

# WALES HEALTH AT WORK PARTNERSHIP IS LAUNCHED

Two of the biggest health issues facing Wales' working population – wellbeing and mental health and musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) – were being explored at a multi-agency conference in Llandudno today.

The Wales Health at Work Summit 2019 was particularly focussed on helping small to medium sized enterprises (SMEs) to address these issues and attendees heard from a wide range of speakers across government and industry.

The Summit was hosted by the newly-formed Wales Health at Work Partnership (WHWP), a coalition of organisations committed to improving workplace health and wellbeing in Wales.

Members of WHWP include the Welsh Government, Public Health Wales and its 'Healthy Working Wales' programme, the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA), the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and social partners.

Outlining its future agenda at today's launch the WHWP set itself several objectives to support Welsh business – including SMEs and 'micros' – and its workforce by:

- Promoting new and existing initiatives in Wales to improve health at work and mental wellbeing.
- Sharing approaches, tools, and workplace experience for managing the risk, and reducing the incidence, of the major causes of occupational ill health in Wales.
- Gathering and acting on information regarding additional health support needed by Wales' working population.
- Developing a co-ordinated and sustainable approach to underpin the work of the Partnership.

Welcoming people to today's event, Summit Chair, Public Health Wales' Jyoti Atri said: "Today's event marks an important landmark. It brings together practitioners from across the public health and workplace health boundary. Working together we will bring improved outcomes for health and wellbeing through work."

HSE's deputy director of the Health and Work Programme, Peter Brown said: "Health is a complex area and, as we all know, health improvements are not delivered in one day. That's as true for HSE's own role, preventing work-related ill health, as for any other, and makes partnership working all the more important. HSE is therefore delighted to be a part of today's launch."

Councillor Dafydd Meurig (Gwynedd), WLGA Spokesperson for Regulatory Services added: "This summit is an important step forward – but it's the beginning of a process, not the end. Ill health in Welsh workplaces continues to take a

heavy toll. Our end goal must be to see lasting improvements, so we urge all those with a shared interest to join us in this mission”.

WHWP told the conference that it recognised the importance of healthy and safe workplaces for good public health and believes its role will be pivotal in delivering lasting beneficial change for Welsh businesses and their employees.

Attendees were asked to capitalise on today’s summit and bring WHWP members together with the wider health and work community to explore all possibilities for future collaboration.

#### Notes to Editors

1. The Wales Health at Work Summit is jointly funded by the Welsh Government – through Healthy Working Wales – and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). It is particularly focussed on small to medium sized enterprises (SMEs) – and on the ‘SME intermediaries’ that support or link to SMEs – and on helping meet their health needs.
2. The membership of the Wales Health at Work Partnership (WHWP) currently comprises:
  - Welsh Government
  - Public Health Wales
  - Business Wales
  - Director of Public Protection – Wales Representative
  - Health & Safety Executive
  - Federation of Small Businesses – Wales
  - Local Authority Health & Safety Expert Panel
  - Wales TUC
  - Welsh Local Government Association
3. The Health and Safety Executive 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](http://www.hse.gov.uk)

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## [Company sentenced after fall through fragile roof](#)

A building and maintenance company has been fined after an employee fell from height, causing life changing head injuries.

Birmingham Magistrates' Court heard that on 11 May 2018 two employees of M & M Damproof were replacing a leaking roof sheet above a motor vehicle repair workshop in Digbeth, Birmingham. The pitched roof consisted of corrugated asbestos cement sheets and perspex roof lights. The pair accessed the roof via a ladder which they positioned at the rear of the premises and walked along the roof valley to the site of the repair at the front of the building.



They went onto the roof several times during the course of repair and also worked from a mezzanine floor below part of the roof. Shortly after returning to the mezzanine area inside the building, one worker heard a cracking sound and a shout. Looking across the workshop he saw that his colleague had fallen

five metres from the roof onto the concrete workshop floor below. He had fallen head first through a fragile roof light. The injured worker suffered multiple fractures and life changing head injuries. He spent eight weeks in hospital and continues to recover.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that M & M Damproof failed to assess the risks of the job and there were no precautions in place to prevent falls from height through the fragile roof.

M & M Damproof Co. Limited of Clements Road, Birmingham pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 9 (2) of the Work at Height Regulations 2005. The company was fined £20,000 and ordered to pay full costs of £996.79.

HSE inspector Amanda James said: "Falls through fragile roofs are a far too common cause of serious and fatal injury in the construction industry and the precautions are well established.

"All roofs can become fragile over time. In particular cement sheets and roof lights are known to be fragile.

"Work on fragile roofs should be avoided where possible, for example by replacing roof sheets from underneath. If it is necessary to go onto the roof, suitable measures such as platforms, coverings and guard rails should be used to prevent falls. Walking along valleys and gutters without protection is not safe; a mis-step, slip or trip could be fatal. With proper planning, safe systems of work and equipment, accidents like this are completely avoidable."

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2. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at: [www.legislation.gov.uk/](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/)
3. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>

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## Multinational building materials company fined after worker died during maintenance and repair work

Cemex UK Operations Limited has been fined £1m after a worker suffered fatal injuries when he was struck on the body by a centering machine lifting mast.

Livingston Sheriff Court heard that on 13 May 2017, James Brownlie was carrying out maintenance and repair work on a dry sided conveyor, part of which ran under a machine known as a centering machine. The centering machine was not isolated at the time and part of Mr Brownlie's body interrupted the path of the light beam between the sensor's emitter and reflector. This caused the machine's lifting mast to activate and descend, striking him on the body and causing internal injuries from which he died a short time later.







An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that Cemex UK Operations Limited failed to ensure the centering machine was isolated prior to the maintenance and repair work being carried out on the conveyor.

Cemex UK Operations Limited, Evreux Way, Rugby pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2 (1) and Section 33 (1) (a) of the Health and Safety at Work Act etc 1974 and was fined £1,000,000.

After the hearing, HSE inspector Kim Ross said: “This tragic incident led to the avoidable death of a man, which could have easily been prevented if had taken action to ensure the centering machine was isolated prior to the maintenance and repair work being carried out.

“If this had been in place before the incident, James Brownlie’s death could have been prevented.”

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## [Company prosecuted after employee injured using rip saw](#)

A building and maintenance company was fined after an employee was injured while operating a rip saw.

Liverpool Crown Court heard that on 2 June 2017, the worker was cutting timber to construct a door in the joinery workshop of Connors Building and Restoration Limited. As he fed a length of hardwood through the blade, an offcut was ejected backwards striking the employee and impaling itself in his upper leg and groin. Although the saw had a crown guard and riving knife, no work piece support was being used.

An investigation by the Health and Safety executive (HSE) found that no risk assessment for the machine had been carried out to identify the controls to reduce the risk of kick back of timber. The company failed to provide adequate training and supervision in use of the work equipment including workpiece supports.

Connors Building and Restoration Limited, of Knowsley Industrial Estate, Liverpool, was found Guilty to breaching regulation 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 etc. The company was fined £20,000 and ordered to pay

costs of £68,192.15.

HSE inspector Catherine Lyon said after the hearing “This injury could have been easily prevented by identifying and implementing safe working practices when using this machine and in ensuring employees were provided with appropriate information, instruction and training to ensure these methods were followed.”

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