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Frontline *Matters*

ISSUE 10 April 2020

Looking after your brain

Follow our tips on how to keep your brain healthy

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Speaking up for health, wellbeing and safety

Editor's note

Welcome to your latest issue of *Frontline Matters*.

Since our last issue in January 2020, the world has changed in completely unpredictable ways.

As this issue goes to print, the developing COVID-19 situation means uncertainty for everyone.

We all face new challenges: figuring out different ways of working or learning to cope with emotional upheaval.

The uncertainty that many of us now feel is not only about potential health risks but also what it means for our daily lives.

Normality is on hold as we adapt to new routines at home and work.

Making plans is almost impossible, so more than ever we need to draw on our own coping abilities as well as connecting with family, friends and co-workers to help us take each day as it comes.

When we know in advance that a change is going to happen, we can often

prepare for it gradually and get used to the idea of it.

This makes it easier to handle. When changes are unpredictable, our personal resilience is even more important.

Resilience is about keeping well mentally in difficult times and adapting to situations.

We can all develop our resilience.

Part of this comes through reaching out to others so you don't feel alone and by not being afraid to ask for help – find out more and some useful contacts on page 12.

Looking after ourselves physically can help our mental wellbeing and on page 3 you can discover simple ways to keep the brain in good health.

What we eat, exercise and even what we think about can keep our brain ticking along at all ages.

Try our wordsearch too: it's not only exercise for your brain but also a useful reminder of some of the

reasons you might contact CIRAS with a report.

Remember that you're not on your own when it comes to your safety, health and wellbeing at work: you can contact CIRAS confidentially with your concerns.

The CIRAS team are set up to work securely from home, so please get in touch if we can help.

Transport and infrastructure are vital for Britain. The supply chain and the NHS depend on transport, infrastructure and logistics key workers.

If you're one of these key workers, it is also important not to lose sight of your own health, safety and wellbeing.

If something's not right, speak up – either through your company's internal channels or confidentially by reporting through CIRAS.

Make yourself heard and stay safe.

The CIRAS team

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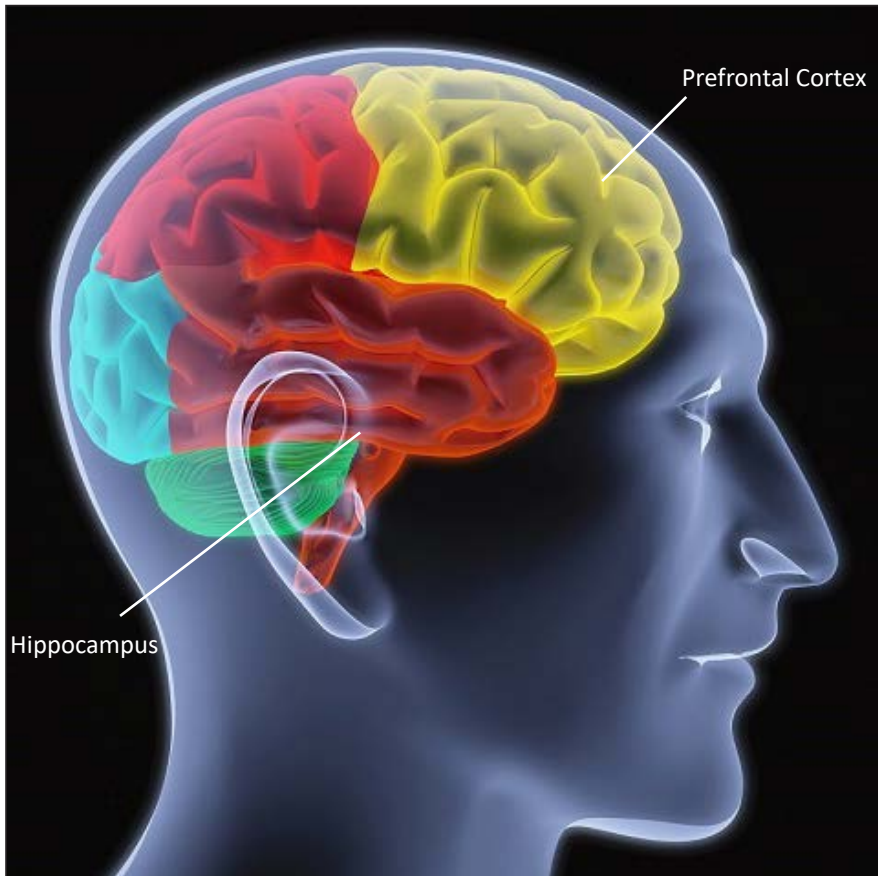
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Looking after your brain

Deborah Archibald, health and wellbeing specialist at RSSB, shares her tips for keeping your brain healthy into old age



© Shutterstock. Main areas affected when the brain 'slows down' – see 'Understanding your brain' on page 5.

