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It's time to focus on health

Although the construction industry has made great strides in safety over the past 30 years or so, its track record on health continues to be poor. We want to change that – it's time to focus on health.

We've launched the wider view to share our thoughts on all things occupational health. We hope you find it a useful read.

Why is occupational health important?

It's easy to see the health impacts of an accident. If a worker were to fall from a height, the effects would be seen instantly. However, ill health can develop many years after exposure to a harmful substance. For example, the link between inhaling dust today and developing asthma many years later isn't always understood or recognised. We're making it our mission to tackle this problem. We want to help the industry understand what actions need to be taken now – to identify and prevent ill health in the future.

We've got industry expertise on our side



Meet Margaret Grahamslaw, our new Head of Occupational Health and Wellbeing.

Margaret joins us from Balfour Beatty, where she's responsible for guiding and managing occupational health services across the UK.

An Occupational Health Steering Group was formed for construction, with representatives from contractors, clients and federations to regulators and CBH/B&CE. Central to Margaret's role will be supporting them and developing our occupational health solution, to improve the health of construction workers.

Our proposed solution gained overwhelming support at the Health in Construction Leadership Group's CEO Summit earlier this year. In fact, 82% of CEOs voted 'yes' when asked if our proposed approach was a viable way forward for the industry.

[Read more about Margaret and her role with us »](#)

Over to you – ask Margaret

Your views are very important to us. So, it's over to you to pose your questions to Margaret – and let us know if you have any helpful suggestions or comments.

[Email Margaret your question now »](#)

How to manage health risks

It's time to treat health like safety – managing health risks is no different than managing safety risks. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has put together some key points on managing construction health risks – you can [read these on their website »](#)

It's important that the industry identifies the signs that a change in health is occurring and controls the risks, not the symptoms. Monitoring and health surveillance programmes are an effective part of managing health risks. But we need to stop exposure to hazards in the first place.

Five facts to take away

You can:

Prevent ill health – it's possible to work in construction without suffering ill health

Treat health like safety – managing health risks should be the same as managing safety risks

Play a part – everyone in construction is responsible for managing health risks

Control risks not symptoms – monitoring and health surveillance programmes aren't the solution, removing the hazards is

Manage risk not lifestyle – the law requires steps to be taken to prevent or control work-related health risks

The industry sees its workers as being unfit for work until proved otherwise. We need to bring about a positive step change in thinking, so they're seen as **'fit, healthy and wanting to stay that way'**.

Becoming a healthier company

To be efficient and profitable, you need fit and healthy workers. Being committed to managing the effects of **'health on work'** and any effects of **'work on health'** is essential.

Occupational health services can help the industry understand and manage the risks that are likely to lead to work-related ill health. And that, in turn, will help you keep your employees healthy at work.

Read the article 'how fit is your workforce' and discover 5 ways to become a healthier company »



Tell us what you think of our new occupational health framework for construction

We've been working with the Occupational Health Steering Group to develop a simplified health assessment framework. Over the last few weeks, we've been around the country consulting with the construction industry. And, for those of you that couldn't come to our events, we want to make sure your voice is heard too.

We've thought long and hard on this issue. And we've come up with a **simple 3-year plan** that removes the need for health assessments to be done over and over again. It focuses on the key health risks that workers face, and we believe that following it will make employers compliant for 90% of their workers.

We want to design a solution that works for the whole industry. And we need your input to make this happen. **Our consultation will end on 29 September 2017.** We'll report back shortly on the results.

[Take a look at our video and framework »](#)

[Tell us your views »](#)

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Award-winning service and support

Strong governance in a large, secure master trust

[For employers – more on the transfer »](#)

[For employees – more on the transfer »](#)

We'd like you to get involved

We're continuing to work with the industry to help improve occupational health. Can you help us in the next stage of our research?

Anything discussed will be used for research purposes only. And won't be shared with any third parties.

[Interested? Send us an email »](#)



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