

# Health & Safety inside look

## this issue

Health and Safety Advisory Team  
Weather Preparedness Month  
Back Care Awareness Week

## Back Care Awareness

3<sup>rd</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> October 2023

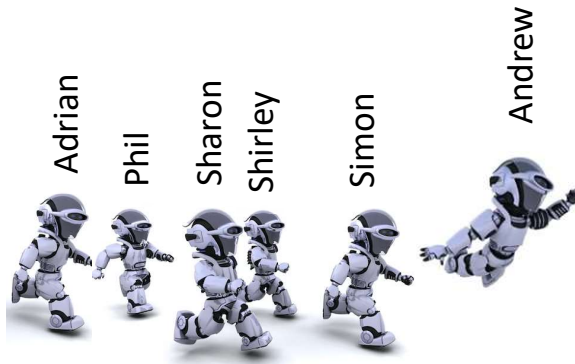
marks Back Care  
Awareness Week

Back Care Awareness  
Week is organised to raise  
awareness about back  
problems as well as how  
to manage back pain.

What device are you using to  
read this? Are you lying in  
bed with your head on the  
pillow, browsing mindlessly on  
your phone? Are you hunched  
over your computer, barely a  
few inches from the screen?

Did you say yes to either of  
these questions? Did you  
make any adjustments to your  
posture whilst reading the first  
few lines?

If you did then Back Care  
Awareness Week is for you!



## Health and Safety Advisors - OHR

**Health and Safety Advisors are appointed by the Isle of Man Government to support all Isle of Man Government Departments.**

The main purpose of the Health and Safety section of the Division is to provide a specialist health and safety advisory service which includes providing information, advice and support for managers to assist them in complying with legislative requirements and best practice derived from specialist organisations and comparable industries.

As an active team of five, the team supports Government Departments to understand and implement health and safety standards.

This is the first publication for Isle of Man Government employees and we hope to share regular newsletters with all staff.

### Meet the Team

Andrew Williams  
Head of Health, Safety and Welfare  
Adrian Mooney  
Health and Safety Adviser  
Phil Nightingale  
Health and Safety Adviser  
Sharon Langley  
Health and Safety Adviser  
Shirley Klieve  
Health and Safety Adviser  
Simon Walmsley  
Health and Safety Adviser

### Day to Day as an Health and Safety Adviser

Acting as an advisory team we work together to provide a knowledgeable service into Government. Together the team has a combined wide range of knowledge on industry standards and specialist topics.

The team supports services such as

- Audits and inspections
- Guidance on risk assessment, policies and safe systems of work/procedures
- Develop and support with the implemented of a health and safety management system into departments
- Incident investigations
- Toolbox talks and workshops
- LEaD Training Provider for COSHH and Health & Safety What you need to know
- Certified training provider for IOSH Managing Safety
- The creation and issuing of guidance documents for all Government Staff.
- Support a Health and Safety helpdesk – staff can email queries and request for support

We also host our own guidance document website which is accessible by all employees

<https://hr.gov.im/health-and-safety/health-and-safety-guidance/>

## Winter Checklist

Who is responsible for monitoring the weather forecast?

Who can and who are set up to work from home?

How will decisions about the weather and workplace access be made and communicated?

Which areas around the workplaces being cleared? Roads/footpaths?

Is equipment and materials in place to grit areas around the building/car park – if you have that responsibility?

*Does someone need to come in early?*

Are risk assessments in place and have they been reviewed since last year? Lone working/cold weather PPE

Do you have a plan for adverse weather and if so has this been reviewed since last winter?



### As we step into autumn we know that winter is fast approaching.

With less daylight, fallen leaves, standing water, ice and snow there is an increase in the number of incidents reported due to trips, slips and fall.

*Are you prepared for seasonal changes?*

*Can you plan to prevent seasonal slips and trips?*

The Health, Safety and Welfare Team find an increased number of slip and trip incident reports during the autumn and winter period and have created some guidance on planning for adverse weather and working during cold weather periods. Both documents will support managers and those with responsibilities for their site safety with assessing and addressing any potential hazards before the poor weather arrives.

The Inclement Weather plan is an active plan for the entire season and should be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that site arrangements and provisions are always in a state of readiness. The plan will look at situations for consideration including lighting, wet and decaying leaves, rain water, ice, frost, snow, grit, PPE and communications.

*"Can you plan to prevent seasonal slips and trips?"*

The plan is available on the Government Website for all employees. An editable document in word format can be requested from the Health, Safety and Welfare Team by emailing [safetyadvice@gov.im](mailto:safetyadvice@gov.im) <https://hr.gov.im/media/2511/plan-for-inclement-weather-template.pdf>

## Are you prepared for winter?

*...Nothing beats safety on a cold winter's day...*

### Working safely in cold weather

Departments are encouraged to have a bad weather policy along with their adverse weather plan. The policy should set out what is expected of staff and what they should do when snow, ice and a lack of transport prevents them from getting to work.

When our staff work outside additional thought and consideration needs to be given towards their safety and a risk assessment should be carried out.

According to the HSE, assessment of the risk to workers' health from working in a cold environment needs to consider both personal and environmental factors.

Personal factors include: level of activity, the amount and type of clothing and duration of exposure. Environmental factors include ambient temperature and radiant heat and, if the work is outside, sunlight, wind velocity and the presence of rain or snow.

