

## EDITOR'S COMMENT

For the first time ever, a new report by the HSE has looked at the harmful effects of alcohol in the workplace, specifically from the point of view of co-workers who are directly affected.

The HSE's recent study 'Alcohol's Harm to Others in Ireland' found that one in ten co-workers have experienced problems due to colleagues who were heavy drinkers. Its author Dr Ann Hope talks to 'Health & Safety Times' about the need to implement alcohol policies, in the workplace which should include a series of guidelines to protect these co-workers at risk.

The report's findings serve to highlight that Ireland's strong drinking culture continues to permeate into the workplace. So, will corporate Ireland stick its head above the parapet to address the problems, or wait for the HSE or the Department of Health to take the lead? Are we back to that age old chestnut of sweeping such problems under the carpet?

For example, take the issue of mental health as calls continue to fall on deaf ears within the Department of Health to introduce adequate resources and back-up at community level.

And perhaps it's now time to study mental health and wellbeing issues within the workplace for both those who suffer from stress and anxiety disorders and their co-workers who may be affected by such behavioural problems.

This is an issue which needs to be addressed. And maybe mental health policies should also be considered within the workplace setting, similar to the calls by Dr Ann Hope for alcohol policies.

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## 5 NEWS UPDATE

The HSA has rolled out its own e-learning portal to host online courses for employers, employees, teachers and students at all levels of education across a range of sectors.



## 16 EURO NEWS

The latest 'Healthy Workplaces' campaign, launched by the European Agency for Safety at Health at Work (EU-OSHA), will raise awareness about the psychological, physical and social risks linked to stress at work over the next two years.



## 25 NISO NEWS

NISO, in association with the Construction Safety Partnership, has launched the Construction Safety Innovation Award for small contractors and small business. The closing date for entries is Friday 29 August.



## 27 IOSH NEWS

IOSH has warned that Irish businesses could be losing their competitive edge and over €3.2 billion per year due to a failure to confront the risks of injury and illness in the workplace. Its new 'Life Savings Ireland' campaign is designed to demonstrate that good health and safety management saves money as well as lives.



## 33 SPECIAL REPORT

One in ten co-workers have experienced problems due to colleagues who were heavy drinkers, according to the first study on the harmful effects of alcohol on the workplace in Ireland. Its author Dr Ann Hope tells Grace Heneghan there's now a need to implement alcohol policies in the workplace to protect workers.



## 39 MENTAL HEALTH

A new employment project has been launched to help people with long-term mental health issues to gain valuable work experience, and the response to this unique business-mental health services partnership has been incredible.



## 43 RETIREMENT PLANNING

Recent changes to the state retirement age from 65 to 66 this year are likely to have consequences for employers who may find themselves in a situation where employees who are due to retire will not be eligible for state entitlements they expected.

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## 44 CRISIS MANAGEMENT

University College Cork is leading a new three-year EU research project to develop new systems to co-ordinate emergency planning, preparedness, response and recovery across all borders. Project co-ordinator Dr Karen Neville says the aim is to standardise crisis management policies and procedures.



## 49 PERSONAL INJURIES

Over the past decade the non-adversarial model of processing personal injury claims has yielded savings of over €1 billion, reduced the timeline for claims from three years to seven months and delivered a 40 per cent reduction in motor insurance premiums.



## 50 CONSTRUCTION ERGONOMICS

Ergonomics should not be confined to just the office. In anticipation of the expected growth in the construction industry this year, a number of key considerations is being targeted at construction-related organisations to consider when implementing ergonomics in this workplace.



## 53 FARM SAFETY

In light of the extraordinary and tragic number of fatal accidents on Irish farms recently, the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, Richard Bruton TD and the Minister for Agriculture Food and the Marine, Simon Coveney TD have issued a joint call, alongside the HSA and the IFA, to all farmers to make safety a top priority.



## 56 UK NEWS

The Communication Workers' Union (CWU), which represents the largest number of dog attack victims in the UK, has welcomed the introduction of tough new dog control laws to England and Wales.



## 58 INTERNATIONAL NEWS

This year's World Congress on Safety and Health at Work in Frankfurt on August 24-27 is being organised jointly by the International Labour Organization (ILO), the International Social Security Association (ISSA) and the German Social Accident Insurance (DGUV).



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