

FRONTLINE

Issue 4 - October 2015

Extra

Inside This Issue

**Fit to Retire or
Fit to Drop?**

**An End to Quiet
Desperation**

IOSH Campaign

HUMBERSIDE

POLICE
Federation

IOSH Campaign - working together to beat Occupational Cancer

Cancer caused by what people do at work is nothing new. One of the first official cases of an occupational cancer was identified in the eighteenth century.

Asbestos is the best known carcinogen – and the biggest killer. Today, asbestos claims well over 100,000 lives a year worldwide. It's estimated that 10 million people across the world will have died as a result of asbestos exposure before it's been fully controlled. But there are many other carcinogenic exposures that cause cancer and claim lives – well over 50 substances are listed as known or probable causes of workplace cancer. Across the EU, 1 in 5 workers faces an occupational cancer risk. Across the world, the number of people dying from a work-caused cancer far outstrips those dying because of work accidents. It's estimated that at least 666,000 people die worldwide every year*.

Recent research has built the most comprehensive picture to date for a single country. A research team led by Dr Lesley Rushton of Imperial College, London, linked thousands of cancer deaths with different occupations. It found:

- almost 14,000 new cases of cancer caused by work are registered each year
- around 8,000 deaths a year are caused by occupational cancer.

About IOSH's campaign

IOSH's No Time to Lose campaign aims to get carcinogenic exposure issues more widely understood and help businesses take action. The campaign is working to:

- raise awareness of a significant health issue facing workers in the UK and internationally
- suggest some solutions on a UK scale to tackle the problem – a national model that can be transposed internationally
- offer free practical, original materials to businesses to help them deliver effective prevention programmes.

More info at

<http://www.notimetolose.org.uk/About-NTTL.aspx>

STAY SAFE IN THE SUN

Protect your skin from harmful ultraviolet radiation from the sun when you're working. Follow five simple steps to make sure you enjoy the weather, without putting your health at risk.

- COVER UP**: Wear only loose-fitting clothing that covers your body.
- PROTECT YOUR HEAD**: Wear a hat with a wide brim that shades your face, neck and shoulders.
- SEEK SHADE**: Spend as much time as possible in the shade.
- USE SUNSCREEN**: Use a broad-spectrum sunscreen with an SPF of at least 30. Reapply every two hours, or more often if you are sweating or towel-drying.
- BE SKIN SAFE**: Avoid sunbathing, tanning beds, and sun lamps. Avoid sunburn, which is a sign of skin damage.

THE UV INDEX

UV INDEX	LOW	Moderate	High	Very High	Extreme
1-2	3-5	6-7	8-10	11-12	13+

GET TO KNOW YOUR SKIN

Checking for signs of skin cancer is as easy as A, B, C (and D). Be aware of how your skin normally looks – that way you'll notice changes that could be signs of skin cancer.

- ASYMMETRY**: One half of a mole or birthmark does not match the other.
- BORDER**: Irregular, jagged, or blurred edges.
- COLOR**: Multiple colors, including brown, black, red, white, and blue.
- DIAMETER**: Larger than a pencil eraser.

CHECKING FOR SIGNS OF SKIN CANCER

- Do you have a mole that's changing in size, shape, or color?
- Do you have a mole that's bleeding, itching, or crusting?
- Do you have a mole that's raised or flat?
- Do you have a mole that's different in color from the rest of your skin?
- Do you have a mole that's larger than a pencil eraser?
- Do you have a mole that's irregular in shape or has irregular borders?
- Do you have a mole that's different in color from the rest of your skin?

CHECK YOUR SKIN

I	II	III	IV	V	VI
1	2	3	4	5	6

Fit to Retire or Fit to Drop?

It is a fact that we are living longer, and generally our quality of life is better than it has ever been, advances in medicine and huge reform in working and social conditions, continue to make each generation fitter...up to now!

We understand better than ever how our bodies work, and there is a vast amount of advice around how to stay healthy – inevitably there are sad exceptions to those rules. We are all aware of friends and colleagues taken from us too soon, when they were the epitome of health and fitness, but they are the exceptions to the principal that healthy lifestyle equals longevity.

Exercise is a key part of a healthy lifestyle and is known to relieve the symptoms in many different conditions, and illnesses. It is advocated to combat stress, the symptoms of the menopause, period pain, blood pressure, impotence to maintain good mental health, reduce the risk of osteoporosis, cardiovascular disease and many others. Being healthy will also assist recovery from injury and illness.

We all know this, yet how many make time to make sure that we do exercise regularly, eat healthily and monitor our wellbeing. As police officers we have a huge incentive to look after ourselves and make the most of our retirement. I know the pension isn't what it was – but even as an average salary pension, it is better than almost any other pension out there, and you must keep sight of that. If you don't believe this ask a teacher, or a nurse about their pensions.

So to maximize your pension, it is never too soon to consider your health, and ensure that you stay fit and healthy so that when retirement comes you can make the most of it! It is also going to make it easier to do your job, and deal with the physical and mental stress of being a police officer.

We already have a number of factors against us. Shift work is not good for you. That is a fact, but policing is a 24/7 business so there is no getting away from this. Policing is stressful and challenging, but that was why you went through a rigorous selection process, and comprehensive training, because you are the right person to meet those challenges. The force has the confidence in you to do all this... what are you doing to make sure that it does not have a negative effect on you now and in the long term.

