

IOSH calls for people-focused work culture as mental health crisis revealed

2 years ago



Nearly two million workers in Great Britain reported suffering ill-health as a result of their work in 2022/23, with around half these cases due to stress, depression or anxiety.

In publishing its [annual statistics on work-related ill health and workplace injuries](#), this week, the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) reported that of the 1.8 million workers suffering from work-related ill health, 875,000 said they had suffered stress, depression or anxiety because of their work.

While this represents a slight fall from the previous year's level of 914,000, the current rate is still higher than pre-pandemic levels. An estimated 35.2 million working days were lost in 2022/23 due to self-reported work-related ill health or injury.

Corey Edwards, IOSH Senior Policy and Public Affairs Manager, said: "[IOSH](#) continues to advocate a prevention-first approach, encouraging employers to prioritise a people-focused work culture that proactively adopts psychosocial risk management strategies.

"Every £1 invested by employers in mental health yields a £5 return, with increased productivity, reduced staff turnover and a prevention of absenteeism and presenteeism. Investment in occupational safety and health must therefore not be misperceived as an unnecessary cost.

"Whilst the Chancellor announced in his Autumn statement a drive to return people with long-term illnesses back to work – with more than a quarter of working-age Britons currently unemployed or economically inactive – equal support for keeping people in work remains imperative."

Economic impact

HSE's latest statistics also revealed the impact work-related ill health and workplace injuries are having on Britain's economic performance.

In 2021/22, the estimated annual costs of workplace injury and new cases of work-related ill health reached £20.7 billion, representing a £1.9 billion increase compared with 2019/20.

The figures also showed that 135 workers were killed in work-related accidents in 2022/23, while 561,000 workers sustained a self-reported non-fatal injury in the workplace during the same period.

HSE chief executive Sarah Albon said: "Preventing or tackling work-related stress can provide significant benefits to employees, improving their experience of work and their overall health; and also to employers including increased productivity, decreased absenteeism and reduced staff turnover."

According to a recent report from Deloitte, the cost of poor mental health to UK employers reached up to £45bn. This figure is made up of absence costs of around £7bn, presenteeism costs ranging from £27bn to £29bn and turnover costs of around £9bn. The World Health Organization estimates poor mental health costs the global economy US\$1 trillion annually in lost productivity.