Webinar

Date: Thur, 19 November 2026
Time: 11:00am - 12:00pm

HSA
An tÚdarás Sláinte agus Sábháilteachta
Health and Safety Authority

Workplace Bullying: Creating the Conditions for Prevention



ÉIRE2026.EU
IRELAND2026.EU

HSA
An tÚdarás Sláinte agus Sábháilteachta
Health and Safety Authority

Psychosocial Hazards: Workplace Bullying

Eithne Coleman, HSA Behavioural Health & Safety Team

19th November, Webinar online

ÉIRE2026.EU
IRELAND2026.EU

HSA
An tÚdarás Sláinte agus Sábháilteachta
Health and Safety Authority

Workplace Bullying as a Psychosocial Hazard

- Workplace bullying is a psychosocial hazard.
- Bullying can negatively impact health, wellbeing and organisational performance.
- Prevention is more effective than intervention after harm has occurred.

IRELAND

9%

met the criteria for workplace bullying in a national representative study of Irish employees (Hogan et al., 2020)

43%

experienced some form of workplace ill-treatment over a two-year period (Hogan et al., 2020)

EUROPE

7%

Across European, workplace bullying prevalence is reported at **7%**.

Furthermore, in a recent Eurofound review, **13%** of EU workers reported experiencing at least one adverse social behaviour at work.

EU-OSHA (2022) & Eurofound (2023)

ÉIRE2026.EU
IRELAND2026.EU

What is Workplace Bullying?

As defined by the Code of Practice in the Irish context

> “Repeated inappropriate behaviour, direct or indirect, whether verbal, physical or otherwise, conducted by one or more persons against another or others, at the place of work and/or in the course of employment, which could reasonably be regarded as undermining the individual's right to dignity at work.”

IMPORTANT

An isolated incident may be inappropriate and may be an affront to dignity at work but, as a once-off incident, is not considered bullying under the HSA definition.

HSA
An tÚdarás Sláinte agus Sábháilteachta
Health and Safety Authority

ÉIRE2026.EU
IRELAND2026.EU

What Workplace Bullying is Not

Not every workplace disagreement is bullying. The Code of Practice recognises that workplace bullying does not include:

01
Reasonable management direction

02
Constructive feedback

03
Performance management carried out appropriately

04
Once-off incidents

05
Workplace disagreements

06
Legitimate allocation of work

HSA
An tÚdarás Sláinte agus Sábháilteachta
Health and Safety Authority

ÉIRE2026.EU
IRELAND2026.EU

The Prevention Hierarchy

HSA
An tÚdarás Sláinte agus Sábháilteachta
Health and Safety Authority

The campaign highlights that prevention should begin with organisational measures before moving to individual interventions.

Primary Prevention

Prevent the risk occurring



WORKPOSITIVE@

Secondary Prevention

Identify concerns early and intervene



hsalearning.ie
HSA Online Courses

Tertiary Prevention

Support people who have been affected

Occupational Health

EAP

The HSA have a free sample Workplace Bullying Risk Assessment. See QR code for further info.

ÉIRE2026.EU
IRELAND2026.EU

New HSA Workplace Bullying eLearning

Supporting Secondary Prevention Through Awareness and Early Intervention

An tÚdarás Sláinte agus Sábháilteachta
Health and Safety Authority

Why Was This Resource Developed?

This free online awareness programme was developed to help employers and employees understand workplace bullying and their prevention role.

It complements workplace-specific policies, procedures and training arrangements.

