

New tools to prevent, reduce and manage stress in the workplace

Employers are being urged to review the stress-causing factors in their workplaces and the work that their employees do.

Stress, depression or anxiety account for 51% of all work-related ill health cases and 55% of all working days lost due to work-related ill health. Stress impacts on all sectors and businesses of all sizes and employers have a legal duty to protect employees from stress at work by doing a risk assessment and acting on it.

Evidence shows that there are six key factors which, if not properly managed, are associated with poor health, lower productivity and increased accident and sickness absence rates.

The six key factors are:

- **Demands:** workload, work patterns and the work environment
- **Control:** how much say the person has in the way they do their work
- **Support:** encouragement, sponsorship and resources available to workers
- **Relationships:** promoting positive working to avoid conflict and dealing with unacceptable behaviour
- **Role:** whether people understand their role within the organisation and whether the organisation ensures that they do not have conflicting roles
- **Change:** how change (large or small) is managed and communicated.

Rob Vondy, Head of Stress and Mental Health Policy at HSE, says: "It's well known that stress can make you ill. We know that work-related stress depression and anxiety has increased in recent years, and the last year has presented new challenges that have never been faced before, and which may affect the workplaces of the UK for some time to come.

"Good communication is vital as stress affects people differently – what stresses one person may not affect another. If you don't understand the problem or its extent, tackling it will be more difficult. Factors like skills and experience, age or disability may all affect whether an employee can cope. People feel stress when they can't cope with the pressures or demands put on them, either in work or other outside issues. Start talking to your colleagues about any issues now – the earlier a problem is tackled the less impact it will have.

"Employers should match demands to employees' skills and knowledge. Recognising the signs of stress will help employers to take steps to prevent, reduce and manage stress in the workplace. Healthy and safe work and workplaces are good for business and good for workers."

HSE has a range of practical support and guidance available including risk assessment templates, a talking toolkit to help start conversations,

workbooks, posters, a new mobile app and a new automated stress indicator tool (SIT). For more information see the [stress section at www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress)

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. www.hse.gov.uk
2. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>
3. April marks Stress Awareness Month
4. The [Stress indicator tool \(SIT\)](#) measures the attitudes and perceptions of employees towards work-related stress and is free to use for up to 50 employees.
5. The [Mobile app](#) is primarily for small and medium sized businesses to help them better understand the law and what is required to protect employees.

The post [New tools to prevent, reduce and manage stress in the workplace](#) appeared first on [HSE Media Centre](#).