The brain is the most complex organ in our bodies and weighs almost three pounds – about the same as four soup cans.

It needs more oxygen than any other organ and uses almost 30 per cent of our body's stores of glucose.

“ Simple lifestyle changes can help keep your brain in the best of health.

What we eat, stress, difficulty sleeping, shift work, an inactive lifestyle, alcohol, some medications and head trauma can all affect our brain.

Simple lifestyle changes can help keep your brain in the best of health.

Food for thought

What you eat directly affects how your brain performs, and the same diet and lifestyle advice applies to the brain as to the body.

Some simple ways to improve your brain health with your diet are:

- **Cut back on sugar.** Choose complex carbohydrates like whole grains and vegetables over simple carbs like white bread, pasta, rice and sugary foods like cakes, biscuits and breakfast cereals.
- **Have regular meals.** Our brains need a steady fuel supply. Skipping meals, long gaps between eating and irregular eating patterns can affect the way the brain is fuelled.
- **Drink more water and fewer fizzy and sugary drinks.** Water is the best way to rehydrate. Sugary drinks have 'empty calories' with almost no nutritional value and are very high in sugar. Swapping to low-calorie or zero-calorie fizzy drinks is not a healthy alternative either. Chemicals in artificial sweeteners can interfere with how your brain transmits signals and therefore impair brain function.

- **Drink less coffee.** Caffeine is a stimulant and can give the brain a short-term boost, but drinking a lot of caffeine throughout the day can decrease your brain's sensitivity to signals from your body and result in less energy and poor concentration.
- **Eat food for the brain.** A varied diet of whole foods including plenty of fruit and vegetables will help you get the nutrients that support brain health. Getting enough of the 'good' fats in oily fish, nuts and seeds is essential, as they help the brain to communicate throughout the body and adapt to new information.

“ Working the muscles in the body can boost brain function...

Get physical

The brain needs a steady flow of blood to supply oxygen.

Physical exercise can make your brain work better because it raises the heart rate and gets the blood pumping to deliver more oxygen to the brain.

Working the muscles in the body can boost brain function by improving concentration and memory and, over time, can even alter the structure of the brain.

Two 20-minute bouts of moderate intensity activity a day significantly improves attention span.

Moderate intensity activity is anything that raises your heart rate above resting levels but where you can still hold a conversation – brisk walking, mowing the lawn, social dancing, easy cross-trainer or jogging sessions.

- Sit up straight. Sitting hunched over restricts the blood flow to the brain.
- Get up and move regularly. Just moving for 10 minutes at a time can be beneficial.

- Go for a walk after lunch. Or get off the train or bus a stop early to walk to or from work after the COVID-19 restrictions end.
- Use the stairs not the lift.
- Stand up and stretch a few times a day. Put a reminder in your diary or on your phone.
- Find a regular physical activity you enjoy. You are more likely to make it a habit if you enjoy it.

“ Train your brain by doing regular crossword or Sudoku-style puzzles...

Use it, don't lose it

It is a common misconception that as we age, we inevitably get more forgetful and our brains will work less well.

The brain cannot regenerate cells as readily as other organs in the body.

But the brain is clever at learning new 'routes' for processing information, which can keep it in good shape.

The brain thrives on stimulation, especially from activities that use the 'thinking' part of it.

Here are some ideas for how to stimulate your brain:

- Train your brain by doing regular crossword or Sudoku-style puzzles, do a jigsaw puzzle or play games designed to solve problems.

How diet affects your brain

Your brain needs glucose – or 'blood sugar' – as fuel. If there is not enough glucose to fuel the brain you might have less concentration or experience fatigue and brain fog.

Too much glucose can also be a problem. Sugary foods, such as sweets, cakes or biscuits and highly processed carbohydrates, such as white bread, pasta or rice cause glucose levels to rise rapidly in the body. Then your body must produce more of the hormone insulin to reduce the glucose to a safe level.

Over time, a highly sugary, processed diet causes the body to lose sensitivity to insulin's regulation of glucose. This is called 'insulin resistance'. It means there is too much glucose for your body to process and not enough of it to use for energy.

Insulin resistance is a precursor to Type 2 diabetes and can make it more difficult for the brain to function at its best. In people with diabetes, a high blood sugar level leads to inflammation in the body. This may damage brain cells and increase the risk of Alzheimer's disease.

