

FRIDAY 11 MARCH 2016

Welcome to the FOM Newsletter.

In this issue...

Health and Wellbeing @ Work 2016

The Prosser White Centenary Symposium

Medical Fitness to Drive Survey

NICE Call for Evidence

That Was The Week Fortnight That Was

[back to top](#)

Health and Wellbeing @ Work 2016

We attended the ever popular Health and Wellbeing @ Work conference in Birmingham this week, accompanied by representatives from the Society and SEQOHS. It was a great opportunity to get out and meet our members, discuss OH with a wide range of professionals and draw attention to the fantastic work all three organisations do. We sent Comms Assistant Leigh up to fly the Faculty flag, and he's put together [a blog](#) of his experiences which is up on the website now.

[back to top](#)

The Prosser White Centenary Symposium

The Prosser White Centenary Symposium is taking place on **Wednesday September 14th 2016** at Manchester Central Convention Complex. The symposium will be jointly hosted by the European Society of Contact Dermatitis (ESCD) and Manchester University's Centre of Occupational and Environmental Health, and is part of the wider **ESCD 2016 Congress**.

The symposium will feature speakers of great distinction from all parts of the globe for what will surely be an exciting educational day. The programme can be [viewed online](#), and features speakers from the UK, Denmark, Germany, Australia, the USA and Finland. Topics will include UV radiation, biocides, US

occupational dermatoses, workplace risk assessment and occupational skin disease surveillance.

Abstracts are being accepted for the main ESCD 2016 Congress until **April 1st**, and given the international scope of the event, inclusion in ESCD 2016 would be a fantastic way of generating awareness of your work. Please visit the ESCD's [submission page](#) for more details.

Tickets are being offered to Faculty members at a generous 40% discount and will cost just £125 a day. For more details and ticket information please see the full advertisement on the [Faculty website](#).

[back to top](#)

Medical Fitness to Drive Survey

We've teamed up with the National Programme Office for Traffic Medicine (Ireland) and the Irish FOM to carry out a survey of the opinion of occupational physicians on medical fitness to drive with a number of mental health conditions and alcohol dependence and abuse.

Given the slender evidence base upon which to support decision-making, we are trying to tap into the collective wisdom of expert clinicians, who in general try to balance mobility and safety in due proportion, given the importance of driving as a central aspect of modern life.

A short [SurveyMonkey](#) has been created to gather your thoughts on the matter. The survey should take less than 5 minutes and all responses are anonymous. Responses will be accepted until **Monday 4th April 2016**, and we are very grateful in advance for your participation in this project which will help to inform practice.

[back to top](#)

NICE Call for Evidence

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) has been asked by the Department of Health to develop a public health guideline on **workplace health: supporting employees with disabilities and long term conditions**.

The guideline will look at workplace interventions to support employees who have a disability or long-term mental or physical health condition. Further information about this guidance can be found [here](#).

The guideline is developed by a committee called the Public Health Advisory Committee (PHAC). Members are drawn from the NHS, local government, healthcare professions, academia and the wider public health community. The committee also has a number of members with a particular expertise in workplace health.

To ensure maximum evidence is gathered, NICE invites experts to give testimony to help answer the guideline overarching research questions.

Occupational physicians play a key role in this area and NICE is keen to ensure this feeds into the evidence base for the guideline. If you are aware of, or indeed conducted your own studies in this area after January 2000, please get in contact with NICE to share the evidence. Further information and submission guidelines

can be found on the [NICE website](#).

[back to top](#)

That Was The ~~Week~~ Fortnight That Was

A few stories from the world of occupational health and medicine you may or may not have missed since last we spoke.

Time for some joined-up thinking about the retirement age

- Less advantaged people will not be well enough to work even to current retirement ages, let alone longer, without significant shifts in their wellbeing.
- Life expectancy gains may be reaching a plateau for most people given higher rates of chronic diseases.
- We have strong indications of the individual and societal risks of putting the pension cart before the wellbeing horse.

Menstrual Leave: Should Women Be Encouraged To Take Time Off For Period Pain?

- The issue of whether women should take time off because of period pain has recently been thrown into the forefront of discussion thanks to Bristol-based company Coexist, which announced it was implementing a 'period policy' earlier this week.

Three common possible reasons for a referral to occupational health

- The Society of Occupational Medicine has collated what it has concluded are three common scenarios why employers do, or do not, consider asking for OH advice.
- The slightly tongue-in-cheek analysis by the society's medical appraiser Dr Eva D'Souza outlined a first scenario in which an employer no longer has employees. Or rather, that the employees it once had had either left, been made ill and gone off sick or were now claiming disability discrimination against it.

Closing the gap: Creating a framework for tackling the disability employment gap in the UK

- Report from think tank the Social Market Foundation advising the Government to rethink disability assessment and the role of the DWP, shifting focus to reasonable workplace adjustments and assistance back into work as a health and social benefit.
- A couple of Guardian pieces around the topic:
- ['Broken' disability benefits need total overhaul, says government adviser](#)
- [Disability benefit is broken. Now even Iain Duncan Smith's advisers say it](#)

NHS to introduce new financial incentive to improve staff health

- The NHS in England is step up its efforts to improve the health of its 1.3 million staff by offering financial incentives to support their health and provide them with healthy food options. From April, hospitals and other providers of NHS care will for the first time be funded to improve the support they offer to frontline health staff to stay healthy.

Charity says mental health support for emergency services staff still much needed

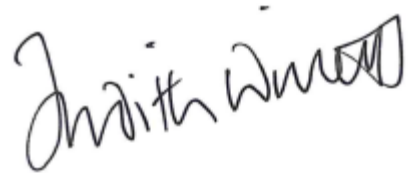
- ITV News report on mental health support for emergency service workers.

UK workers on zero-hours contracts rise above 800,000

- The number of workers on zero-hours contracts has increased by more than 100,000 over the past 12 months to exceed 800,000 for the first time, official figures show.

[back to top](#)

With best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Judith Willetts". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Judith Willetts
Chief Executive

