



Mates in Mind highlights mental health statistics as a stark warning to employers of the cost to workers and businesses if workplace mental health is not properly understood.

Following the release of the Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) annual figures for Great Britain, the Managing Director of Mates in Mind urges employers to ensure that they are investing in their people rather than paying lip service to addressing mental health. This comes as the HSE reports the number of cases of work-related stress, depression or anxiety (new or longstanding) in 2018/19 have remained at 600,000 cases – the same as reported for 2017/18.

The HSE has stated that in 2018/19 stress, depression or anxiety accounted for 44% of all work-related ill health cases and 54% of all working days lost due to ill health.

The report highlights that the total number of working days lost due to this condition in 2018/19 was 12.8 million days, equating to an average of 21.2 days lost per case. James Rudoni, Managing Director of Mates in Mind said:

"This latest report by the HSE further reinforces the importance of our charity's aims to drive change across UK workplaces and immediately support employers to improve the mental health of their workforces. It is evident, acknowledging the rates of lost working days, that the sustainability and productivity of our businesses are being impacted by mental ill-health.

"However, in addition to highlighting the worrying business cost that poor mental health is having across UK industries at a time of significant and unusual pressure for many companies. We must acknowledge that the human cost of these trends cannot be ignored either. The numbers being presented in HSE's report are not simply cases, but people, therefore we urge employers to invest in the health of their organisations, by prioritising the mental health of their most vulnerable and most valuable asset - their people.

With International Stress Awareness Week and the release of these new HSE findings falling within days of each other, the need for employers to ensure they provide a workplace culture with prevention in mind has become ever clearer.

"Although we are encouraged to see that the number of cases of work-related stress, depression or anxiety in the UK did not increase further over the last year, and have been pleased to witness and facilitate progressive developments of mentally healthy workplaces alongside our partner organisations- we recognise that there is still much work to be done.

"Mates in Mind understand that if organisations are to make meaningful changes and do more than pay lip service to the topic of mental health, they must address the harmful reaction people have to undue pressure and demands placed on them at work, and the impacts this has on their mental health.

Within the HSE report, respondents cited workload pressures, including tight deadlines, too much responsibility and a lack of managerial support as the main factors causing work-related stress, depression or anxiety. Other factors included: a lack of managerial support, organisational changes at work, violence and role uncertainty (lack of clarity about job role and uncertain of what to do).

"With the HSE's report highlighting the challenges which work-related ill-health poses and the specific areas in which employers and organisations can work to be better and make a change- the report comes as an important warning that more organisations need to take action.

"We know that many employers wish they could do more, but are worried and don't know where to start. Mates in Mind can help. We are proud to be supporting over 300 organisations across the UK and offer a unique 'whole organisation' approach to developing the skills, clarity and confidence to raise awareness, improve understanding and address the stigma that surrounds workplace mental health."

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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. It is also supported by construction industry charities and bodies and has various Mates in Mind business champions, including Balfour Beatty; DE Group; 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

Instagram: @matesinmind

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