When a diabetic person's blood sugar reaches a significantly high or low level, their body sends immediate signals that result in sudden energy crashes, behaviour changes, confusion and seizures. In contrast, with Alzheimer's disease, the brain's function and structure decline gradually.

- Learn a new skill, activity or language.
- Get creative. Use all your senses – learn to cook a new dish from scratch, engaging smell and taste; take up a craft like model making, pottery or sewing, which uses touch; or learn to play a musical instrument.
- Change up day-to-day tasks to challenge the brain e.g. try

writing with the 'wrong' hand, use chopsticks to eat or read aloud.

Regularly repeating a task or activity reinforces the brain's communication pathways and makes the activity quicker and easier each time.

“ Simple lifestyle and behaviour changes can really benefit our brains and overall health in the long run.

The brain also works best focused on one task at a time.

Contrary to popular myth, it isn't good at multi-tasking.

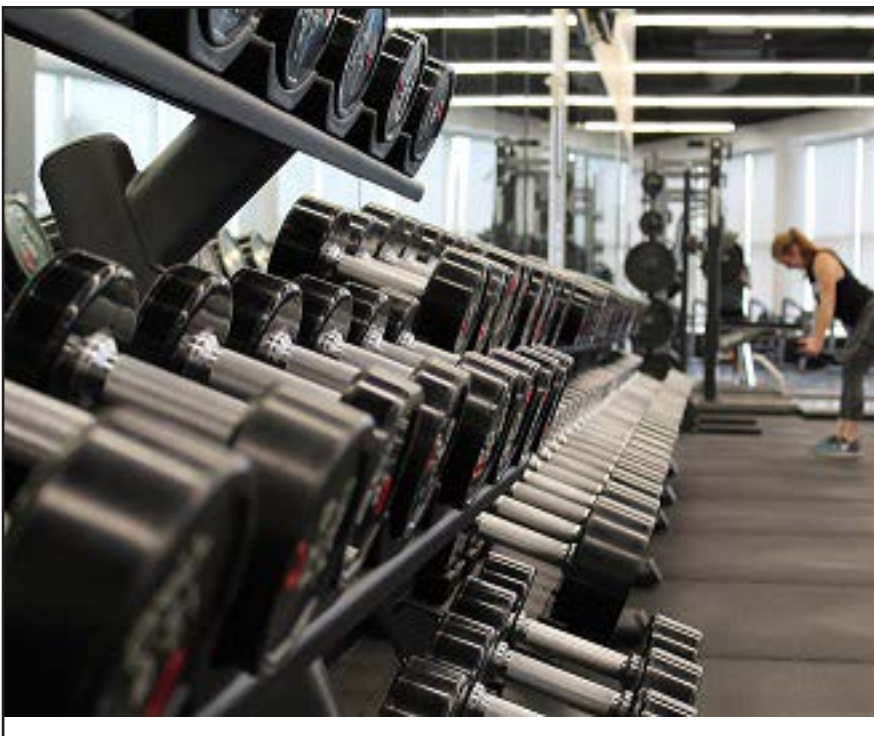
When it is 'multi-tasking', it is actually changing focus repeatedly between different tasks.

Set aside chunks of time to devote to one task before moving on to the next.

Although the brain has many amazing abilities, it needs us to be proactive about keeping it healthy.

Simple lifestyle and behaviour changes can really benefit our brains and overall health in the long run.

When it comes to looking after the brain, prevention is better than cure.



© Photo by Danielle Cerullo on Unsplash. Physical exercise can make your brain work better.

Understanding your brain

The brain and spinal cord make up the central nervous system. Neurons – or nerve cells – are the basis of your body's nervous system and help to transmit signals, including to and from your brain.

As people get older, they may struggle with tasks they used to complete without difficulty and experience changes in day-to-day memory, planning capability, punctuality, language and attention span. These are signs of what is called mild cognitive impairment, when your brain is not working at its best.

A decline in problem-solving skills, processing information or forgetting instructions may be early signs. Cognitive impairment may also be due to fatigue or stress.

Two areas of the brain are mainly affected: the prefrontal cortex and the hippocampus (see image on page 3). The prefrontal cortex is involved in reasoning and impulse control, emotional drive, motivation and planning. The hippocampus is involved in memory and learning.

Why contact CIRAS?

Flex your brain and give our wordsearch a go! Look for these words in the grid below. The words here are examples of some of the reasons you might raise a concern confidentially with CIRAS.

Competence Distraction Environment Equipment Facilities
Fatigue Procedures PPE Rules Safety
Shift design Training Vegetation Welfare Wellbeing



Cesspit cover ordered and replaced at Chingford yard

Report of leaking sewage results in new company-wide communications on fault reporting



© Arriva Rail London. Cesspit cover.

