

## Press Release

Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> May 2021

### Leading Stress Management Association Supports Carers' Week

The International Stress Management Association (ISMA<sup>UK</sup>), the leading professional body for workplace and personal stress management, wellbeing and performance, is supporting Carers' Week in June with three great initiatives to underline the vital role carers play in our communities and draw attention to just how important caring is.

Carers' Week is an annual campaign to raise awareness of caring, highlight the challenges unpaid carers face, and recognise the contribution they make to families and communities throughout the UK. The campaign brings thousands of individuals and organisations together to support the UK's 6.5 million unpaid carers, as well as helping those who don't think of themselves as having caring responsibilities to identify as carers and access much-needed support. Carers UK say 1 in 8 employees now have caring responsibilities and 4.5 million became unpaid carers during the Covid-19 pandemic. Many have had to provide more care while dealing with financial pressures and increased levels of isolation.

#### Let's start to make a difference

Carole Spiers, Chair of ISMA<sup>UK</sup>, said, "ISMA<sup>UK</sup> is a small charity with a big voice and a wide reach. We know circumstances are still difficult for carers after taking on huge challenges because of the Covid-19 pandemic. During Carers' Week, we are inviting people to use and share our video resources and encouraging them to join the ISMA<sup>UK</sup> community. This means our work will become more accessible to those who really need it right now. Let's start to make a difference, using Carers' Week as a catalyst for change".

#### View energiser videos to help improve wellbeing

Four uplifting Energiser videos – with the themes Singalong, Laughter, Meditation & Breathing and Better Sleep, first shown during ISMA<sup>UK</sup>'s Online Global Stress & Wellbeing Summit last November, are being made available. A link to each Energiser is provided, so that anyone can watch for free and share them with friends and colleagues all through Carers' Week.

#### Watch world-leading experts on wellbeing and sustainability

ISMA<sup>UK</sup> are offering carers, businesses and others in the community the chance to watch an inspiring Masterclass discussion, first broadcast in March, between Professor Sir Cary Cooper, world-leading expert on workplace wellbeing and Professor Lennart Levi, Founder and Director of the Division of Stress Research at Karolinska Institutet, Sweden. Talking about wellbeing and sustainability in the changing world of work, they ask leaders of this and the next generation to embrace the challenges ahead. This motivational video, accessed through a single link, has important messages for leaders, educators, influencers, entrepreneurs, charities, young people and communities.

Clare Concannon, Lead Ambassador at ISMA<sup>UK</sup>, is also a part-time carer. She commented, "*It's the small things that make a difference to me as a carer, balancing work, life and care responsibilities –*

*often all at once! Being kind to yourself is a relentless struggle, especially during the pandemic with risks to our own physical and mental wellbeing. Carers need opportunities to refresh, restore, and re-balance. For me and others like me, the ISMA<sup>UK</sup> initiatives are a positive step, helping us to be kind to ourselves.”*

### **Be a Friend and win a carers’ policy for your business**

Charlotte Turnbull, ISMA<sup>UK</sup> Ambassador and Head of Employment at W Legal, is offering the chance to win a carers’ policy for your business, usually charged at £250 + VAT, when you sign up to be a Friend of ISMA<sup>UK</sup>. Charlotte said, *“Businesses can support employees with caring responsibilities by incorporating a carers’ policy into their staff handbook. Many of the estimated 6 million plus unpaid carers in the UK combine paid work with unpaid caring responsibilities. It is challenging for employees to balance competing responsibilities, causing many to reduce their working hours or stop working altogether, resulting in a significant loss of skills. When carers leave because of their responsibilities, employers have to pay recruitment and training costs for new recruits and employees might join a competitor if they re-enter the workforce later on”.*

To become a Friend of ISMA<sup>UK</sup> is easy and costs nothing – just visit [www.isma.org.uk](http://www.isma.org.uk) and find the link on the Friends of ISMA<sup>UK</sup> page.

Another ISMA<sup>UK</sup> member, Simon Hawtrey-Woore, also a carer, commented, *“I am so grateful for the recognition and resources being made available through ISMA<sup>UK</sup> for those of us who live in Carers’ World - a parallel world in a different time zone, a world where you’re glued to an individual and their every need yet feel desperately lonely. You are needed, relied upon, show up unconditionally, but get little recognition. It’s a world you can’t step out of and feel trapped in, often in fear of not coping - asking for help means admitting you can’t cope. If you know a carer, please signpost them to ISMA<sup>UK</sup>. If you are a carer, I hope you will find the courage to approach ISMA<sup>UK</sup>. They will offer a helping hand in the Carers’ World”.*

### **Make your own pledge during Carers’ Week**

Carole Spiers concluded, *“The Carers’ Week team are asking as many people as possible to help them make caring visible and valued by finding an activity for Carers’ Week. It could be anything from delivering a wellbeing workshop or taking a health walk, to a session on valuing yourself. To upload an activity on the website takes a moment – so far over 600 activities have been uploaded on the map of Carers’ Week activities across the UK. To pledge your own individual or organisational activity, simply go to <https://www.carersweek.org/>”.*

ENDS

## Notes for Editors

The four ISMA<sup>UK</sup> Energiser Sessions can be accessed via these links –

**Singalong Energiser with George Bell**, on: song <https://vimeo.com/480027651>

**Laughter Energiser with Lotte Mikkelsen**, happiness expert, laughter yoga master trainer  
[https://youtu.be/nl3lip0Mn\\_I](https://youtu.be/nl3lip0Mn_I)

**Stress Relief Energiser through Mantra Meditation and Yogic Breathing with Prash Kotecha**, wellbeing and mindset coach <https://vimeo.com/476329374>

**Do You Want to Sleep Better? Energiser with Frances Taylor**, creator of powerful sleep programmes  
<https://vimeo.com/476376142>

The ISMA<sup>UK</sup> Masterclass, *Resetting the Button: wellbeing and sustainability in the changing world of work*, with Professor Sir Cary Cooper and Professor Lennart Levi, can be accessed on YouTube via this link <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZyAAfPTBv7w&t=4s>

To find out more about ISMA<sup>UK</sup>, visit [www.isma.org.uk](http://www.isma.org.uk). As a registered charity and membership-based organisation for over 30 years, ISMA<sup>UK</sup> exists to promote sound knowledge and best practice in stress management, both nationally and internationally, providing advice to a wide range of individuals, businesses and voluntary organisations, while supporting the Health & Safety Executive in delivering their requirements for Stress Risk Assessment. For more information contact Carole Spiers, Chair, at [chair@isma.ork.uk](mailto:chair@isma.ork.uk).

To find out more about Carers' Week and how you can pledge an activity during 7<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> June, visit <https://www.carersweek.org/>.