

THE COUNCIL FOR
WORK & HEALTH



February 2026 Newsletter



A message from our Chair, Kevin Bampton

Much of the Council's concern in coming months is likely to revolve around evidence-based standards. It appears we are in tune with others.

Workplaces are needing to prepare for the duty to put in place menopause action plans, in line with the Employment Rights Act. "Simply do it" <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC12669409/>, following up on a national menopause survey reminds us of the importance of interdisciplinary and multiprofessional evidence-based practice derived from reliable social, business and medical sources. CWH will be consulting on a standard for those advising and supporting the development of menopause action plans. We would very much like to hear from member organisations and evidence-based practitioners working in this field to provide early feedback. Such is the size of this market, we expect this to be a challenging process!

Many members will have seen the extremely helpful tools developed by MHRA on AI driven mental health apps <http://www.minded.org.uk/Component/Details/851376>. In some ways this provides a pathfinder for other AI diagnostic tools and highlights the importance of using the Yellow Card scheme as a means of highlighting poor practice. Of course, AI needs data, which goes beyond the information fed into large language models. As my predecessor, Steve Boorman pointed out, following two CWH reports a decade ago, wearable devices, low-cost sensors and real time monitors can feed into intelligent systems to provide real-world data and observation that could be transformative. (Boorman S. "A Healthier Tomorrow". Occupational Health at Work December/January 2016/2017, vol.13(4), pp.34-36.)

CWH will be working across its membership to continue to ensure that we recognise and anticipate the challenges and opportunities in this space and welcomes members to contribute their insights, standards and projects, such as the excellent SOM/IOH document

<https://ioh.org.uk/2026/01/introducing-new-ai-guidance-for-occupational-health-professionals/>



Welcome to our new member

We are delighted to welcome the British Safety Industry Federation (BSiF), as a member of the Council for Work and Health. We look forward to working with, and learning from BSiF. Below is a copy of their profile for your information.

The British Safety Industry Federation is the UK Trade Association for the Safety Industry, a major independent voice for UK safety.

Providing authoritative information on a range of workplace safety issues and representing the needs of the UK market, our members and the country's work force.

It is our mission to support all businesses in the UK who help to keep people safe and healthy at work. We are passionate that safety and health is universally recognised for what it is – a positive force for good.

BSiF work closely with the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and Trading Standards with whom we have Primary Authority partnership.

BSIF are the lead association for the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Regulation. We ensure the needs of the UK safety industry are shared. Our active input across Government departments puts us at the forefront of influencing legislation.

Our work with Government enforcement agencies, standards making authorities, safety equipment manufacturers, distributors, users and sector associations makes certain we are leading the way in educating and advising on topical industry issues that affect worker safety and health.

To help give assurances to those that need to procure/use compliant PPE & Safety Equipment BSIF audit members under the 'Registered Safety Supplier Scheme', through this scheme a strict set of protocols are set for members so they can prove alignment with their regulatory/legislative requirements. The scheme seeks to improve the quality of product and the capability of suppliers in the safety/PPE market.



MHRA issues new guidance for people using mental health apps and technologies

New advice on using apps and other digital tools to support mental health is being published by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) today (27 January), as part of [free online resources developed with NHS England](#) for the public, parents, carers and professionals who use or recommend these tools.

More people in the UK, particularly young people, are turning to digital tools for mental health support. From symptom-tracking apps to virtual reality therapies, these products are now widely available and often used alongside NHS and community care, but it is not always clear which are reliable, safe or right for an individual. The new guidance aims to help people make more informed choices and know what to do if something doesn't feel right.

New online resources will help the public, parents, carers and health, social care and education professionals understand what safe, effective digital mental health technologies look like in practice. To access the guidance, click the button below.

[CLICK HERE - TO ACCESS THE MHRA GUIDANCE](#)

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Event Reminder: Working Well in the Creative Industries: Staying Creative for Longer

26 February 2026, from 1300

Behind every performance, exhibition, collection or craft lies physical effort, emotional labour, and long hours of unseen work.

On 26 February, join the Council for Work and Health and OHID for a free virtual event exploring how we can better support health and wellbeing across the creative industries, from theatre and music to museums, heritage and design.

This event is a rare opportunity to bring together practitioners and organisations to share good practice and insight into working in the different types of organisations and settings across the vibrant landscape of the Arts.

Speakers and topics will be announced shortly.

