

THE COUNCIL FOR
WORK & HEALTH



July 2026 Newsletter



A message from our Chair, Kevin Bampton

Is it time to rebrand Occupational Health?

A few years ago, the British Occupational Hygiene Society canvassed its members on a name change to reflect the reality that, even among the Occupational Health community, the term “occupational hygiene” was poorly understood. The invaluable science of controlling hazards to health in the workplace environment seemed to be under-selling itself.

In recent months, I have heard increased discussion about whether we should be calling Occupational Health something else, partly because it poorly represents the breadth of disciplines included, within it and partly because it is a “tarnished brand” for some. It’s relatively rare that you ever see a corporate strategy where the word “Health” is not the poor spouse of its more macho partner “Safety” or bound to the more feel-good term, “Wellbeing.” Yet, perhaps the issue with the brand is not what we call it, but how we have collectively framed its identity. Skoda was once synonymous with poor quality, yet has transformed itself through its clear value proposition and high-quality products. Other name changes have been less successful.

Perhaps what we call our community is less important than being more clear about what our collective value delivers for workers and employers and consistent quality and standards will achieve more than changing terminology. Our brand issue may lie more in what people think of us and how we collectively are perceived as acting than in a

lack of understanding on their part. I would be fascinated to hear your thoughts.



Fit Note Reform: Call for Evidence - Results

On 26 May 2026, the government published a report into a call for evidence on Fit Note Reform.

To read the full report, click [here](#)



Keep Britain Working - the story so far

As key stakeholders interested in Keep Britain Working, we are keen to keep you sighted and informed of progress. Please therefore find attached a progress update covering activity over the last few months since our update in [March](#).

The Vanguard Phase continues to progress well, with over 180 vanguards and engagement extending to over 250 employers, providers, and other organisations. The current update provides a high-level overview of progress to date, as well as key areas of focus and planned activity for the coming months. We have been deliberately

bold in describing the future system, to invite views and provoke a robust conversation around key parts of the system.

We are keen to keep you involved in the work and therefore as the activity of the Vanguard Phase progresses, we will share further detail about what we are learning to invite feedback and input to help shape the future work.

Thank you again for your continued engagement.

With all best wishes,

India

The Keep Britain Working Team

Keep Britain Working | Joint Work & Health Directorate | Department for Work & Pensions | Caxton House, Tothill St, SW1H 9NA

To view the latest report, click [here](#).



Annual General Meeting 2026

To read the notes of the Council for Work and Health AGM held on 28 May 2026, click [here](#).



Work, Health and the Long Game — New Blog from the Council

On 23 June, our Deputy Chair, Mandy Murphy, attended the Work Foundation's annual Work and Health Summit in London; a half-day gathering of employers, trade unions, policy makers and researchers examining the work to date on what it will take to keep people well and in work.

The day featured keynote interviews with Sir Charlie Mayfield, whose Keeping People Working review now underpins the government's Vanguard programme, and Professor Dame Carol Black, who has shaped this agenda for nearly two decades. Both were candid: the evidence is strong and the policy vehicles exist but implementation has too often fallen short.

Mandy has written up the key highlights from the summit alongside her own personal reflections, including two observations she believes our membership is well placed to act on: the voice of the employee in return-to-work conversations, and the question of what a truly supportive workplace actually looks like in practice.

[Read the full article on our website.](#)

[Read the full report here](#)



BACP / CWH Round Table meeting – Core Principles for supporting Mental Health at Work (29 July 2026)

The BACP have kindly funded a project to review core principles for supporting mental health at work. We are holding a Round Table meeting (in person) to help inform and guide those non-clinicians who will be conducting the interviews aimed at getting people to return to work (not benefits).

BACP and CWH Round Table meeting

Wednesday 29 July 2026

Venue:

BOHS

5/6 Melbourne Business Court

Millennium Way

Pride Park

Derby DE24 8LZ

Timings: Approximately 1100 – 1500 (to be confirmed)

Places are limited, but we want to be as inclusive and diverse as possible. We would value your input.

