

Study shows that 26% of construction workers have suicidal thoughts

ILO Health and Safety at Work Day 2022 urges businesses to focus on employee wellbeing.

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- HSE's 2021 [report of construction statistics](#) in Great Britain found that 74,000 workers were suffering from work-related ill-health (new or long-standing). Of this, 54% were related to musculoskeletal disorders, 27% stress, depression, or anxiety, and 18% other. While many companies focus on their Occupational Health and Safety frameworks (OHS) in an attempt to keep workers fit and at work, many forget to address general wellbeing and mental health.



Construction workers aren't receiving adequate mental health support.

"There is still a lot of work needed to raise awareness of the importance of supporting mental health in the construction sector. This is highlighted by the high suicide statistics within the industry. With 64% of construction workers wanting more support from employers for their mental health, I believe there is a serious duty of care from the key stakeholders on construction projects to ensure that all employers in the supply chain are providing adequate mental health support to their employees. One of the key ways businesses can support their employees is to make sure they are providing access to services that suit their needs, not just the latest meditation app," says Jack Latus, Managing Director of [LATUS Health](#).

[The last report](#) conducted by the Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB) in 2020 showed a disparity between the figures reported by HSE regarding mental health and those reported by actual workers. They found that 87% of those surveyed experienced anxiety, 70% experienced depression, 97% experienced stress and 26% had suicidal thoughts.

We spoke to a local construction worker, Alex* who is self-employed but works for a

construction company that assigns contractors to various parts of the UK. He stated:

"I often drive home from a job in Scotland or Ireland on a Friday night and might end up driving back there on Monday if a new contract comes up, even though I've worked the two or three weeks previous. It's not enough rest after that much work, but being self-employed, I don't get paid for the days I don't work, and after the lack of contracts through the pandemic, it makes you feel as though you have to take what you can get." Alex*, Hull, (name changed for privacy reasons)

CIOB also found that there are specific factors relating to the construction industry that have a direct impact on stress levels and mental health, these being: limited-term contracts, long hours, lengthy commutes, time away from family, pressure to complete work on time, and within budget, the 'macho' culture that exists within the industry, late payments on work and uncertainty over the future pipeline of work. These are the factors affecting construction workers like Alex* every day, and without adequate time to rest and enjoy life, it's unsurprising that so many struggle with their mental health. Businesses can remedy this by providing tailored support that matches the needs of their staff.

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