Concern

A reporter raised a health and safety concern about raw sewage in Chingford yard at Chingford station.

They said that the cesspit cover by the shunters' cabin had eroded, leading to unpleasant smells throughout the yard and shunters' cabin and causing raw sewage to leak.

“ ...concern about raw sewage in Chingford yard...

The reporter was concerned about the potential impact of this on employee health and wellbeing, but also that any of the employees who can access the yard might step in the raw sewage and carry it on to trains and through the station.

The reporter therefore asked Arriva Rail London (ARL) if they could:

- investigate and replace the eroded cesspit cover with a new airtight cover to prevent any raw sewage from leaking.

Arriva Rail London's response

ARL acknowledges that there was a defect in the cesspit cover as detailed by the reporter.

This defect was first identified during a Planned General Inspection (PGI) in June 2019.

The PGI report was filed and an email sent to local management but, as there is no automatic system for escalating issues identified during PGIs for rectification, the matter was not further progressed.

“ The facilities management team immediately carried out a site survey...

After a period of several months the reporter noted that the cover had not been replaced and decided to report the issue via CIRAS.

When ARL was contacted by CIRAS about the defective cover, the ARL

facilities management (FM) team immediately carried out a site survey and agreed that the cover was defective and needed to be replaced.

A new cover was ordered and installed as soon as it had been received from the suppliers.

The surrounding area was also thoroughly cleaned to ensure that any of the remaining contaminants had been removed.

All rectification work took place at the end of November 2019. No further concerns have been raised.

“ A new cover was ordered and installed as soon as it had been received from the suppliers.

ARL has systems in place for reporting safety concerns and FM issues.

ARL was concerned that this issue had not been reported through these channels which could have enabled a faster resolution.

“ ...further communications are being issued about the company's safety reporting app...

In light of the apparent lack of knowledge of these reporting systems in this area, the FM team issued a company-wide briefing note on 3 December 2019 advising of the fault-reporting process and arrangements for escalating reported faults that have not been addressed.

In addition, further communications are being issued about the company's safety reporting app and online tool for all staff.

In addition to the above, all personnel carrying out PGIs and safety tours have been requested to raise any plant defects using the appropriate reporting tool.

COVID-19 control and prevention measures highlighted

Reporter asks about soap supplies and why last-known contacts of colleagues with symptoms are not being tracked

Concern

A reporter was concerned that TransPennine Express (TPE) was not being proactive in investigating and containing the spread of COVID-19 in TPE depots and train services.

The reporter was aware of staff going on sick leave with COVID-19 symptoms without TPE asking who they had been in contact with before.

They were also concerned about a lack of measures to test colleagues possibly carrying the virus, especially as many use different train services through their shift.

Guards were still required to physically check tickets and handle cash on trains, exposing them to what the reporter believes is unnecessary close contact with the public.

“ ...concerned about a lack of measures to test colleagues possibly carrying the virus...”

According to the reporter’s observations, trains leaving stations such as Sheffield, Manchester Piccadilly and York were also not supplied with enough soap for passengers to wash hands adequately.

The reporter was concerned that members of staff and the public were being put at risk of exposure to the virus without the means of protecting themselves and therefore asked TPE if they could:

- investigate the spread of COVID-19 within TPE
- consider reducing ticket and cash handling on services immediately
- share with the company what measures are in place to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and whether any testing will take place
- ensure hand soap is on all passenger services.



© TransPennine Express.

TransPennine Express’ response

We understand that these times are bringing great uncertainty among our staff, and we hope that our response will reassure the reporter.

TPE has consistently followed Public Health England advice to industry with regards to managing the COVID-19 crisis.

A number of colleagues have self-isolated but to date no member of TPE has been diagnosed with COVID-19, so there is no requirement to track contacts.

However, all COVID-19-related absence is being reported at the point the individual notifies our absence management provider; at this point the line manager is aware.

There is currently no requirement to test for COVID-19.

The requirement is to report when symptoms appear as soon as possible.

Additionally, medical expertise is provided by medical professionals

within FirstCare¹ who would assess the category of ill-health based on the symptoms notified.

Revised advice for handling tickets, as directed by Rail Delivery Group, has been recently communicated to front-line colleagues.

To date there is no medical advice that these duties should be curtailed.

“ ...robust processes in place to ensure soap is replenished on trains and stations.”

TPE is not aware of issues with soap supplies as colleagues have not reported this through the normal communication line.

TPE and its suppliers have robust processes in place to ensure soap is replenished on trains and stations.

