



Press Release

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UK Construction's Largest Safety Stand-Down To Highlight Impact Of Diabetes On Sector

The UK construction industry's largest safety stand-down campaign is to place the diabetes safety impact on the sector at the forefront of its 2024 campaign.

The *Stop. Make a Change* (SMAC) campaign, which will roll out between 7-18 October, will focus on diabetes safety and practical steps employers and employees must be aware of to mitigate its risks in the workplace. This year, SMAC is partnering with the Diabetes Safety Organisation (DSO) to highlight the hidden epidemic of type 2 diabetes, which impacts 1 in 12 people in the working population - equating to 254,200 people working in the construction industry, of which more than 57,000 don't even know they have the condition.

Apart from the potentially catastrophic affect this disease can have on individuals, the financial consequences to individuals and industry as a whole can be huge. It is estimated that the current loss of productivity across industry could be as high as £4 - £5bn.

Commenting, Chief Executive of the Civil Engineering Contractors Association (CECA) Alasdair Reisner said: "This year's *Stop. Make a Change* campaign is to highlight what we believe is one of the most pressing safety issues facing our industry.

"The need to increase awareness around the risk of incidents and accidents due to diabetes is greater than ever and places ever growing obligations on employers to meet this challenge and to maintain safe working environments.

"I'd also like to stress that by addressing diabetes safety we will be better able to support those with or at risk of the condition to ensure they do not have to hide a life threatening condition for fear of losing their job only to end up suffering the consequences at a later date. We owe it to our workforce to unlock a greater awareness and act upon it."

Commenting, Kate Walker, DSO CEO, said: "We are delighted to be taking part in *Stop. Make a Change* this year to highlight the increasing safety risk posed by diabetes in UK construction - an invisible risk that is currently not being sufficiently addressed, and one that leaves employees exposed to a potential fatality and companies open to criminal liability.

"Increased awareness about diabetes safety is a pressing need in UK construction. Too often this is an issue that is seen as impacting only its sufferers, whereas it must become part of best practice for everyone working in the sector to have the practical knowledge required to both mitigate its risks, and help those who have the condition in an emergency situation.

"We look forward to working with companies throughout the construction sector during SMAC-24 and beyond, to outline practical steps that can be taken to mitigate the risks of diabetes and ensure knowledge of the condition can be cascaded across all levels of the supply chain."

More than 500,000 employers and employees have taken part in *Stop. Make a Change* since it was inaugurated by the Civil Engineering Contractors Association (CECA) in 2017. The campaign has since been endorsed across the sector, including by the government-industry strategic partnership the Construction Leadership Council (CLC).

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Notes to Editors

1. The Civil Engineering Contractors Association (CECA) represents over 300 contractors of all sizes, covering approximately 80% of the civil engineering market in Great Britain. Our members build infrastructure that provides the basis for economic sustainability and quality of life in communities across the country.

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