Kent Health & Safety Group

**14 May 2015**

**Church Farm Hall**

#### Minutes

# Attendance List

Gill Wiseman KCC

David Nicholson KCC

Doug Chenery KHSG

Philip Fairhurst Park Leisure & Sport

Jill Moore Bexley London Borough

Alan Webb Alan Webb Consultancy Ltd

Sarah Stubberfield Kent Fire & Rescue Service

Carol Cassin KCC

John McNeil AMKW

Mark Curry Ground Control

Colin Norgate J4S

### Apologies for absence

Andy Henderson, Mike Walters, Greg Buckley, Richard Pavey, Dorothy Cook, Steve Fowler, Chris Pike, Gary Hewitt.

## **Welcome to members and visitors**

The Chairman welcomed members and visitors to the May meeting of Kent Health and Safety Group.

**Mental Health First Aid**

The Chairman welcomed Athene Lane-Martin from Health Improvement Training Solutions who would be speaking about health at work, which is just as important as safety at work.

Athene began by saying that mental health is still quite a big issue in Kent.

The group most likely to commit suicide is middle aged men who work in the construction industry. This is for various reasons such as shift patterns, insecurity because the industry is not as it was, and access to possible suicide sites.

Long term planning is needed to improve mental health.

Mental ill health is costly to employers with the annual cost totalling £105 billion.

Stress is an important issue. The head is attached to the body – any physical problems with the body could be brought about by stress.

113 million working days lost to sick leave each year.

60-70% of people with common mental health disorders are in work.

No health without mental health

* more people will have good health;
* more people with mental health problems will recover;
* more people with mental health problems will have good physical health.

Terminology is important

Stress is a common and acceptable term.

If someone is suffering from stress, it means more than having a bad day. They cannot get out of bed, they cannot cope.

Mental health is a state of wellbeing in which an individual realises his or her own abilities and can cope with the normal stress of life.

Athene spoke of the Foresight Report – ‘mental capital and wellbeing: making the most of ourselves in the 21st century.’

The main determinants of health are:

* individual lifestyle factors (eg what people eat and drink);
* social; and community network;
* general socioeconomic, cultural and environmental conditions.

Cause and consequence

Poor mental health is both a cause and consequence of the experiences of social, economic and environmental inequalities.

Mental wellbeing at work

**Physical** **Work health** **Lifestyle health**

Psychological Stress Depression/anxiety

Social Bullying, conflict Family issues

Environment Workplace Housing problems

Economic Salary, benefits Disposable income

Stress is very individual, what one person can cope with, another can’t.

If someone leaves everything to the last minute, that might be stressful to somebody they work with.

Signs of stress

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Physical** | **Emotional** | **Behavioural** |
| Headaches | Feeling irritable | Temper outburst |
| Muscle tensions or pain | Feeling anxious or tense | Drinking or smoking |
| Stomach problems | Feeling in low mood | Changes in eating habits |
| Sweating | Feeling of apathy | Withdrawing from usual activities |
| Feeling dizzy | Feeling low in self esteem | Becoming unreasonable |
| Bowel or bladder problems |  | Being forgetful or clumsy |

Breathlessness or palpitations Rushing around

Dry mouth

Tingling in body

Sexual problems

IAPT – Improving Access to Psychological Therapies; this is based around cognitive behavioural therapies.

What is currently available to support someone who is coping with stress, anxiety or depression?

* Time to Change campaign

1 in 4 will have a mental health problem.

By 2030 the World Health Organisation says that depression will be the biggest health problem.

Being an effective stress manager does not require extra work.

It is worth noting that both the employer and employee are responsible for looking after their emotional well-being.

Dynamic risk management system:

screening

evaluation

information

actions

Action

Primary intervention

Secondary prevention

Tertiary prevention

Promoting well-being

Sometimes people don’t know that making healthy choices like eating a balanced diet can protect their mental health in the same way that it does their physical health.