Register your place here:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/GOWJ7VHsSXYGit2sOJod-Q>

News from Council Members



iOH

We are pleased to be exhibiting and have members speaking at the IGPP conference in February [The Annual Health and Wellbeing in the Workplace Conference 2026 | IGPP](#). Several of our members have benefited from grants to attend.

We are also exhibiting and have members speaking at the Health and Wellbeing at Work conference at the NEC with our annual dinner event, RAML, being held on the evening of the 10th March. This year's speaker will be Nancy Doyle and we will be joined by magician Angus Baskerville [Ruth Alston Memorial Lecture and Gala Dinner 2026 - iOH - The Association of Occupational Health and Wellbeing Professionals](#). Tickets are available to book for members and non-members

We were proud to publish our Compilation of Responses to Charlie Mayfield's report, with the Council [Compilation of responses to the Keep Britain Working Review – Final Report - iOH - The Association of Occupational Health and Wellbeing Professionals](#).

This special report compiles responses from leading organisations in the work and health sector, including SOM, iOH, BOHS, IOSH, VRA, and others to the Keep Britain Working – Final Report. The report, led by Sir Charlie Mayfield, sets out a vision to tackle rising economic inactivity due to ill health by promoting prevention, early intervention, and employer-led workplace health provision. Thank you to all Council members who contributed.

We have published a Career Coaching Toolkit for members this month

Our AI in OH webinar series continues – see the series and catch up with recordings here [Artificial Intelligence Archives - iOH - The Association of Occupational Health and Wellbeing Professionals](#)

Janet O'Neill

Vice President



Influence the future of Counselling & Psychotherapy

In October 2025, the [Partnership of Counselling and Psychotherapy Bodies](#) (PCPB) launched a year-long independent Commission to examine the current and future landscape of the counselling professions and the key issues affecting the sector, professionals, services and clients.

The Commission's analysis is focussing on four key themes:

- The state of the sector
- Is there a case for statutory regulation
- The evidence base
- The future for the professions

As part of their review, the Commission is particularly keen to capture the input and views of services, the wider mental health sector and vitally, of those with lived experience. To facilitate this, a call for evidence has been launched, running from 14 January for ten weeks.

Insights from this will be used to help shape the Commission's final report and recommendations, which is due to be published in summer 2026.

How to submit evidence

If you provide a service, work in the wider mental health sector, have lived experience or have an interest in the Commission's work and would like to submit evidence, please complete the survey by clicking the link below. If you're a member of one of the six Professional Bodies who make the PCPB, you'll have already been sent a link to a survey to complete.

The call for evidence will close at **12:00 on 27 March 2026**.

Please use this link to have your say -

https://response.questback.com/isa/qbv.dll/bylink?p=a6_P7ARsWT7tLOd3ZM3VeevuPk7OI5ZEBc1zxiBZN9t3sxo0AC1ReYhkBTIONk7LO

More information about the [Commission for the Future of Counselling and Psychotherapy](#) is available on the [PCPB](#) website.

Kris Ambler, Workforce Lead

Phone: 07964 902906

British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy

www.bacp.co.uk



Faculty of Occupational Health Nursing

FOHN has a new website with the Society of Occupational Medicine (SOM).

It's a fresh space to bring our community closer together and strengthen how we connect, support, and represent Occupational Health Nursing

The website reflects the depth, professionalism, and passion of Occupational Health Nursing.

FOHN news, events & webinars - Stay up to date with what's happening in Occupational Health Nursing.

Professional development and accreditation - Guidance to support your growth and recognition.

Policy and partnership updates - Including work with SOM, Council for Work and Health, and BOHS.

Meet the FOHN Board - Discover membership benefits and how you can get involved.

Get in touch by email:

- * fohn@som.org.uk
- * fohnadmin@som.org.uk
- * nurseaccreditation@som.org.uk



HSE's Working Minds Campaign

[Understanding the impact of stress at work](#)

HSE's Working Minds campaign has launched a new webpage to help employers recognise how work-related stress develops and why prevention matters.

It reinforces the importance of good work design and explains the impact stress can have on:

- health
- absence
- productivity

Working Minds: short videos with practical steps to prevent stress

Taking simple steps to prevent work-related stress can support mental health and improve productivity throughout the year.

[HSE's Working Minds campaign](#) provides practical, evidence-based guidance to help employers prevent work-related stress and support staff wellbeing.

