

New online learning tool helps businesses address work-related stress

A “much needed” new online learning tool designed to prevent work-related stress has been launched.

Businesses are encouraged to sign-up to the free-to-use interactive tool, designed by the Health and Safety Executive’s (HSE) Working Minds campaign, to understand what they need to do to comply with the law.

The tool provides the simple and effective guidance employers need to take action to meet their legal duties and begin to understand how to include stress in their workplace risk assessments.

Created as part of HSE’s Working Minds campaign, which promotes good mental health in the workplace, the new tool is made up of six short modules. These take employers through relatable, everyday scenarios, such as how to recognise the signs of stress in individuals and teams like regular lateness to work, being withdrawn and higher staff turnover.

Liz Goodwill, head of work-related stress policy at HSE, said: “More than half of small and medium sized (SME) businesses recently visited by HSE knew they had a legal duty to assess the risk of work-related stress, but the number who actually did this was significantly lower. This new online tool will help employers understand the steps and actions necessary to help bridge this gap. It is a much needed solution.

“Lack of time, money and know-how are common reasons why businesses can struggle to prevent and proactively tackle the issue. Now, they have a resource that provides free learning which is simple and engaging and does not take a huge amount of time to complete.

“Businesses will come away with an understanding of what the law requires of employers and what actions they need to take. It provides an opportunity for employers to refresh their existing knowledge and help drive the culture change that the Working Minds campaign is aiming to achieve. I encourage them to give it a go.”

The tool was launched today, Wednesday 8 November, at HSE’s online Health and Work conference. It can be found here: [HSE Workplace Stress \(focusgames.com\)](https://www.focusgames.com/HSE-Workplace-Stress).

Whether you’re a small business or a large corporation, the law requires all employers to carry out a stress risk assessment and act upon the findings to prevent work related stress and support good mental health in the workplace.

Since 2019, the total annual cost of poor mental health has increased by 25%, costing UK employers up to £56 billion a year. Over half of working days are lost due to work-related stress, depression or anxiety. Stress, depression and anxiety are the number one reasons for work-related illness in the UK and figures continue to rise.

Liz Goodwill, added: “The Mental health and employers report from Deloitte suggests employers see a return of £5.30 on average for every £1 invested in staff wellbeing. By providing this free learning, our aim is to help lower the investment cost and assist employers to reap the potential benefits including increased productivity, lower absenteeism and reduced staff turnover.”

Working Minds helps employers to follow five simple steps based on risk assessment. They are to **Reach out** and have conversations, **Recognise** the signs and causes of stress, **Respond** to any risks you’ve identified, **Reflect** on actions you’ve agreed and taken, and make it **Routine**. It needs to become the norm to talk about stress and how people are feeling and coping at work.

Notes to Editors

1. The [Health and Safety Executive](#) (HSE) is Britain’s national regulator for workplace health and safety. We 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.
2. To read more about HSE’s Working Minds campaign click [here](#)
3. For press and media enquiries please contact media.enquiries@hse.gov.uk
4. [Mental health and employers: the case for investment – pandemic and beyond | Deloitte UK](#)