TPE has asked suppliers to pay particular attention to this but as a result of proactively managing the COVID-19 situation rather than responding to feedback.

1 TPE’s absence reporting system

Workload at Eastcroft depot reviewed routinely

Full audit and new fatigue planning system follows concern



© East Midlands Railway. Eastcroft depot.

Concern

A reporter raised a concern about an increase in workload but not staffing levels at the East Midlands Railway Eastcroft depot in Nottingham.

They believed that this issue had been going on for six months and, according to the reporter, it was because of an increase in units.

They said that this had led to staff taking shortcuts to complete work within the planned allocated time, including service checks and refuelling rolling stock.

“ A reporter raised a concern about an increase in workload but not staffing levels... ”

Furthermore, the reporter said an increase in rolling stock meant that maintenance tasks were being conducted outside the depot alongside the derailleurs, with no protection from the running line, posing a safety risk.

The reporter was concerned that staff taking shortcuts could lead to errors

being missed and could result in a train going into service with faults, potentially causing an incident.

They also said that staff could be fatigued due to a lack of breaks during shifts and suggested that staff were not receiving personal needs breaks.

Therefore, the reporter asked East Midlands Railway to:

- investigate the current workload at Eastcroft depot and either increase the staffing levels or adjust the workplan to suit the current staffing levels
- ensure units are worked on inside the depot unless it is a service check or a broken-down unit.

East Midlands Railway's response

A review of the data has shown that there has been no increase of workload or additional units coming into the depot during the six-month time period.

As such, there has been no need to increase staffing numbers or change working practices.

The fleet strength and maintenance approach has remained the same through 2019 and has not changed within the last 12 months.

Our investigation highlighted that the depot does not currently have a regular periodic review process to monitor its workload against the available manning levels.

“ Moving forward, resourcing levels on the depot will be reviewed more routinely... ”

This will be implemented and will be critical to enable the business to effectively manage the next 24 months, when a number of unit cascades are planned that will affect the makeup of the fleet portfolio.

The concerns about work being conducted outside of the depot (where no protection is in place) are noted.

There is an Operational Working Instruction (OWI) at the depot which defines where and when any work

activities should be progressed to manage risk correctly.

The investigation established that an OWI has been in circulation that has been withdrawn and replaced.

This will have led to confusion. Despite this, there is no evidence of working unsafely or of the correct OWI not being adhered to.

As an immediate response to the report there was a joint review between management and staff representatives, who are jointly reviewing and updating the OWI.

Once this review has been completed, it will go through the formal document control process at which point the OWI will be re-briefed out.

This will ensure that all functions have a consistent understanding of the latest procedure.

This and the East Midlands Railway internal mechanisms (for example close call reporting) are being promoted to ensure staff are able to raise any safety concerns.

The main aim of the investigation was to identify if there was any increased workload during the period of time as stated by the reporter, alongside checking if, in fact, there had been any need to increase staffing and manning levels within the depot.

The investigation looked at the following areas:

1. To identify workloads coming on to the fuel line
2. Confirm fleet and identify any changes to fleet strength over the last six months
3. Workload and activities taking place on the fuel line
4. Review of manning levels, both current and previous
5. Review of the current manning levels against the business manning level calculation and the budgeted figures
6. Timing of all activities taking place on fuel line
7. Review of previous local level council meeting held with union and safety reps
8. Maintenance tasks on depot

A full audit is being carried out on work activities to assess the workloads of staff on the fuel line.



© East Midlands Railway. Eastcroft depot.

This will aim to assess that the correct processes and procedures are being followed and to carry out a time-and-motion study to verify the times allocated to each task continue to be a realistic and achievable target to undertake the work safely.

“ A full audit is being carried out on work activities to assess the workloads of staff..

A programme is to be instigated to ensure that staff are taking their allotted break times during shift.

Staff will be instructed to ensure that they take their breaks accordingly with a team of four working on the fuel line.

Supervisors / team leaders will be required to monitor compliance and confirm if there is any reason why staff are unable to take their breaks.

A review of the future requirements brought about by proposed fleet changes through 2020 and 2021 is

ongoing, with consideration being given to examine staff shift patterns to balance staff availability to workload.

Resourcing levels on the depot will be reviewed more routinely, at six-month intervals or as required if a change in workload is instigated.

The rosters and working hours for all staff at the depot will be managed via an online system called Crewplan, which automates the management of staff rosters and fatigue. It monitors overtime, shift patterns, rest-day working and any breaks staff take while they are on duty.

All actions are also to be entered onto Compass. This is a tracking system that ensures that all the actions are allocated and completed within the agreed timeframes.

