design and implementation of Workforce Wellbeing Program should be proportionate to each facility's scale and resources.

4. Policy Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 DoH

DoH must:

4.1.1 Ensure that healthcare providers have an effective Comprehensive Workforce Wellbeing Program in place.

4.1.2 Identify, monitor, and analyze workforce wellbeing indicators using aggregated and segmented data.

4.1.3 Enforce compliance with this policy among all concerned stakeholders.

4.1.4 Verify adherence to the provisions of this policy through audits and inspections.

4.2 Healthcare Providers

All healthcare providers must:

4.2.1 Promote and maintain a supportive culture that emphasizes workforce wellbeing.

4.2.2 Implement a comprehensive strategy to enhance staff wellbeing, addressing all factors that may negatively impact their physical and mental health.

4.2.3 Identify and address job-related factors that disrupt employee's work-life balance.

4.2.4 Ensure that wellbeing program and interventions are effective, efficient and achieve their intended goals by identifying, tracking and analyzing workforce wellbeing indicators:

4.2.4.1 Subjective wellbeing: Assessed through staff perception indicators gathered via surveys, interviews, and focus groups. Examples include:
- Employee perception of happiness in the workplace
- Job satisfaction

4.2.4.2 Objective wellbeing: Measured using metrics such as:
- absenteeism rates,
- Work-related incidents reported over a period of time,
- Retention rate.

4.2.5 Provide training and awareness sessions for managers to help them recognize signs of:

- Staff burnout,
- Stress,
- Low workplace morale,
- Work-related mental, physical, or psychosomatic health issues,
- Poor social connection and engagement in the workplace,
- Physical harm,
- Job-related dissatisfaction, etc.

4.2.6 Ensure all employees receive initial and periodic refresher orientations on the organization's policies related to wellbeing, occupational health and safety, code of conduct, whistleblowing and existing support channels, such as complaint and grievance procedures.

4.3 Healthcare Workforce

All members of the healthcare workforce must:

4.3.1 Take active responsibility to maintain their own wellbeing.

4.3.2 Strive to achieve a healthy balance between their work and personal life.

4.3.3 Report any organizational incidents or practices that jeopardize their wellbeing through a designated reporting channel.

5. Policy Scope of Implementation

5.1 This policy applies to:

5.1.1 All licensed healthcare providers

5.1.2 All healthcare workforce members

6. Exempted from Policy Scope

None

7. Enforcement and Compliance

DoH may impose sanctions in relation to any breach of requirements under this Policy in accordance with the Disciplinary Regulations[11] of the Healthcare sector.

8. Monitoring and Evaluation (Key success factors)

DoH will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness, outcomes and impact of this Policy. Any necessary changes to the policy will be made accordingly.

5.Relevant Reference Documents

No.	Reference Date	Reference Name	Relation Explanation / Coding / Publication Links
1	2017	Mental Health Commission of NSW. Wellbeing language and definitions guide 2017. Sydney, Mental Health Commission of NSW	https://www.nswmentalhealthcommission.com.au/sites/default/files/inline-files/language-and-definitions-guide-web_0.pdf
2	2015	Schulte, P. A., Guerin, R. J., Schill, A. L., et.al, Considerations for Incorporating "Well-Being" in Public Policy for Workers and Workplaces. American journal of public health, 105(8), e31–e44.	https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.2015.302616
3	2024	National Academy of Medicine (2024). National plan for health workforce well-being. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press	https://nap.nationalacademies.org/download/26744#
4	2023	De Neve, J-E., Ward, G. Measuring Workplace Wellbeing	https://wellbeing.hmc.ox.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/2303-WP-Measuring-Workplace-Wellbeing-DOI.pdf
5	2013	WHO. Regional Office for Europe. Measurement of and target-setting for well-being: an initiative by the WHO Regional Office for Europe: second meeting of the expert group: Paris, France, 25–26 June 2012.	https://iris.who.int/handle/10665/107309
6	2022	The HCPC - Health and Wellbeing framework	https://www.hcpc-uk.org/resources/policy/health-and-wellbeing-framework/
7	2019	Lovelock, Kirsten. Psychosocial hazards in work environments and effective approaches for managing them - WorkSafe New Zealand	https://www.worksafe.govt.nz/dmsdocument/5417-psychosocial-hazards-in-work-environments-and-effective-approaches-for-managing-them
8	2022	The U.S. Surgeon General's Framework for Workplace Mental Health & Well-Being	https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/workplace-mental-health-well-being.pdf
9	2022	Promoting Health and Well-being at Work: Policy and Practices, OECD Health Policy Studies, OECD Publishing, Paris.	https://doi.org/10.1787/e179b2a5-en
10	2018	The National Program for Happiness & Wellbeing A Guide to Happiness & Wellbeing in the Workplace	https://www.hw.gov.ae/en/download/a-guide-to-happiness-and-wellbeing-program-in-the-workplace-1/
11	2024	DOH Chairman Resolution 79/2024- *The Official Gazette*, 9th edition, September 2024.	https://www.abudhabi.gov.ae/-/media/sites/adgov/gazettes/2024/ar/9th-arabic-2024.ashx