Please let Anna know if you would like to attend.

anna@forumconferences.com



Work and Health in the Creative Industries

Task and Finish Group update

The Work and Health in Creative Industries Task and Finish Group met on 8th June, bringing together representatives from across the sector including the Royal Philharmonic, National Theatre, the Film and TV Charity, Help Musicians, and the Department of Health and Social Care.

The group's central focus remains the development of a consensus statement, setting out the case for better workplace health support across the creative sector. Discussion centred on sharpening the language to reflect the sector's unique characteristics, in particular, its heavy reliance on freelancers and independent practitioners and aligning it with the government's growth agenda.

Progress was also noted on ministerial engagement, with the work and health in creative industries agenda beginning to feature in speeches from both DHSC and DCMS ministers.

Members were asked to share case studies of innovation and good practice, contacts in under-represented disciplines (particularly fashion and publishing), and details of upcoming events or conferences to support the group's growing connections with the national policy agenda.

The next meeting is scheduled for **27th July**.

News from Council Members

New Blog:

Collaboration Across Work & Health Gains New Energy as Sector Leaders Unite

A renewed wave of collaboration is taking shape across the work, health, and rehabilitation landscape, as leaders from physiotherapy, occupational therapy, vocational rehabilitation, and case management came together again to share updates and coordinate future efforts.

The meeting highlighted a shared determination to strengthen professional visibility, influence national policy, and ensure that the right expertise is represented in conversations about work and health.

To read the full blog click [here](#).



ACPOHE update

We have a new website that we are very proud of. It was launched this week. Click on the button to have a look.

[NEW WEBSITE !](#)



HAVS Risk Reduction Pledge

The HSE held a Prevention Summit and requested employers to take initiative to proactively manage health risks to reduce the risk of occupational diseases.

Cadent gas led the way by establishing a HAV Group and inviting organisations across the industry to join them.

These Utilities sector organisations have launched a Hand Arm Vibration (HAV) Risk Reduction Pledge aiming to eliminate new cases of Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome (HAVS) by 2035, signalling a shift beyond compliance toward innovation and improved data integrity across the supply chain. The pledge intends to enhance vibration risk management by exceeding minimum standards, influencing market priorities, fostering innovation, strengthening data trust, and integrating vibration risk in procurement decisions. Recognizing the serious and preventable nature of HAVS, the initiative emphasizes leadership, senior accountability, and alignment with strategic health priorities to protect workers and address persistent occupational health risks. Change will be driven through shared commitment, collaboration, continuous improvement, support for affected individuals, and consistent contractor standards across the industry. The pledge commits signatories to achieving zero new HAVS cases by 2035, reflecting a unified dedication to safer workplaces in the utilities sector.

To sign the Hand Arm Vibration Risk Reduction Pledge, or find out more, please see [here](#).



British Occupational Hygiene Society Update

BOHS has recently published its [new five-year strategy for 2026-2030](#), setting out the Society's vision and priorities to advance worker health protection and strengthen the role of occupational hygiene in preventing work-related ill health.

The Society has also published its [Annual Report](#), highlighting key achievements and activities delivered during 2025.

Looking ahead, BOHS has several important events planned for the remainder of 2026, including the [Occupational and Environmental Exposure of Skin to Chemicals Conference](#) (14 September, Manchester), [LEV 2026](#) (7 October, Derby), and [UKHCA 2026: Hearing Conservation – A Time for Action!](#) (3 November, Manchester).

Further information on the strategy, annual report, news and upcoming events is available via the [BOHS website](#).



AI in OH Collaboration Group (iOH special interest group)

The AI in OH collaboration group (an iOH special interest group) published the AI in OH guidance document in January this year [AI](#)

[Guidance for Occupational Health Professionals - AI in OH Collaboration Group](#)

We feel it is already time to update the guide and would be very grateful if anyone would be happy to review and add suggestions.

We want it to be as practical as possible for all OH clinicians whilst ensuring it is robust.