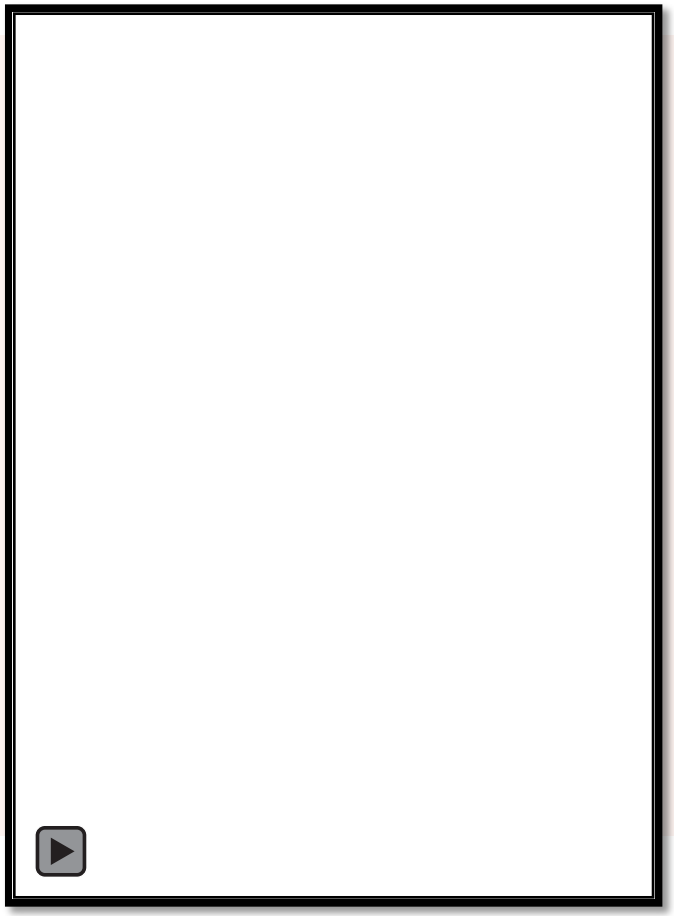
Course Overview

Free online learning resource.

Duration: Approximately 30 minutes.

Suitable for: Employers, employees and safety representatives.

hsalearning.ie
HSA Online Courses



ÉIRE2026.EU
IRELAND2026.EU

The role of the HSA

HSA
An tÚdarás Sláinte agus Sábháilteachta
Health and Safety Authority

The HSA focuses on whether employers have:

- Appropriate systems in place
- Reasonable procedures
- Effective risk management arrangements
- Measures to prevent risks to employee health and safety

The employer focuses on:

- Taking reasonable measures to prevent incidents of bullying occurring (RA & policy)
- Reacting speedily to resolve issues early/progress investigations
- Initiating control measures.
- Implementing support and assistance throughout the process
- Reviewing and monitoring the environment afterwards, as far as is reasonable.

ÉIRE2026.EU
IRELAND2026.EU

Key Takeaways

HSA
An tÚdarás Sláinte agus Sábháilteachta
Health and Safety Authority

1

Bullying is a psychosocial hazard and a workplace health and safety issue.

2

Supporting affected workers is essential, but preventing exposure remains the priority.

3

The HSA have many resources available to support you and your organisation. .

The HSA Workplace Bullying webpage

ÉIRE2026.EU
IRELAND2026.EU

Go Raibh Maith Agaibh
Thank you

ÉIRE2026.EU
IRELAND2026.EU

HSA
An tÚdarás Sláinte agus Sábháilteachta
Health and Safety Authority

Ready? Set? Success!

HSA

An tÚdarás Sláinte agus Sábháilteachta
Health and Safety Authority

How establishing contextual readiness can enhance organisational approaches to tackling bullying at work.

Dr Chloë Gough (CPsychol)

November 2026



TODAY'S SESSION

01 Why workplace bullying interventions are unsuccessful

02 What is Readiness for change? How can it help?

03 How to identify and establish readiness in your organisation

04 Lessons Learned & Tips for Success

05 Reflection

06 Recap

01. Introduction

- **Bullying Origins:** Individual Disposition vs Work-Environment
- Theory Failure vs **Programme Failure**
- Conflate the **need** for change with being **ready** for it.

02.

Readiness for change is like a flower...



02.

Contextual Readiness for Change

What is it?