The campaign has produced a series of short videos offering straightforward actions workplaces can take to reduce stress and

support mental health at work:

- [About Working Minds](#)

An introduction to preventing work-related stress, with clear actions employers and managers can take to improve work design and support wellbeing

- [Why preventing stress matters](#)

How preventing stress benefits people, teams, and organisations

- [Prevention is better than cure](#)

Simple, proactive steps that can make a real difference to mental health at work

- [Support for small businesses](#)

Practical advice for smaller workplaces to prevent stress without added cost or complexity

- [Managing pressure in high-stress environments](#)

Tips to help teams stay healthy while working under sustained pressure

You can get a first look at all campaign resources, news and updates by [subscribing to the monthly Working Minds ebulletin](#).



HSE inspections and work hazards:

Chiropractors and Flour dust in bakeries

The HSE is undertaking a series of inspections in 2026 focussing on specific roles or work hazard. Recently announced are the following:

Chiropractors to assess radiation compliance

HSE is inspecting compliance among chiropractors under the Ionising Radiations Regulations 2017 (IRR17).

The inspection campaign will run until the end of March and is targeting chiropractors who use radiation generators. To help dutyholders understand the requirements of an inspection, HSE has created a video outlining the expectations of the visit and the areas' inspectors will be assessing compliance on.

- watch the video on their YouTube channel: [What to expect from an ionising radiation inspection](#)
- find out more about the inspections in their news release: [HSE inspecting chiropractors to assess radiation compliance](#)

Inspections tackling exposure to **flour dust in bakeries**

HSE is carrying out a series of inspections at large bakeries across Great Britain from January 2026.

Inspectors will be checking that employers are properly protecting workers from the dangers of dusty ingredients including flour dust, one of the most common causes of occupational asthma in the country.

Inspectors will assess bakeries' compliance with COSHH regulations, focusing on whether employers have correctly considered their measures for managing risk in order of effectiveness.

You can:

- read their [guidance on controlling flour dust in bakeries](#)
- find out more about the inspections in their news release: [HSE inspections tackling exposure to flour dust in bakeries](#)



IOSH

IOSH [commented](#) on Mental Health UK's latest Burnout Report which revealed persistently high stress levels across the UK workforce, with 91 per cent of all respondents reporting high or extreme stress in the last 12 months. Burnout is increasingly recognised as one of the most significant threats to workforce wellbeing and productivity. IOSH is calling on employers to embed health and safety approaches that address psychosocial risks with the same rigour as physical hazards. It continues to advocate for stronger organisational support for managers, early intervention strategies and robust wellbeing policies that prevent harm before it occurs.

As part of the UK Government's push to tackle the high levels of sickness in business, the IOSH 'Managing occupational health and wellbeing' course has been chosen for a training pilot taking place in

the first quarter of 2026. The pilot will deliver the course to 5,000 line managers in small and medium-sized businesses, funded by DWP.

IOSH has special consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (UN ECOSOC), as a non-governmental organisation (NGO). ECOSOC has been a driving force behind efforts to improve global conditions, fostering cooperation and aligning nations around shared social and economic goals. This year, ECOSOC marks 80 years since its inaugural meeting which began a sustained commitment to dialogue, progress and the collective advancement of communities worldwide. The anniversary is a reminder that global wellbeing depends on safe, healthy and dignified work. IOSH published an [opinion piece](#) on its website.



National School of Occupational Health (NSOH)

Here is the NSOH news for February 2026

- A very successful meeting to develop the framework for a NSOH/SOM inhouse OH Nurse training program was held this month. With one meeting to go, completion is in sight.

- The NSOH/SOM clinical standards in management referrals have their meeting this month. An article introducing the standards was written by Amanda Dowson here: [Making Occupational Health Work: From quality referrals to effective outcomes - iOH - The Association of Occupational Health and Wellbeing Professionals](#), and a SOM webinar to discuss the premise will be held on the 4th of March [Webinar on clinical standards for OH reports | The Society of Occupational Medicine](#)
- NSOH on behalf of the AI in OH working group delivered a webinar to RoSPA this month and, following on from that, have been invited to a roundtable discussion in March as part of their newly formed OSH Skills Commission.
- SOM/iOH and the AI in OH working group, which is supported by the NSOH and Manchester University has just launched a guidance document for use of AI in OH. [See here to access the document](#)
- For all those who attended the NSOH conference on substance abuse in the workplace, the recordings are now available. Apologies for the delay which was caused by a technical glitch.

