

WALES HEALTH AT WORK PARTNERSHIP IS LAUNCHED

Two of the biggest health issues facing Wales' working population – wellbeing and mental health and musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) – were being explored at a multi-agency conference in Llandudno today.

The Wales Health at Work Summit 2019 was particularly focussed on helping small to medium sized enterprises (SMEs) to address these issues and attendees heard from a wide range of speakers across government and industry.

The Summit was hosted by the newly-formed Wales Health at Work Partnership (WHWP), a coalition of organisations committed to improving workplace health and wellbeing in Wales.

Members of WHWP include the Welsh Government, Public Health Wales and its 'Healthy Working Wales' programme, the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA), the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and social partners.

Outlining its future agenda at today's launch the WHWP set itself several objectives to support Welsh business – including SMEs and 'micros' – and its workforce by:

- Promoting new and existing initiatives in Wales to improve health at work and mental wellbeing.
- Sharing approaches, tools, and workplace experience for managing the risk, and reducing the incidence, of the major causes of occupational ill health in Wales.
- Gathering and acting on information regarding additional health support needed by Wales' working population.
- Developing a co-ordinated and sustainable approach to underpin the work of the Partnership.

Welcoming people to today's event, Summit Chair, Public Health Wales' Jyoti Atri said: "Today's event marks an important landmark. It brings together practitioners from across the public health and workplace health boundary. Working together we will bring improved outcomes for health and wellbeing through work."

HSE's deputy director of the Health and Work Programme, Peter Brown said: "Health is a complex area and, as we all know, health improvements are not delivered in one day. That's as true for HSE's own role, preventing work-related ill health, as for any other, and makes partnership working all the more important. HSE is therefore delighted to be a part of today's launch."

Councillor Dafydd Meurig (Gwynedd), WLGA Spokesperson for Regulatory Services added: "This summit is an important step forward – but it's the beginning of a process, not the end. Ill health in Welsh workplaces continues to take a

heavy toll. Our end goal must be to see lasting improvements, so we urge all those with a shared interest to join us in this mission”.

WHWP told the conference that it recognised the importance of healthy and safe workplaces for good public health and believes its role will be pivotal in delivering lasting beneficial change for Welsh businesses and their employees.

Attendees were asked to capitalise on today’s summit and bring WHWP members together with the wider health and work community to explore all possibilities for future collaboration.

Notes to Editors

1. The Wales Health at Work Summit is jointly funded by the Welsh Government – through Healthy Working Wales – and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). It is particularly focussed on small to medium sized enterprises (SMEs) – and on the ‘SME intermediaries’ that support or link to SMEs – and on helping meet their health needs.
2. The membership of the Wales Health at Work Partnership (WHWP) currently comprises:
 - Welsh Government
 - Public Health Wales
 - Business Wales
 - Director of Public Protection – Wales Representative
 - Health & Safety Executive
 - Federation of Small Businesses – Wales
 - Local Authority Health & Safety Expert Panel
 - Wales TUC
 - Welsh Local Government Association
3. The Health and Safety Executive is Britain’s national regulator for workplace health and safety. We prevent work-related death, injury and ill health through regulatory actions that range from influencing behaviours across whole industry sectors through to targeted interventions on individual businesses. These activities are supported by globally recognised scientific expertise. www.hse.gov.uk

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