If you would like to get involved, please contact janet.oneill@ioh.org.uk



iOH News

Our latest OH Today has been published – a bumper edition with articles that will be of great interest to all working in the work and health field [OH Today - The official Journal of iOH - iOH - The Association of Occupational Health and Wellbeing Professionals](#)

Our website resources have been updated: Toolkit, Organisations related to Occupational Health and Journals Relating to Work and Health [Occupational Health Resources - iOH - The Association of Occupational Health and Wellbeing Professionals](#)

We have published the following: Ebola, an Occupational Health View; AI in OH from Hype to Reality and the iOH position statement on Fitnote

Reform [iOH News & Views - iOH - The Association of Occupational Health and Wellbeing Professionals](#)

iOH were pleased to support 2 posters from Manchester University on the AI in OH collaboration group survey, A poster on the AI in OH strategic transformation project lead by Clare Brown and a oral poster on the AI in OH ethics and governance guide for professionals, at the SOM FOM conference in Nottingham this year. Link here. [Home - AI in OH Collaboration Group](#)

This next month brings our first Professional Practice Reflection session for members, with the theme of positive risk taking and confidence in evidence [Professional Practice Reflection Sessions - iOH - The Association of Occupational Health and Wellbeing Professionals](#)

We have 2 webinars coming up Fertility in Occupational Health and Complex Regional Pain Syndrome [iOH Webinars - iOH - The Association of Occupational Health and Wellbeing Professionals](#)



IOSH update

Work-related musculoskeletal disorders

IOSH supports the UK Government's plans to speed up treatment and support people with musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) back into work, while urging a stronger focus on prevention.

IOSH is calling for good OSH to be integrated into the Government's approach, following the [IOSH 10 Principles of good OSH](#) and including

prevention, good job design, embedding a 'health-in-design' approach, supporting early intervention, rehabilitation and return to work, and promoting awareness and training

We are ready to work with government, the NHS and employers to ensure that prevention is fully embedded alongside treatment and rehabilitation, creating a healthier and more sustainable workforce.

AI must be people-first to make work safer

Following the publication of the white paper 'The digital dilemma', IOSH's Head of Policy and Public Affairs Ruth Wilkinson spoke at the International Labour Conference in Geneva in June, highlighting how AI and digitalisation are rapidly transforming jobs and workplaces, creating new opportunities to prevent harm, improve decision-making and design safer systems of work. Ruth spoke about how AI can help identify harms before they can occur. It can help eliminate exposures, and it can help design safer and healthier systems. But without the right governance, without responsible and ethical practice, and without worker voice opportunities, it can bring significant risk. IOSH is calling for collective action to make occupational safety and health central to how AI is designed and used to ensure that as AI transforms work, the transformation will be safe, healthy, fair, and human-centred.



RoSPA update:

On 30 June RoSPA held its prestigious Health & Safety Awards ceremony, the largest of its kind, recognising over 1,800 global entrants for good practice and continuous improvement.

RoSPA also launched the report on its Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Skills Commission. The report contains practical recommendations for Government, Skills England, organisational leaders and OSH professionals aiming to address the growing skills shortages affecting safety outcomes, workforce resilience, and productivity across the UK.

Based on the in-person roundtable discussions held earlier this year, the Commission's comprehensive report provides insights to support industry, influence Government policy, and help future-proof the OSH workforce for evolving risks and ways of working. To read the report visit: [OSH Skills Commission webpage](#)

Jules Robinson, RoSPA OSH & Falls Manager, will be presenting findings of the Commission at the NEBOSH conference on 1st July.

Read the RoSPA Report here: [Protecting Workforce Competence for Safer, Healthier workplaces.](#)



SOM update

- **Summary of the Keep Britain Working Workshop on 12th June.**
Attached- attendees from government, occupational health providers, trades unions, health and safety bodies, research and academia, think-tanks, and lobby groups. [2026 07 - Report for SOM on Keep Britain Working workshop a.pdf](#)
- **Shift work, sleep and public health: From evidence to action – webinar** - [video here](#)
- **Ask your MP to sign the Early Day Motion about silicosis and the engineered stone and kitchen worktop industry:** See the page [here](#):
- **FOHN update** - Congratulations to Diane Romano Woodward who has recently been awarded Fellow of FOHN
- **Medicinal Cannabis** – brief attached from SOM Special Interest Group [2026 07 - Managing Cannabis Use in the Workplace.pdf](#)
- **Fertility treatment and pregnancy loss** - SOM has published new guidance on [Supporting employees at work during fertility treatment and pregnancy loss](#).