For further information on any of the above, please contact Janet O'Neill on janet.oneill6@nhs.net.



SOM - Systematic literature review on the mental health, safety and wellbeing of first responders

SOM has secured funding from Lloyd's Register Foundation to run a systematic literature review on the mental health, safety and wellbeing of first responders. Protecting the health and safety of first responders is of vital importance, so governments, and the public, can be assured that they can be called upon to work effectively in challenging environments.

The project will consolidate current knowledge on the mental health and safety of disaster and first responders from an international perspective by carrying out a systematic global literature review on the psychological impacts, both good and bad, experienced by this occupational group and identifying best practices and effective interventions. Findings will be used to provide actionable insights for policymakers; organisations and the Lloyd's Register Foundation.

SOM President Professor Neil Greenberg will be leading the systematic review alongside researcher, Dr Sahra Tekin. Neil said: *This work fits with SOM's intent to make better use of published evidence as the basis for the various guidance documents which we produce to help occupational health professionals carry out their work*". The project is part of a new SOM Work, Health and Safety Information Centre to be

launched in 2026 - a hub for anyone who needs to know 'what works' in work, health and safety.



SOM Leadership Competency Framework:

SOM have recently launched the Occupational Health Leadership Competencies Framework, part of an initiative to grow leadership across the occupational health speciality. As Dr. Lanrey Ogunyemi commented: "leadership development needs to be intentional, supported and visible".

You can find the competency framework here:

https://www.som.org.uk/sites/som.org.uk/files/Occupational_Health_Leadership_Competency_Framework_Oct2025.pdf and other helpful

resources within the OH leadership Academy here:

<https://www.som.org.uk/som-leadership-academy>



RoSPA - Launching an Occupational Safety and Health Skills Commission

RoSPA is launching an Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Skills Commission to address the growing skills shortages affecting safety outcomes, workforce resilience, and productivity across the UK. At a pivotal moment for national skills policy, the Commission will bring together OSH leaders to identify current and future OSH skills drivers, explore barriers to recruitment and retention, and develop practical, evidence-based recommendations. Using 5 themed, in-person roundtables in February and March 2026, the Commission will inform a comprehensive findings report and provide insights to support industry, influence Government policy, and help future-proof the OSH workforce for evolving risks and ways of working. Interested in staying in the loop – register your interest using the form on the bottom of the [OSH Skills Commission webpage](#)



**Supporting occupational health
and wellbeing professionals**

SOM activities and updates

SOM is also pleased to announce that its latest book ***Work, Art and Health: A Journey Through Time*** is in stock and available to purchase. Written by former SOM President Paul Nicholson, this beautifully illustrated book takes readers on an excursion to explore the world of work, and its effects on health by looking at examples of art from the prehistoric to the present. The journey starts in c.5500BCE with a rock painting of an early human collecting honey, and ends in 2021 with a portrait of a hospital nurse wearing full PPE during the COVID pandemic. Featuring 100 works of art, subject matter includes a wide range of occupations and art movements from around the world. The book showcases works by famous artists, and accomplished works by less well-known artists. It is visually diverse and informative, and should appeal to anyone with an interest in health and safety at work. You can order the book directly from the publisher at: [Work, Art and Health | Troubador Publishing](#) or through major bookstores.



BOHS

Positioning prevention as the future of worker health- BOHS launches new 2026–2030 Strategy

BOHS has launched its new five-year strategy, setting out a clear ambition to position prevention as the future of worker health. The strategy confirms BOHS's role as the UK's leading scientific and professional body for occupational hygiene and worker health protection. and focuses on designing out exposure, anticipating emerging risks, and strengthening professional capacity. It will guide BOHS's work with members, policymakers and partners to ensure occupational hygiene remains central to protecting current and future generations from work-related ill-health.

New [Guidance for Occupational Hygienists on the Assessment and Control of the Health Risks from Diesel Engine Exhaust Emissions \(DEEEs\)](#)

BOHS has just published a new [Guidance for Occupational Hygienists on the Assessment and Control of the Health Risks from Diesel Engine Exhaust Emissions \(DEEEs\)](#). While the guidance provides professional information for experts, it should also help health and safety and other professionals understand the required approaches to controlling exposure to diesel engine exhaust emissions.

Dates for your diary



10-11 February 2026

Safety Health and Wellbeing (SHW) Live Manchester

HSE returns as the Official Partner of SHW Live Manchester 2026.