Compass allows for all actions to be delegated to individuals, which gives accountability. This helps to ensure that all actions are monitored and feedback gained before any of them are closed out.

Working practices changed during COVID-19 crisis

Crew rostering rearranged to prevent waiting in mess rooms



© West Midlands Trains. Bletchley Station.

Concern

A reporter was concerned that measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19 at London Northwestern Railway (LNR) Bletchley depot were not being followed.

“...a lack of items that staff need to support hygiene practices including wipes and hand sanitising gels.

None of the three mess rooms at the depot are big enough for staff to adequately follow government advice to ensure a two-metre distance between individuals at all times (social distancing).

As a result, West Midlands Trains (WMT) decided to reduce the amount of time staff wait in the depot after they book on and before their first job. Although the reporter acknowledged this as an effective measure, they believed it did not go far enough.

They added that this measure was not always followed as some staff were waiting for hours in the depot between booking on and their first job.

The reporter also observed a lack of items that staff need to support hygiene practices, including wipes and hand sanitising gels.

They therefore asked LNR (part of WMT) to:

- consider introducing an on-call system where employees' start times are confirmed, to prevent people waiting in the depot after booking on
- ensure staff at the depot have what they need to support good hygiene practices (i.e. wipes and hand sanitising gels)
- reduce any unnecessary contact throughout the building (for example, by leaving the main doors to the depot open).

West Midlands Trains' response

Our managing director and the executive team sees the health, safety and wellbeing of our colleagues and passengers as our top priority.

The COVID-19 pandemic is at the forefront of all our minds and we maintain a position of updating, referencing and following the advice and guidance being shared by the UK

Government, health authorities and the wider rail industry.

WMT is arranging to roster crews to diagrams in advance to minimise the time staff have to wait after booking on and before their first job.

This will enable us to advise staff what turn they are working and provide them with a start time relevant to their first working shift rather than have them sitting waiting in mess rooms.

“The COVID-19 pandemic is at the forefront of all our minds...

Local management is also arranging for staff to remain at home ready to work, for those that live a short commute from their place of work.

Arrangements to facilitate social distancing have been put in place within areas of the business.

We have removed some of the chairs from mess rooms and taped off areas to encourage the two-metre rule.

WMT has already significantly enhanced the cleaning regimes within all areas of the business, focusing on key touch points, for example, handles and signing-on-point telephones.

We are also using our outsourced contractors to increase in-house cleaning and sanitising where required.

We are maintaining our supply of hand gels, wipes and sanitisers that are distributed to all areas of our business.

Regular communications give advice on how to use the sanitising products provided and staff are also briefed by their line managers.

Gold Command video meetings attended by the WMT exec and senior managers are held where we also review the situation on a daily basis to ensure that we continue to manage the process dynamically.

Local teams are carrying out additional safety tours with managers and safety reps to monitor arrangements put in place and to talk to staff to reassure

them, respond to their concerns and offer informed advice.

We have and will continue to follow government advice on how to limit our colleagues' exposure to COVID-19 and to reduce all unnecessary contact.

We encourage all our colleagues not to undertake any non-essential travel and to follow the UK Government's advice at <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>.

Construction design management arrangements reviewed

Investigation follows concern about work at Westbury sidings

Concern

A reporter raised a safety concern about work that was taking place at Westbury sidings 4 and 9 in February 2020.

“...concerned that track workers might lay rails incorrectly...”

The reporter believed that these works might not be compliant with Construction Design Management (CDM) as designs were not signed off at this location.

They were therefore concerned that track workers might lay rails incorrectly (in the old position).

The reporter was concerned that this could result in a derailment and asked if Network Rail could:

- confirm if CDM sign off is needed for the work identified above;
- if so, ensure that the work complies with CDM.

Network Rail's response

Network Rail would like to thank the reporter for raising their concern.

We have carried out an investigation and have found that the reporter has identified some areas which have been addressed.

All the appropriate duty holders under CDM 2015 have been appointed and have accepted these appointments for the sidings project at Westbury.

However, the specific element to which the reporter refers has recently been added to the scope of work and the appointments are being extended to include this work.

We have reviewed the design element.

This project is currently in design phase and all the appropriate checks such as interdisciplinary checks by our principal designer organisation have taken place.

The interdisciplinary reviews were carried out in early 2020 in line with our programme.

All hazard information will be managed to ensure that it is communicated to those undertaking the activity.

We have reviewed all the CDM arrangements for this project and have found that they comply with CDM 2015, including the L153 guidance and Network Rail's standard NR/L2/OHS/0047, issue 7.

We have addressed the issues over the arrangements for reviewing appointments under CDM 2015 where there is an extension to a project and we thank the reporter for raising this matter.