Silicosis

A large number of workers in the kitchen worktop industry have been subjected to acute exposure to toxic dust, resulting in deaths and serious and incurable illness.

Silicosis can be asymptomatic and hard to diagnose. Many GPs, healthcare workers and occupational health professionals may be unsure of what to do if they encounter workers who have been exposed.

Please can you promote the following link as widely as possible amongst professional colleagues [Information for GPs](#) | [Lungs at Work](#)

There has been a rapid increase in cases of silicosis in the UK since 2023 [1]. This is largely attributable to disease from artificial stone in stonemasons working in the kitchen worktop industry. Artificial stone silicosis disproportionately affects young men and often presents as acute or accelerated disease in people with only one or two years of exposure and is associated with high mortality. This mirrors trends seen in Australia, California and elsewhere.

At present, there is no UK screening programme for silicosis and the disease is often **asymptomatic** in the early stages.

If you have a patient with suspected silicosis and/or known high exposure to silica dust, we can see them in our specialist NHS occupational lung disease clinic at the Royal Brompton Hospital. We can arrange a CT scan at that point. Please send a very brief referral via ERS.

Alternatively, please arrange a chest CT scan (chest x-ray is not sensitive and may miss early disease) and ensure that clinical information given specifically states possible silicosis (?nodules ? lymphadenopathy). Any confirmed cases of silicosis should be discussed with a specialist service.

Please let us know if you would like to discuss any cases by emailing us at gstt.OCLDAdvice@nhs.net.

A list of other UK specialist NHS occupational lung disease clinics can be found [here](#).

Dates for your diary



5 August 2026

ACPOHE Webinar: 1100-1200

Date: 05th August 2026

Time: 11.00am - 12.00pm

Title: New Discoveries in the Causes of Fibromyalgia-type Chronic Pain

Location: Microsoft Teams

Speaker: Dr Guy Bewick

More details and registration: [ACPOHE Webinar: New Discoveries in the Causes of Fibromyalgia-type Chronic Pain | Association of Chartered Physiotherapists in Occupational Health and Ergonomics](#)



Health at Work Network

10 September 2026

NHS Health at Work Network, Annual Conference

The NHS Health at Work Network's popular annual Conference is taking place on 10 September at the Chesford Grange in Warwickshire. With a range of expert guest speakers, we will be joined by 230+ OH professionals and will be covering innovative topics including AI in OH, supporting staff with cancer, and clinical negligence. For further information, and to make a booking, please contact: admin@nhshealthatwork.co.uk

Flyer available [here](#)



19 October 2026

UK and Ireland occupational and environmental epidemiology: 19th annual meeting

Venue: HSE Science and Research Centre, Buxton

Price: £95 per person

[Register now](#)

We are delighted to invite you to the 19th Annual UK and Ireland Occupational and Environmental Epidemiology Meeting. This year's edition is hosted by the Health and Safety Executive on Monday 19 October 2026.

This meeting is planned as an in-person event at the HSE Science and Research Centre in Buxton. All presentations will be delivered in person.



27 November 2026

RCN and SOM Occupational Health Nursing Conference 2026

Advancing Occupational Health Practice

Friday 27 November 2026

RCN HQ London or online via Zoom Events

CPD 7 hours

www.rcn.org.uk/OH26

Following the conference, delegates will be able to:

- Apply inclusive occupational health practices
Identify and apply at least three evidence based approaches to supporting neurodivergent employees, menopause related needs, and other long term health conditions through appropriate reasonable adjustments within their own workplace or caseload.
- Assess and respond to evolving workplace health risks
Critically assess emerging and complex occupational health issues including; medicinal cannabis use, men's health risks, and safeguarding concerns and outline clear occupational health interventions or referral pathways for at least two real world workplace scenarios.
- Integrate innovation and strategic thinking into OH nursing practice
- Demonstrate an understanding of how AI, social prescribing, and cross sector collaboration can be ethically and safely integrated into occupational health nursing practice, identifying at least one practical change they will implement within three months of the conference.



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

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We encourage you to share this newsletter within your networks and across your social media channels where it may be of interest.

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