* Have a stop smoking club at lunchtime at work.
* Have a health promotion at work showing the amount of units of alcohol it is safe to drink
* Have a health promotion at work showing the recommended amount of physical activity.

Mental Health Awareness Week is 11-17 May 2015.

Useful websites

[www.liveitwell.org.uk](http://www.liveitwell.org.uk)

[www.time-to-change.org.uk/timetotalkday](http://www.time-to-change.org.uk/timetotalkday)

5 steps to wellbeing at work:

* Foster a sense of community;
* Get people moving;
* Nurture sensitivity to the environment;
* Promote learning and development (eg doing crosswords)
* Encourage generosity at work (eg volunteering)

KCC are promoting a wheel of wellbeing covering body, mind, spirit, people, place and planet.

Mental health training

A MHFA course will teach you to spot early signs of a mental health problem. It is a 2 day course.

Athene finished by saying that “you cannot change the wind, but you can adjust the sails.”

Gill Wiseman gave the vote of thanks to Athene for her very interesting presentation.

**General Business**

* **Minutes of previous meeting**

The minutes of the April meeting were agreed.

* **Correspondence**

The latest ROSPA newsletter had been received with information about a film that had been created ‘facing up to falls’.

Information had also been received that from 8 June, the paper counterpart of the driving licence is being abolished.

* **Programme**

The Chair reminded members that the next meeting is the Group’s AGM and the presentation by Eversheds. He also reported that the hall had been booked for all 2015/16 dates. The meetings will all take place on the first Thursday of the month apart from the May meeting, as the hall has to be kept free in case of election.

The talk at the October meeting will be on work place hazards and on manual handling at the November meeting. Please let the chair know of any potential speakers.

* **Website**

There was nothing to report

* **HSE update**

The Chair reported that there had been no HSE email bulletins as the HSE had been unable to issue anything in the run-up to the elections.

There has been a slight change to the Control of Asbestos regulations which requires medical surveillance for workers undertaking licensed asbestos work and now also covers workers carrying out notifiable non-licensed work.

* **Update from other organisations**

The next IOSH SE meeting will take place on Tuesday 19 May on CDM regs. This a breakfast meeting and takes place at 7.45 am.

The chairman reported the following items of interest:-

CHIP regulations are being replaced on 1 June 2015 by the European CLP Regulation;

IOSH have published a paper on skin cancer among outdoor workers;

Brake have a free resource pack aimed at helping SMEs improve the safety of staff who drive for work;

IOSH also have a driver safety quiz available from shp online.

* **Help! / Learning experiences**

Jill Moore asked if any member had experience of conflict resolution and specific issues regarding highways work. The Highways Agency was suggested, also the large highways companies. CIEH have a conflict resolution course.

* **Accidents and dangerous occurrences**

The accident was discussed that had taken place at Port of Dover when a contractor had fallen 5 metres (information circulated prior to the meeting) and fractured his skull.

Mark Curry reported on an accident investigation in the Midlands. The contractor was planting trees. He was very experienced and had always worn wellington boots. He twisted his ankle, but carried on working. The next day his ankle was very swollen, so he had an x-ray and he had broken his ankle. Mark had raised the issue of wearing wellington boots some months ago, but the contractor finds work boots uncomfortable. Mark has now seen the wellington boots which are very old and floppy. He recommended that wellington boots need to be assessed according to the job that is being done.

**Any other business**

The Chair reported that the Group can have a lockable cupboard in the kitchen for a projector. Doug Chenery asked about insurance which Colin will look into.

If anybody can man the SGUK stand at IOSH Expo at the Excel Centre for a short while, they should contact Mark Curry.

Mark will be attending the SGUK AGM in Preston and will report back to the Group.

**Next meeting**

The next meeting will take place on 4 June 2015 when Eversheds will give a general health and safety update focussing on recent changes. Their presentation will be followed by the Group’s AGM.