Where there is an extension to a project which includes a change of scope there will be a review of the CDM arrangements including duty holder appointments to confirm that these are current.

FREE Webinar: 'The Importance of reporting health and safety concerns'

Thursday 7 May at 11am (45 minutes)



© Photo by CDC on Unsplash.

As a worker in the transport industry, we know you are up against challenges you've probably never faced before – whether you are out there keeping our transport network running, furloughed or working at home.

It's as important now as it's ever been that you speak up about health, safety and wellbeing issues that are worrying

you – so your concern can be heard, and action taken where necessary.

In this webinar, we'll talk about why health and safety reporting matters so much, how to report what's worrying you and where CIRAS fits in.

Register online:

<https://reportingapril2020.eventbrite.co.uk>

Being there for each other

Finding a way out of your worries in these uncertain times – and looking out for colleagues – will help you to be safer and healthier



© Photo by Manuel Del Moral on Unsplash.

As we all face the unpredictable challenges brought about by COVID-19, it is more important than ever to look out for each other.

Worries, just like fatigue, can distract people at work or at home, making accidents and near-misses more likely.

People may worry when they have a lot on their mind or when they are facing difficult or stressful times – whether it's a one-off situation or ongoing and uncertain, like the situation we are all living through now.

“ ...it is more important than ever to look out for each other.

Mental health conditions such as anxiety can add to worries, making things seem worse than they are or unmanageable.

Getting help

If you or someone you know is feeling low, a chat with a friend or colleague can help to lift your mood.

Someone really listening to how you feel and what's worrying you, and what you are going through, could make you feel better.

Even when you can't meet a friend face to face, a phone call or chatting online – maybe with video – helps you stay connected.

If you would like to speak to a specialist for help, your employer might offer an employee assistance programme (EAP) for help with practical or emotional issues – whether about family, relationships, debt, work, wellbeing or anything else.

There might also be an Occupational Health (OH) team in your workplace to offer health and wellbeing assistance – your line manager or HR department can give you details.

When you are worried about your mental or physical health, your local GP is there to help you.

Or for mental health concerns – including low mood, burnout or stress

– you can pick up the phone and speak with an independent service such as Samaritans, the Mind Infoline or SANE line (see 'Useful contacts' box).

“ ...you can also contact CIRAS confidentially if you are concerned about health, wellbeing or safety at work...

It is also possible to refer yourself to the NHS Improved Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) service without seeing your GP (see 'Useful contacts' box).

Speaking to your line manager or another responsible person in your workplace could help solve problems that are making you worry at work or identify ways to make things better.

And if you don't want to do that, you can also contact CIRAS confidentially if you are concerned about health, wellbeing or safety at work – whether it's for yourself or for others, such as co-workers or the public.

You can even speak to CIRAS if your concern is about a company you don't work for.

Whether you are worried about yourself or someone else, reaching out and getting help can allow you to be in the moment, focused and safer.

Helping others: RAILS model

If you would like to support someone, you can use the RAILS model to give yourself the confidence to do it:

Remain calm

Check in with yourself first. If a situation seems challenging, taking a few deep breaths can make a big difference before you decide to approach someone.

Approach

Plan the best way to approach the person you are concerned about.

Assess the situation as best you can. Be sensitive because it may be difficult for them to talk.

Watch for signs that they may be experiencing a crisis situation: alcohol or substance abuse, suicidal thoughts and behaviours, panic attacks, aggressive behaviour, trauma after an incident, psychotic states and medical emergencies.

Inquire

Ask the other person how they are feeling.

You may have noticed that they are behaving differently from usual, fatigued, anxious, stressed, melancholic or depressed.

Empathise and express concern but refrain from giving advice.

Listen

Listening works best if you can be non-judgmental.

Try to put your judgments aside, treat the person with respect and dignity and keep an open mind.

Ask, 'How long have you been feeling this way?'. Give them space to tell their story.

Support

The support you provide can be practical and emotional. By being there for someone in crisis, you can give them hope for recovery and help them to recover faster.

Encourage the person to seek appropriate professional support wherever appropriate (see introduction and 'Useful contacts' box).

Useful contacts

For support in times of crisis:

Samaritans

T: 116 123

W: www.samaritans.org

A safe place for people to talk any time they like, in their own way.

SANE

T: 07984 967 708 (16:30-22:30 daily)

W: www.sane.org.uk

E: jo@samaritans.org

Out-of-hours mental health and emotional support.

Mind

T: 0300 123 3393 (09:00-18:00, Mon-Fri except bank holidays; or text 86463)

W: www.mind.org.uk

E: info@mind.org.uk

Local support and advice on medication and other treatments.

Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT)

W: www.nhs.uk/service-search/find-a-psychological-therapies-service/

Talking therapies for worry, stress and low mood. You can self-refer online or be referred by your GP.

For construction workers:

The Construction Industry Helpline

T: 0345 605 1956

W: www.constructionindustryhelpline.com

24/7 safety net for construction workers and their families.

For transport workers:

Transport Benevolent Fund

T: 0300 333 2000

W: www.tbf.org.uk

Health and legal advice as well as cash help to members and their dependents.

Railway Benefit Fund

T: 0345 241 2885

W: www.railwaybenefitfund.org.uk

Legal and debt advice, carers' support, grants programme and family fund.

Railway Mission

W: www.railwaymission.org

E: support@railwaymission.org

A christian charity offering help to everyone.

Help with debt

If you're struggling with money, there is help available, says new industry wellbeing group A.D.V.I.C.E.

A.D.V.I.C.E. was set up in September 2019 to share wellbeing information with transport and construction workers. Members are CIRAS, Barhale, Bovis Homes, Colas Rail UK, Ganymede Solutions, McGinley Support Services, Midland Metro Alliance, Network Rail, RSS Infrastructure, Transport for Wales, Van-Elle and Vital Human Resources.

Around 8.3 million people in the UK are 'over-indebted'.

They find it difficult to keep up with bills or credit commitments or have fallen behind on – or missed – payments for bills or credit commitments in three or more months within the last six months.

People are responsible for a debt when the law says they have to pay it, including council tax or water charges.

You'll also probably have to pay a debt if you've signed a contract to say you agree to give money to someone, like a credit or tenancy agreement.

Priority debts

These can cause particularly serious problems if you don't do anything about them.

If you are over-indebted, deal with your priority debts first.

These include:

- rent or mortgage arrears
- secured loan arrears
- council tax arrears
- gas/electric arrears
- phone/internet bills
- TV licence payments
- goods bought on hire purchase
- unpaid income tax, national insurance or VAT
- unpaid child maintenance support.

Contact Citizens Advice immediately if:

- you're struggling to deal with priority debts
- you need help deciding which of your priority debts is best to deal with first.

You don't need to struggle on alone with your debt worries.

There are many ways to clear debts and some of them are better known than others.



© A.D.V.I.C.E.

What is best for you depends on your circumstances.

A free debt adviser can help you make the right decisions.

A debt adviser will:

- treat everything you say in complete confidence
- give advice about better ways of managing your money
- never judge you or make you feel bad about your situation
- suggest ways of dealing with debts that you might not know about
- always be happy to talk to you
- check you have applied for all the benefits and entitlements available to you.

You might only need one conversation with an experienced debt adviser to make sure that your plan to manage or clear your debts is the right one for you.

Nearly half of people in debt aren't sure how to pay off their debts.

This is where a debt adviser can be really helpful.

More than eight out of 10 people who have had debt advice say they feel less stressed or anxious and more in control of their life.

For the full article about managing debt, see www.safety.networkrail.co.uk/healthandwellbeing/a-d-v-i-c-e/

Useful contacts

Money Advice Trust – National Debtline

T: 0808 808 4000

W: www.moneyadvicetrust.org and www.nationaldebtline.org

This national charity helps people to tackle their debts and manage their money with confidence.

Money Advice Trust – Business Debtline

T: 0800 197 6026

W: www.businessdebtline.org

Free debt advice for those who are self-employed and small business owners.

Citizens Advice

T: 03444 111 444

W: www.citizensadvice.org.uk

Network of independent charities offering confidential advice for free.

Do you have any concerns about health, safety or wellbeing?

Have you tried internal reporting channels, or don't feel that you can?

***Please contact us via our hotline, webform or textphone. We can still receive freepost reports but there may be some delay in us accessing our post.**

Any information you provide will be treated as confidential.

We ask you to provide your name and contact details so we can get in touch to discuss your concerns. Once your report is processed, your report form will be destroyed.

Name:

Job title:

Employer:

Phone:

Mobile:

Describe your concern:

Convenient time to call:

What happens next?

- We will contact you to discuss your health and safety concerns
- We will write a report on your behalf
- We remove any information that might identify you
- We send the report to the company for a response
- Once we receive the response we will then provide you with a copy

CONFIDENTIAL

POSTAGE
PAID

FREEPOST CIRAS

Fold along the dotted line and seal edges



Prevent incidents in confidence

Report hotline:
0800 4 101 101

Report textline:
07507 285 887

Freepost: CIRAS
www.ciras.org.uk