

Press Release

24th November 2022

ISMA^{UK} and HSE partner on Working Minds campaign

The International Stress Management Association (ISMA^{UK}) is partnering with the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) on the HSE's Working Minds campaign, launched last year to encourage employers to promote good mental health in the workplace. Stress, anxiety and depression are the number one reasons for work-related illness in the UK and this is on the rise.

Annual statistics published this week by the HSE covering the 2021/22 period show that, of the 1.8 million UK workers suffering from a work-related illness, 914,000 were suffering with stress, depression or anxiety – around half of cases. In addition, an estimated 17 million working days were lost due to work-related stress, depression or anxiety – this is over half of all working days lost due to work-related ill health.

Working Minds, which had its first anniversary earlier this month, is aimed specifically at supporting small businesses by providing employers and workers with easy to implement advice and tools to help them recognize symptoms of stress, depression or anxiety, reach out to sufferers, respond appropriately and reflect on the lessons learned so that improvements can be made leading to better mental health in the workplace. These objectives can be summarized in five simple steps –

1. Reach out and have conversations
2. Recognise the signs and causes of stress
3. Respond to any risks identified by agreeing action points between employer and worker
4. Reflect on the actions taken – have things improved?
5. make it Routine to check back in on how things are going.

Together with partners such as ISMA^{UK} the HSE invite business and organisations across the nation to support their campaign and become Working Minds Champions to help raise awareness and drive change. Elizabeth Goodwill from Stress and Mental Health Policy at the HSE said, "We're calling for a culture change across Britain's workplaces so that recognising and responding to signs of stress become as routine as managing workplace safety and we can't do it alone. We're delighted to be working with ISMA^{UK} to help prevent stress and support good mental health".

Carole Spiers, Chair of ISMA^{UK}, said, "We are very pleased to partner with the HSE on their Working Minds campaign, particularly in the light of their latest statistics showing increased cases of work-related stress, depression or anxiety. This campaign resonates strongly with ISMA^{UK} as the lead professional body for workplace and personal stress management, wellbeing and performance. The pandemic unleashed unprecedented change, bringing increased levels of stress and consequent mental health issues with it – and these levels are clearly still increasing. Employee wellbeing and mental health support are just as important as profit and productivity – because each is entirely dependent upon the other.

She continued, “With remote and hybrid working on the increase, businesses are being judged more than ever on how they treat their employees and on what specific support they are making available to them. It is essential, therefore, that we understand the importance of wellbeing in the workplace - whether that be at the office, either full-time or on a hybrid basis, or working remotely. Effective, unrestricted communication at all levels is crucial to achieve optimum working and productivity, reinforcing an atmosphere in which there is job security and trust, both of which are essential for employee wellbeing at every level within an organisation.”

Notes for Editors

About Working Minds

Employers and employees wanting to know more about the Working Minds campaign, including the advice and tools available, should visit workright.campaign.gov.uk/campaigns/workingminds.

A podcast has recently been issued, featuring HSE Chair Sarah Newton and Professor Sir Cary Cooper CBE, a patron of ISMA^{UK}, in discussion on the subjects of stress, mental health and the Working Minds campaign. [Listen to the podcast](#) here.

A video featuring Working Minds partners, including Carole Spiers, Chair of ISMA^{UK}, has been released to mark the first year of the Working Minds campaign. [Working Minds partners – one year on - YouTube](#).

About ISMA^{UK}

ISMA^{UK} is the leading professional body for workplace and personal stress management, wellbeing and performance, promoting sound knowledge and best practice in stress management, resilience, wellbeing and mental health for over 30 years. ISMA^{UK} practitioners and consultants provide stress management services, including flexible training courses and coaching to individuals and businesses in both the private and public sectors, assisting around 40,000 people who need professional help with stress-related issues every year. ISMA^{UK} endorses and uses the HSE guidelines for managing stress in the workplace. To find out more about ISMA^{UK}, visit www.isma.org.uk.

About the HSE

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is Britain’s national regulator for workplace health and safety. It is dedicated to protecting people and places and helping everyone lead safer and healthier lives. HSE’s role is to prevent work-related death, injury and ill health through regulatory actions that range from influencing behaviours across whole industry sectors through to targeted interventions on individual businesses. These activities are supported by globally recognised scientific expertise.

Press Interviews

For press and media enquiries please contact Carole Spiers, Chair of ISMA^{UK}, on +44 (0) 77 688 78910 or at chair@isma.org.uk, or Jennie Atkins, HSE External Senior Communications Manager, at Jennie.Atkins@hse.gov.uk or on 07880 425244.