



**Partners for Better Health at Work  
Newsletter 07  
June 2006**



**Welcome to the seventh issue of the Partners for Better Health at Work Newsletter**

In this quarters edition I am pleased to bring you information on The Health, Work and Well-being Stakeholder Summit, Better Backs and an update on Workplace Health Connect and tools to promote it. I have also added new contact details for this newsletter as I have taken over the role of editor from Simon Thornhill.

As always you are more than welcome to extract information from the articles or distribute this newsletter to anyone you feel may have an interest in its contents. If you have received this through a contact and would like to sign up, my contact details are:

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**Health, Work and Well-being Stakeholder Summit**

The *Health, Work and Well-being Stakeholder Summit* was held on 3 May and was a positive and successful event with an excellent turnout. It was attended by 150 stakeholders including senior representatives from private and public sector employers, employee representatives, trade unions, trade and professional bodies and academics. Three Ministers spoke at the Summit - Rt Hon Margaret Hodge MBE, (then) Minister of State for Employment and Welfare Reform; Lord Hunt, DWP Minister (who attended for the whole day) and Rosie Winterton, Minister of State for Health Services. Bill Callaghan, Chair of the Health and Safety Commission, a number of members of the National Stakeholder Council as well as senior officials from other Government departments and the devolved administrations also attended. The main objectives of the day were to inform stakeholders and engage them - through signing up to the Stakeholder Charter. The morning comprised the ministerial speeches which set the scene and this was followed by speakers from large and small companies, and the public and private sectors outlining case studies. The afternoon session included workshops looking at the current challenges in implementing the strategy and ideas for overcoming these.

Speakers and delegates showed clear support for the Health, Work and Well-being agenda and this was made known by the 52 stakeholders who signed the Charter on the day, showing their commitment to the agenda. We hope that existing and future Charter signatories will carry through their commitment to improve the health and well-being of their workforces and will share their ideas and the outcomes in due course. You can access the Charter on the Health, Work and Well-being website at [www.health-and-work.org.uk](http://www.health-and-work.org.uk)"

**Noise**

**Noise and Vibration Roadshows 16 - 27 June 2006.** By popular demand four more HSE/EEF roadshows were held in London, Bridgend Sheffield and Warrington and were aimed at all who manage noise and vibration risk at work, including managing directors, production managers, health and safety advisors and safety representatives. For further details see the Vibration events page on the HSE web site at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/vibration/events.htm>"

## **Better Backs**

This year, the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) in partnership with local authorities will again be running a national campaign to tackle back pain in the workplace. Better Backs will build on the success of last year's backs campaign and also extend its scope.

Running from October, Better Backs will include workplace inspections, mass media advertising and events. The campaign will aim to reduce the incidence and impact of bad backs and reduce the number of working days lost due to back pain.

The campaign will focus on the holistic approach needed to manage back pain. It will promote sensible workplace precautions that reduce the risk of back pain and emphasise the positive benefits of staying active with back pain. At the same time, it will encourage employers and employees to work together to help people return to normal activities.

The HSE is keen to involve other bodies, trade associations and businesses in the campaign so funding is available to run campaign events. Further details will soon be available at [www.hse.gov.uk/msd](http://www.hse.gov.uk/msd) - in the meantime, please email [betterbacks@hse.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:betterbacks@hse.gsi.gov.uk).

## **Workplace Health Connect**

Workplace Health Connect is a service funded by Government and delivered in partnership with the HSE. It provides confidential, practical and free advice to smaller businesses in England and Wales on any workplace health and safety issue. It also provides advice on managing sickness absence and return to work.

Workplace Health Connect has been up and running since 23 February 2006 and so far there have been approximately 1,800 calls to the Adviceline (0845 609 6006) and over 700 referrals for free workplace visits. Customer satisfaction ratings for the Adviceline are very high, with 94% of callers said they were either very satisfied or satisfied with the service they received. The most common enquiries to date have been about hazard identification, risk assessments, stress, sickness absence, return to work issues and hazardous materials.

We would be very grateful if you would help to promote Workplace Health Connect through your organisation's websites or magazines etc. To facilitate this we have produced some text, images, buttons and banners that can be downloaded from <http://www.hse.gov.uk/workplacehealth/promotion.htm>

## **Healthy Workplace Solutions workshops kick off**

London and Leeds see the start of over 70 free regional workshops to help organisations manage attendance and work-related stress. Kicking off on 15 June and running until February 2007, they are sector-specific and aimed at those who record the highest levels of sickness absence from stress – central government, education, health, local authorities and financial services. The workshops focus on practical advice and peer examples, and aim to help participating organisations take action to improve the management of sickness absence through the effective implementation of the Management Standards (or an equivalent approach) and reduce incidents of ill health and days lost. More information can be found at: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/workshops.htm>

**Next issue due out in September 2006**