However, carrying out a risk assessment in winter means taking more than just cold temperatures into account. The most dangerous and rapid heat loss occurs when wind chill comes into play and clothing gets wet, as the body loses 25–30 times more heat when in contact with cold, wet objects compared with dry conditions. Snow and ice on site should also be taken into account.

Appropriate controls need to be implemented and for those working outside this will include additional personal protective equipment with thermal qualities, regular breaks in the warmth.

The Central Health, Safety and Welfare Team can help you gear up for winter and cold weather working. We can help with assessment and provide guidance on controls.

## Back Care Awareness Week – 3<sup>rd</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> October



Back Care Awareness Week is focused on back pain prevention by keeping our spines in good health.

This annual campaign encourages all to recognise back pain and what can be done to relieve any symptoms.

Back pain can come on suddenly from an accident, a fall or by lifting something heavy. It can also develop slowly because of age related degenerative changes in the spine. In some cases, inflammatory arthritis disorders or other medical conditions cause the pain.

If you are experiencing pain and discomfort in the workplace, it is important that you discuss with your Manager or Team Leader.

An assessment with you for the tasks that you do should be carried out. This can be with the support of Occupational Health or the Central Health, Safety and Welfare Team.

### Did you know....

The Central Health, Safety and Welfare Team will support ergonomic assessments for vehicles, computer workstations, lifting and carrying duties and pushing & pulling activities.

A number of guidance documents have also been created – see the musculoskeletal section on the government website

<https://hr.gov.im/health-and-safety/health-and-safety-guidance/>

If you are experiencing back pain it is important to visit your GP if symptoms are not easing.

Recommendations to reduce discomfort include staying active. Take time during your working day to check on your posture and to stretch.

Your back needs movement and those who stay active with back pain, follow any recommendations from practitioners tend to recover.

There are many helpful resources available to help you recover and reduce back pain discomfort.

Workstation Stretches – in less than 4 minutes you can watch how workstation stretches can be carried out inside the workplace.

<https://www.bupa.co.uk/newsroom/ourviews/desk-stretches>



## Back Care for Drivers

Driving needn't be a pain in the neck...

Confined in a fixed position for hours on end, stressed out by road users and the constant vibrations of the wheels on the road – it is not surprising that so many drivers experience back ache!

Ensure that your seat is adjusted to provide back support and that controls are within reach.

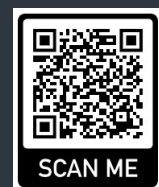
Take regular breaks, move around in your seat and think about your posture

Avoid twisting when getting in or out of the vehicle

Never lift heavy things after a long drive – loosen up first!

The Health, Safety & Welfare Team have created a vehicle ergonomic self-assessment which is available on the website

<https://hr.gov.im/media/2512/vehicle-ergonomic-assessment.pdf>



SCAN ME

## Ergonomic Tips

**Q: how do I know that I am sat correctly at my computer workstation?**

A: there are 8 basic principles

1. When sitting down at your desk, are your hips at a 90-120 degree angle and feet flat on the floor?
2. Can the height and angle of your monitor, keyboard and chair be adjusted?
3. Is it practical for you to stand periodically while continuing to work?

4. Is the top of your monitor or laptop screen at the same level as your eyes?
5. Is your screen arm's length away from your eyes?
6. Are your wrists able to remain flat when you are typing?
7. Are your shoulders relaxed, with your upper arms parallel with your torso?
8. Are your most used items all available within easy reach?

Take time to create a comfortable workstation and remember to step away from your workstation and mobilise your joints.



## How to contact Health, Safety and Welfare

### Telephone:

01624 686999

### Email:

safetyadvice@gov.im

### Where to find us:

Unit 19 Snugborough Trading Estate, Union Mills, Isle of Man.

IM4 4LH

What 3 Words:

Recovery.eleves.tent

## Health & Safety Locally

All workplaces must display the Health and Safety at Work Law Poster. This has recently been updated by the Health & Safety at Work Inspectorate.

This updated poster can be found on their website: <https://www.gov.im/media/1352572/health-and-safety-law-poster-210923.pdf>

## Upcoming Events and Professional Development

### IOSH Managing Safely

The IOSH Managing Safely Course comprises 3 days training followed by 2 written assignments.

- One multi-format examination taken at the end of day 3.
- A risk assessment project submitted after the course – conducted within the workplace and returned before the submission date (which is set by IOSH).

Both assignments are marked by IOSH.

Dates:

- 6th, 7th and 8th November 2023
- 15th, 16th and 17th January 2024
- 12th, 13th and 14th February 2024

### Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)

Dates:

- 6th November 2023 – 14:00 until 16:00
- 27th November 2023 – 14:00 until 16:00
- 5th December 2023 – 09:30am until 11:30am

Health, Safety and Welfare will also host bespoke workshops and toolbox talks to Isle of Man Government Departments and Employees. Please make contact to discuss any requirements for your own area.

## Just for fun...

Team Safety Moment – focused on slips, trips and falls why not discuss this Safety Moment inside your next team meeting?

**Slips, trips and falls are extremely common causes of workplace injuries. The most common causes are: wet and slippery floor, poor lighting, unsuitable footwear, unstable walkways and tripping hazards.**

**What are the most common slip, trip and fall hazards in your own area and what steps can be taken to minimize and prevent these risks?**

Finally...What's Wrong with This Photo? Look for 5 common habits that can contribute towards musculoskeletal discomfort.

Answers along with guidance can be found at the website:

<https://hr.gov.im/media/2447/082022-dse-poster.pdf>

or by snapping the below QR code

