



World Suicide Prevention Day – PRESS RELEASE

September 10 marks World Suicide Prevention Day (WSPD), a day in which organisations across the world raise awareness about suicide prevention. With over 6,507 suicides registered in the UK last year alone, it is vital we open up this conversation.

In response to the latest report released by the Office of National Statistics for 2018 which reports that suicide rates have risen for the first time since 2013, James Rudoni, Managing Director of Mates in Mind said:

“Every suicide is a preventable death and the effect on those impacted is lasting. We know that we have a big challenge, and this does not deter us – to the contrary, it emphasises that more needs to be done. This should remain a priority issue overall, but that there is also a need to focus on men in their late 40s who remain the highest-risk group by age.

What we also know from data previously reported by the ONS (2017) is that this risk is elevated in some sectors of the economy, such as construction, and within the sector the suicide risk is three times the national average for site workers. We affirm there is both a moral as well as clear business case for organisations to be aware of this issue, understand that they have a duty of care and recognise that they can play a critical role in tackling it.

Just getting people to create a space at work to open up a conversation about mental health continues to be the most immediate and effective starting point. We cannot underestimate this important first step – helping to provide clear language, create general awareness and help people to recognise that everyone has mental health the same way that they have physical health. In this space, part of the messaging is about people recognising the signs in themselves, but awareness also is about enabling people to spot the changes in behaviour in others, combined with having increased confidence to know how to appropriately open up a conversation with a colleague.

*Over the last two years, our experience in supporting more than 300 organisations has shown us that Mates in Mind can make a meaningful difference to how an organisation supports the mental health of its people. We’ve seen the industry respond, and with the **Stop. Make a Change** campaign it again provides the opportunity for workplaces and sites around the country to do just that. We encourage businesses to download our resource pack or get in touch with Mates in Mind for more advice and support.”*

How Mates in Mind is working to change this

In our first year of action we partnered with organisations across the construction industry, building a community of 185 Supporter organisations, reaching more than 187,000 individuals across the sector.

Today, Mates in Mind supports over 300 organisations to improve their workplace mental health.

Within the Mates in Mind framework there are four key elements which, importantly, together offer a holistic and joined up approach:

- 1. To educate and inform the workforce** – with messages tailored to the workforce, to leaders and to champions – helping everyone understand their roles and responsibilities when it comes to mental wellbeing
- 2. To support both the organisation in creating the right programme for them**, offering guidance on specific worker issues from creating a stress management policy – through to connecting the workforce to appropriate support at the right time.

3. To visibly support the framework throughout the organisation with relevant and accessible communication materials – from hard hat stickers to van stickers, to posters, flyers to wallet cards etc.

4. To help build an evidence base – Mates in Mind are also developing a research programme which will help the industry understand the nature and impact of mental health and ensure development of effective and robust solutions.

To find out how to get involved with Mates in Mind, get in touch with our dedicated Programme Support Team on 020 3510 5018.

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Notes to editor

About Mates in Mind

1. Mates in Mind is a registered charity working in the UK that aims to provide clear information to employers on available support and guidance on mental health, mental illness and mental wellbeing, and how they can address this within their organisations. Mates in Mind looks to make sense of what options and support are available to employers wishing to promote improved mental health within their workforce.
2. Mates in Mind is a collaboration of founding partners: Health in Construction Leadership Group and British Safety Council and is supported by core partner charities Mind, Samaritans, Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) England and Inspire. It is also supported by construction industry charities and bodies and has various Mates in Mind business champions, including: Balfour Beatty; eight20; Galliford Try; Mineral Products Association; RSE Group; Sellafield; Tarmac; and Tideway. Quotes of support from these organisations are available on request.
3. Mates in Mind was the result of a Health in Construction Leadership Group summit in early 2017 for construction industry CEOs and senior leaders who voted overwhelmingly to improve the mental wellbeing of its workforce. At an event in January 2017, Mates in Mind was launched, and the pilot phase was started. Mates in Mind was featured in the *Thriving at Work* report published in October 2017.
4. More details on Mates in Mind is available at: www.matesinmind.org
5. Mates in Mind must only be referred to in acronym form as MinM.

Mates in Mind's networks

Website: www.matesinmind.org

Twitter: www.twitter.com/matesinmind

Facebook: www.facebook.com/matesinmind

LinkedIn group: www.linkedin.com/company/matesinmind

Media requests

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