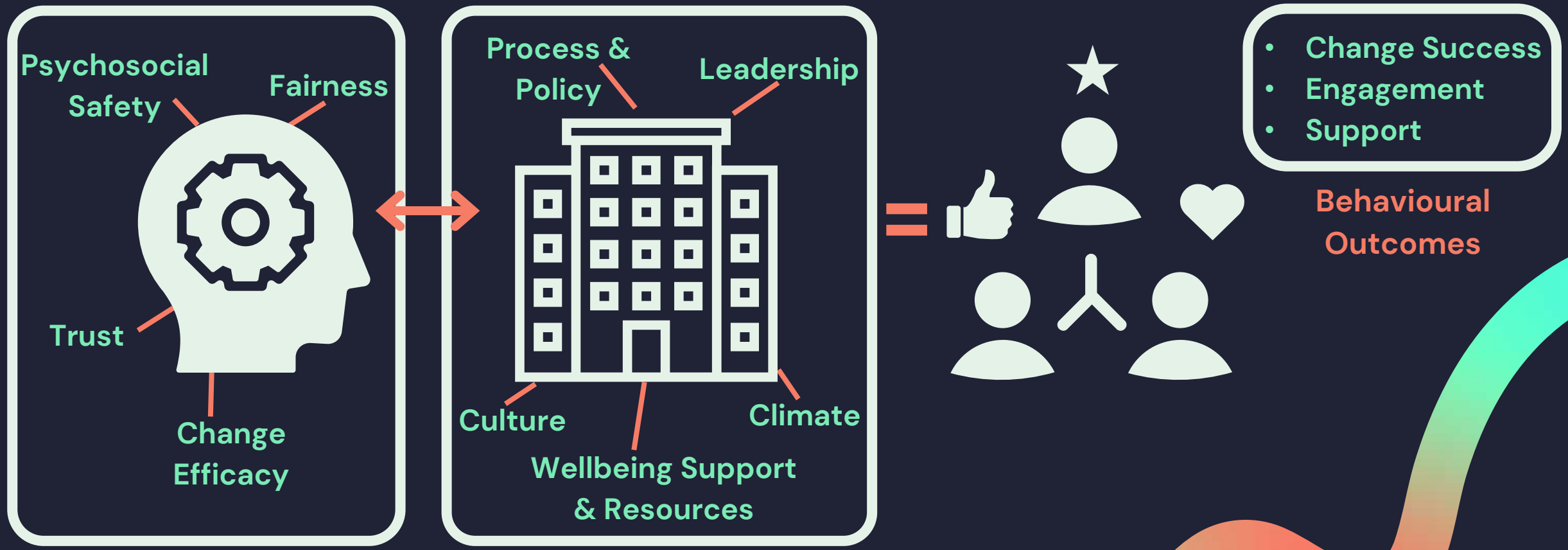


Why is it important?

- What counts for change success is what people think.

- For behaviours to thrive, we need to create conditions to enable them to do so.

03. How to identify readiness for change



Gough, Coyne & Munir (2025)

04. Lessons Learned: Large Scale Rollout



25
Departments

~500
Assessments

10,672
Respondents

04. Lessons Learned: Action Plan Success



Quick implementation



Planning & Responsibility Allocation



SLT Endorsement, Support & Engagement



Transparency



Seeing the bigger picture

05. Reflection

Topic 1: Programme Failure

Reflect on a time your team/organisation attempted a change initiative that didn't fully succeed. What role did readiness play in this outcome?

Topic 2: Action Plan Success

Which of the key success areas do you believe would be most difficult to achieve in your organisation and why?

06. Recap

- We often confuse the **need** for change with being **ready** for it.
- We must assess and tweak our context **before** embedding initiatives.
- What counts for **change success** is what **people think**.
- Higher readiness = better engagement, support and perceived success.
- Readiness is **not** a quick fix ⟶ long-term commitment that reaps a high return on investment.

Thank You.

Questions?

LinkedIn Dr Chloë Gough

Recent Publication:

Gough, C., Coyne, I. and Munir, F. (2025), "Organisational readiness for workplace bullying interventions: conceptualisation and measurement", International Journal of Conflict Management, Vol. 36 No. 3, pp. 675-696. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJCMA-01-2025-0033

Questions and Answers



HSA
An tÚdarás Sláinte agus Sábháilteachta
Health and Safety Authority

ÉIRE2026.EU
IRELAND2026.EU

Go Raibh Maith Agaibh
Thank you

ÉIRE2026.EU
IRELAND2026.EU

HSA
An tÚdarás Sláinte agus Sábháilteachta
Health and Safety Authority