We will be opening each day with a keynote presentation, tackling the most urgent issues shaping the future of workplace safety.

At our stand (A10) HSE experts will lead an extended programme of spotlight seminars at our mini theatre.

Find out more about [the HSE experience at SHW Live Manchester 2026](#).

[Register for SHW 2026](#).



11 February 2026

Free webinar: Achieving safety culture excellence

11 February, 10.30am to 11.30am.

This exclusive webinar from HSE and our publishing partner TSO will focus on improving organisational safety culture in the construction industry. Topics covered will include:

- the ASCENT (Achieving Safety Culture Excellence Now and Tomorrow) programme - a practical, evidence-based approach designed to help organisations build and sustain a strong safety culture
- an exclusive preview of the latest benchmarking data
- real-world examples demonstrating how the Safety Climate Tool (SCT) is being used to deliver measurable improvements in safety culture

The webinar will conclude with a live audience Q&A.

[Register for our construction industry webinar.](#)



26 February 2026, from 1300

CWH and OHID webinar

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This event is a rare opportunity to bring together practitioners and organisations to share good practice and insight into working in the different types of organisations and settings across the vibrant landscape of the Arts.

Register now to secure your place at this free virtual event.

[TO REGISTER, CLICK HERE:](#)



4 March 2026

Work-related stress training courses from HSE

Our training is delivered by experts to help organisations comply with the law and keep workforces healthy and safe.

We are running the following stress-themed courses in the near future:

- [Work-related stress: developing manager capability](#)
4 March, live online
- [NEBOSH HSE Certificate in Managing Stress at Work](#)
25 March, HSE Science and research centre, Buxton

HEALTH &
WELLBEING
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10 & 11 March 2026

[Health and Wellbeing at Work](#) conference will take place on 10 & 11 March 2026 at the NEC Birmingham.

The event is the UK's largest event dedicated to improving the health, wellbeing, safety, behaviour and culture of today's workforce



29-30 April 2026

Asbestos 2026 FAAM Conference

2026 sees the ninth annual asbestos conference organised in conjunction with the Faculty of Asbestos Assessment & Management (FAAM) with an in-person event on the 29th and 30th April in Birmingham.

The event brings together researchers, academics, practitioners & regulators, through talks & technical sessions dealing with scientific topics covering key areas regarding the assessment, control & management of asbestos. The conference is open to anyone to attend, not just BOHS & FAAM members. The 2026 Asbestos FAAM conference programme will be available soon!

You can find more information and book your place [here](#).

[Asbestos 2026 – FAAM Conference \(Birmingham\)](#)



11-14 May 2026

Inhaled Particles & International Particle Toxicology Conference (Glasgow)

11-14 May 2026

Two major international conferences unite to explore cutting-edge science on particle exposure, inhalation and toxicology, with parallel strands and joint sessions.



16-17 June 2026

Call for Abstracts for the SOM/FOM 2026 Annual Scientific Meeting is open. All submissions welcome.

The Conference will be held in Nottingham on 16th and 17th June 2026. The day before the main Conference, 15th June - there will be workplace visits available (pre-booking essential), as well as the

Welcome Reception in the evening at the impressive Nottingham Castle. Please see below for the information. *Submit your abstract(s) ahead of 2nd March 2026 at*
<https://www.occupationalhealthconferences.com/>



16-18 June 2026

OH2026 – The Workplace Health Protection Conference (Glasgow)

16–18 June 2026 (PDCs on 15 June)

A larger, more innovative programme for 2026.

Abstract submissions now open:

<https://app.oxfordabstracts.com/stages/79525/submitter>



14-19 February 2027

ICOH 2027 – Call for Abstracts

Mumbai, India | 14th–19th February 2027 The International Scientific Advisory Committee, the Trustee Committee and the National Scientific Committee of ICOH 2027 invites researchers, professionals, practitioners, and students to actively contribute to the scientific program by submitting abstracts for consideration as oral or poster presentations in the Free Paper Sessions.

<https://www.icoh2027.in/call-for-abstracts.html>. For more information please contact: Email: SC@icoh2027.in

Do you like the newsletter? Share it!

Spread the word: Council Connect is for everyone invested in safer, healthier work.

We encourage you to share this newsletter within your networks and across your social media channels where it may be of interest. If colleagues or contacts would like to receive their own copy of *Council Connect*, they can request to be added to our mailing list by contacting Anna at anna@forumconferences.com



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