



News Release

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For Immediate Release

'Stressing the Positives' with Free Advice on Stress Awareness Day

This year's National Stress Awareness Day (NSAD) will be 'Stressing the Positives' on Wednesday 4th November 2009. NSAD, now in its 11th year and organised annually by the International Stress Management Association, aims to help people suffering from stress by highlighting the many coping strategies and sources of help available, and offering free advice to people who want to reduce the harmful effects of stress in their lives.

The International Stress Management Association (ISMA) is the leading UK Professional Body in the specialist field of stress management and this year will be working together with HSE (Health & Safety Executive) nationally, and Boots UK, the UK's leading pharmacy-led health and beauty retailer, to deliver free access to Stress Advisors in selected stores throughout the country.

ISMA created National Stress Awareness Day (NSAD) out of necessity rather than requirement. Ann McCracken, Chair of ISMA, says: "Stress, depression and anxiety accounts for over 13.5 million workdays being lost each year, making it the single biggest cause of sickness absence in the UK. The aim, through the nationwide campaign, is to increase public awareness about the effects of stress, the treatments available and, most importantly, to help individuals suffering from stress to seek help using a team of stress experts. NSAD will be providing free drop-in advice and access to Stress Advisors located in selected Boots stores and other venues nationwide."

The network of over 60 Stress Advisors provided by ISMA will be located in 12 Boots stores, 10 HSE offices and 40 other participating organisations. Covering the length and breadth of the country, the Advisors will be offering free confidential consultations on a drop-in basis. Simon McCandlish Commercial Director, Consumer Healthcare and Pharmacy, Boots UK, said: "As the UK's leading pharmacy-led health and beauty retailer, Boots UK is focused on everyone's right to accessibility for Healthcare and our Customers tell us that stress is one of their top five concerns. We see National Stress Awareness Day as a key opportunity to increase public awareness about the effects of stress and the options available and we are pleased to be working with ISMA on this important day."

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While ISMA is helping individuals manage their own stress, HSE is working to prevent stress in the workplace. Since there is evidence that most Work Related Stress is due to poor management, it is vital that businesses have a solid Stress Policy in place that managers can apply. In fact employers are required by law to assess the risk of stress-related ill health arising from work activities and take action to control that risk.

HSE provides guidance for Work Related Stress through its Management Standards, which are designed to help employers manage the causes of Work Related Stress and are based on a Risk Assessment model. Additionally, to help managers understand what behaviours are required to tackle stress effectively, HSE has developed a self-assessment questionnaire contained within a Management Competency Tool Kit. A further suite of tools is currently being developed to complement this toolkit and HSE is calling for volunteers to test the prototype. For more information please visit <http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/volunteer.htm>

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Issued on behalf of ISMA by Kyrene Marketing Communications. For further information please call Simon Lamb on 01376 513215 or email info@kyrene.co.uk

Notes to Editors:

- For more information about NSAD, visit www.nationalstressawarenessday.co.uk
- To find out where ISMA Stress Advisors will be located, call 01179 697284
- Watch out for news of events to be held on the 4th November, National Stress Awareness Day
- Further information on Boots UK and related products, please contact Lexis PR on 020 7908 6506 or email bootspressoffice@lexispr.com