

Newsletter



October 2014

Special points of interest:-

- New Explosives Regulations

The new Explosives Regulations 2014 (ER 2014) and the Acetylene Safety (England and Wales and Scotland) Regulations 2014 (ASR 2014) will come into force in November 2014 and ESAB is reminding the market that these new regulations embrace significant changes to acetylene safety within the United Kingdom.

- First Aid Training.

The HSE has removed the approval process for training and qualification for First Aiders from October 2013. This enable employers to choose their training according to business needs. Guidance on how to assess first aid needs are provided by the HSE.

- OH Access

Only 1 in 7 workers in the UK has access to qualified occupational health advice says the British Medical Association (Alcohol, drugs and the workplace – the role of medical professionals. London: BMA, 2014).

Tax Exemption

The government has announced employers will be given tax exemption of up to £500 per employee for treatment recommended by occupational health.



Mental Health

According to a study by OECD (Mental Health and Work: UK. Paris: OECD, 2014) mental health costs the UK about £70 billion each year. These costs relate to lost productivity, healthcare costs and benefit payments. The UK has the highest numbers of disability benefit claims in the world and mental health problems are the major reason.

To avoid excessive costs to your business it is wise to prevent work related mental health problems as far as possible.

Sickness Absence in 2013

In the UK 131 million days were taken of in 2013 for sickness absence (Office for National Statistics). This equates to 4.4 days per employee per year. Major reasons were muscular-skeletal problems, minor illnesses and mental health problems.

Migraine

8 million people in the UK suffer from migraines. This is 1 in 7. According to The Migraine Trust (<http://employment.migrainetrust.org/#/1/>) about 35% of them experience problems at work. Migraine attacks can result in unpredicted frequent short term absence and may cause problems to manage workload due to disruption. The frequency of attacks can vary widely from one attack a year to 3 to 4 attacks a week. Frequently there are trigger factors that can be identified and used to influence the frequency of future attacks. Not in all cases trigger factors can be identified; however, if it is possible this can make a huge difference. In an appointment with the Occupational Health Physician possible trigger factors can be evaluated and changes in private and working life discussed. In the report to management the OH Physician can make the employer aware of adjustments in the workplace influencing the frequency of attacks and consequently absence levels.

To book an appointment please contact us on 020 7959 3015

Lower Back Pain

Worldwide lower back pain relates to about 1/3 of work related disabilities. The pain is mainly linked to ergonomic workplace factors (Annals of the Rheumatic Diseases 2014; 73:975-981) including lifting, awkward positions and movement as well as vibration exposure.



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