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The UK Work Stress Network Annual Conference 2018 – Hillscourt Conference, Centre, Rednal, Birmingham B45 8RS – Saturday 24th & Sunday 25th November 2018: "Future Proofing Our Work Stress Protections"

To: All Branches

Dear Colleagues,

The UK Work Stress Network has announced that their Annual Conference 2018 will take place at the Hillscourt Conference Centre, Rednal, Birmingham B45 8RS on Saturday, 24 November 2018, 9.30 a.m. to 5.30 p.m. and Sunday, 25 November 9.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m.

In line with CWU Conference Policy, the CWU is proud to announce its continued support and sponsorship of both the UK Work Stress Network Conference and the new edition of the organisation's excellent "Work Stress Handbook" published earlier this year.

The UK National Work Stress Network is a Trade Unionist led organisation which is committed to the eradication of the causes of work-related stress and associated illnesses. It campaigns to advance this aim through its involvement with the Hazards Campaign and in conjunction with the TUC, European organisations and within UK Trade Union structures.

The Network calls for:-

- Employers, Company Directors and Managers at all levels to acknowledge their duty of care and for their acceptance of their health and safety responsibilities to the workforce;
- Legislation and enforcement procedures to outlaw all forms of workplace stress, bullying and victimisation; also to ensure full corporate liability for workplace injury; and
- The creation of a caring, supportive workplace culture with 'Dignity at Work' for all and for worker sensitive procedures for all.

The Network consists of many hundreds of like-minded people, some of whom have suffered the consequences of work-related stress. Amongst them are experienced caseworkers, counsellors, occupational health workers, Trades Union lay and paid officers and those who are just determined to see effective management which recognises the needs of the workforce as well as of business.

The Conference will examine working lives becoming much more complex and stressful. Working life is becoming more complex from all angles. Following the EU referendum result, with 'BREXIT' looming, we face an uncertain future for the country, employment and business. Employment and other laws originating from the EU, once transferred into UK law, will almost certainly face dilution or even removal under another Conservative Government. Health and Safety laws are still in place but many employers disregard or are ignorant of the HSE Stress Management Standards.

The Prime Minister has flagged up a greater need for better care and support particularly for Mental Health. The government commissioned Stevenson-Farmer independent review into workplace mental health concluded that the UK faces a significant mental health challenge at work and that both employers and government must prioritise and invest far more in improving mental health. At the same time the NHS is struggling to keep up, and no extra money seems to be forthcoming. Pressures on public services continue to remain high under the enduring austerity regime. Workers face increasing demands on their time and skills.

There is relentless change at work, which in itself is intensely fatiguing.

Recent research has shown that those with disabilities suffer disadvantage at a range of levels – all of which increases stress levels.

Are you a young worker dealing with the brave new world of zero hours contracts, coping with the demands of more than one employer? Are you a middle aged worker coping with the pressures of being both a worker and a parent to children (younger and older) at home? Are you the carer of elderly parents? Or are you an older worker having to work much longer than you had ever anticipated? Working life is becoming more complex from both ends of the age spectrum.

- Young workers
- Older aging workers
- Zero Hours Contracts
- Doing two jobs
- Working and parenting
- Working and being a carer
- Long hours of work
- Manual work demands

Whichever applies, the world of work has never been more stressful.

A greater recognition of mental health issues is very welcome and brings increased responsibilities for employers. It also brings more challenges for our work as health and safety stewards.

This conference will examine the impact of mental health issues at work as we move through our careers that are being extended every year. It will examine new research on specific age groups and what problems are being identified. It will explore strategies that we can promote to improve working life for those with mental health issues in the workplace.

No-one has any idea precisely what is ahead for us. All we can say for certain is that as Trade Unionists we will be operating in a challenging and changing environment.

This UK National Stress Network Conference will give an opportunity to reflect, discuss and learn from each other. It will examine what is ahead as hopefully there will be by then a much clearer idea of the future. The Conference will focus on how best to defend hard-won Trade Union Health and Safety protections whatever the atmosphere the UK is faced with post Brexit. The conference will also look at the strategies needed, whistleblowing, campaigning, organising, and how Unions, Safety Reps and Workers can protect themselves. The Conference will be identifying the protections already achieved in work stress, what is under threat and how best to protect them.

Speakers and workshops are to be confirmed shortly. Those who attend regularly will be aware of the record for providing interesting speakers and stimulating, interesting workshops.

UK National Work-Stress Network Conference Further Information:-

Julie Walker
6 Greenhill Avenue
Ripley
Derbyshire
DE5 3JJ
Email Address: ukstresscoordinator@gmail.com
Website: <http://www.workstress.net/>

Registration:

A copy of the Booking Form is attached in pdf format and is also available from the following link:

<http://www.workstress.net/about-us/conferences>

This conference is aimed at Health and Safety Representatives, Trades Union Officials and Shop Stewards, Human Resources and Health and Safety Specialists and Stress Management Consultants.

This is a very popular annual event – book early to secure a place.

Yours sincerely



Dave Joyce
National Health, Safety & Environment Officer