# HSE urges companies to take decisive action on work-related stress amid rising mental health challenges



Marking World Mental Health Day 2025, the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has issued a strong call to employers to move beyond simply raising awareness and instead take concrete, practical steps to prevent work-related stress. The latest data reveals a significant ongoing challenge: in 2023/24, nearly half of all self-reported work-related ill health cases in Great Britain—roughly 776,000—were linked to stress, depression, or anxiety. These conditions resulted in affected workers taking an average of 19.6 days off, indicating a substantial toll on both employees and business operations.

According to HSE statistics, the total number of workers reporting work-related ill health stood at 1.7 million for the year, with around 33.7 million working days lost due to illness or injury. Although the number of stress-related cases has fallen from 910,000 in 2022/23, it remains notably higher than pre-pandemic figures, underscoring the persistent nature of mental health challenges in the workplace.

Kayleigh Roberts, HSE's Work-Related Stress Policy Lead, highlighted the urgent need for employers to take action, stating: "This World Mental Health Day, we’re asking employers to keep talking – but start doing." She emphasised that manageable changes such as reviewing workloads, improving communication, and increasing employee autonomy can positively impact wellbeing and business performance. Roberts noted, “The organisations that thrive are those that address the root causes of stress before they escalate into a crisis.”

The HSE’s Working Minds campaign, now supported by 36 partner organisations, frames mental health as not only a moral responsibility but also a critical business priority. The campaign promotes a five-step approach—Reach out, Recognise, Respond, Reflect, and make it Routine—to tackle core stress triggers including demand pressures, control, support, relationship dynamics, role clarity, and change management.

In practice, employers are encouraged to adopt a range of accessible measures to protect mental health. These include conducting stress risk assessments using HSE templates, utilising communication tools such as the Talking Toolkit, and ensuring managers complete free training modules offered via HSE’s Work Right website. Over 18,000 business leaders have already engaged with these resources, with 94% reporting increased confidence in applying mental health management techniques.

The emphasis on actionable interventions reflects growing recognition that workplace mental health directly influences productivity, staff retention, and overall organisational success. As HSE points out, protecting team mental health is not just beneficial for individuals but also essential for maintaining robust and resilient businesses. The message this World Mental Health Day is clear: employers must commit to practical change now to curb the rising impacts of work-related stress and foster healthier, more supportive working environments.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.hsmsearch.com/Protect-team-mental-health-HSE), [[2]](https://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/overview.htm), [[4]](https://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/overview.htm)
* Paragraph 2 – [[2]](https://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/overview.htm), [[4]](https://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/overview.htm), [[5]](https://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/overview.htm)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.hsmsearch.com/Protect-team-mental-health-HSE)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://www.hsmsearch.com/Protect-team-mental-health-HSE)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://www.hsmsearch.com/Protect-team-mental-health-HSE)
* Paragraph 6 – [[1]](https://www.hsmsearch.com/Protect-team-mental-health-HSE), [[2]](https://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/overview.htm), [[4]](https://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/overview.htm)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.hsmsearch.com/Protect-team-mental-health-HSE> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/overview.htm> - The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has published its annual statistics for 2023/24, revealing that 1.7 million workers reported work-related ill health, with approximately 776,000 cases linked to stress, depression, or anxiety. This accounts for nearly half of all reported ill health cases. The rate of self-reported work-related stress remains higher than pre-pandemic levels but has decreased from 910,000 cases in 2022/23. Additionally, 33.7 million working days were lost due to self-reported work-related ill health or injury during this period.
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