I have always found sport and exercise to be a really positive part of my life and no matter how busy I have been, I have tried to make time for it. When the children were little and I was working full time on shifts this was particularly challenging. The key things for me were understanding what motivates me and then keeping things as simple as possible.

I love all sports, but have never been a runner, At school I believed that cross country running was a form of torture and hated every step of it. Despite this early poor start to running, when I entered the work of work, and fitness tests...it was clear that running was the most simple way to maintain fitness, due to shifts and limited time available, as all it requires is me and a pair of trainers, and some loud music.

Team sports are not easy with shift work but the sense of responsibility to the team is a great motivator. There are many different types of groups, classes, sports and running clubs and for some running with other people is the only way they can be motivated. My sister in law goes to a boot camp, as people shouting at her motivates her!

Fit to Retire or Fit to Drop? (Continued)

Over time I have come to enjoy running, still not the physical act of running, which will always be hard work for me, I certainly have no talent at it! But I do enjoy the “space” it gives me, time to be by myself with no one else to think about. I can clear my mind of daily grind and solve problems, none of this improves my running, but it has been responsible for some of my most inspired ideas, and a few of the crazy ones too.

I am motivated by a challenge, if I sign up to something then I work hard towards that. This was how I found myself high up, a very steep Scottish hill in the cold and dark, in March this year, completing the Mighty Deerstalker! Our team consisted of a Vicar, a computer programmer, an accountant (my sister in law) and me, raising money for a youth project. Friendship, teamwork, fear, and eventually satisfaction from finishing a tough course and raising money to support a good project - all from putting on a pair of trainers.

Events like this; Deerstalker, tough mudder (got that shirt too), major series, survival of the fittest, are a few of an increasing number of events that give you an opportunity to challenge yourself, way beyond your comfort zones and motivate you to get fit to do it. It's certainly not for everybody, but there are many other events that are designed for all levels of ability, Race for Life is one brilliant example of these.

Training for a challenge, does give me the incentive to get out on a wet cold day and do at least 30 minutes running, no matter how slowly or uncomfortable it was it makes me feel better, because I actually did it.

Technology is your friend when it comes to training, there are so many programs, gadgets and tools to assist you whether your aim is to get fit, lose weight, or run a marathon, there will be something to help and usually free to download to a smart phone! I have asked

around and popular prove to be C25K graduation to C210K (couch to 5km/10km), workout trainer (a digital coach covering a ranger of workouts) or Strava uses GPS and allows you compare your times with others running or cycling in the local area.

Pedometers have advanced to allow you to download and analyse your day to day activity, much more than just counting steps! If you carry your phone everywhere you can get an app on a smart phone. I have been wearing a FITBIT for a while now and I was shocked at how long I spend each day sat still! Though I can't change the nature of my job, driving or sat in front of a computer screen, by being conscious of it I can do more. For example using the toilets the furthest away from my office, not ringing someone in the building but walking down to talk to them, and when I have had a day where I haven't moved enough...at least walking the dog when I get home!

If the current physical and mental health benefits of fitness alone don't inspire you, then consider how good health will allow you to enjoy your pension better, and for longer. In spite Mrs May and her colleagues in Government who seem to resent us it. My Grandma was 104 when she died, and was living in her own home still. It is my aim to emulate her, and enjoy 50 years of pension growing old disgracefully in rude health!!

Article by Insp Maxine Teasdale

An End to Quiet Desperation



Quiet desperation

Too many men live lives of “quiet desperation”, as a good friend of mine once put it. Too many men think it’s right to just accept society’s expectation of us – to be the “strong, silent type”, to bury our emotions, to “grin and bear it”. And too many men go on to commit suicide.

Something has to change. I’m convinced we can do better than this.

Until recently, I never understood how important mental health is. I certainly never saw it as being as important as physical health. I always saw ‘depression’ as a severe clinical condition that affected only a very small minority of people. But then my brother, Andy, killed himself, and all that changed for me. I now see the world through very different eyes.

I’ve been unfortunate enough to come into very close contact with suicide twice in my life. The first time was when I was 20, and a close friend of mine, whose nickname was “Ski”, took his own life. Ski’s case was at the more severe end of the depression scale, and there were clear signs that he was very ill – self harm, erratic behaviour, breaking down in tears after a few drinks. I look back with massive regret, but I try not to beat myself up – I was only 20 and was incapable of even recognising the symptoms, let alone doing anything about it. I do wish I’d been more aware of his situation at the time, though.

But even with my eyes open to the dangers of extreme, clinically-diagnosed depression such as this, I don’t think I or anyone close to me could have seen what was coming my brother’s way almost 20 years later. In Andy’s case, there were no obvious symptoms. He was having a hard time in life, with a lot of changes happening. We knew he was finding it really difficult to make the adjustments in his life that he needed to. Once or twice towards the end of his life, he broke down in tears, but he never gave anything away to suggest that he would do something so drastic. Again, I don’t blame myself, and nor should anyone else. Andy had a weakness that none of us could see. I try and rationalise it as his brain having had a “loose wire” that short circuited.

So while Andy’s situation was very different to Ski’s, and his state of mind was much less visible, there’s a common theme. Both were men, and both were relatively young. In 2013, over 6,200 deaths in the UK were recorded as suicide. Of these, almost 80% – or four out of every five – were committed by men, a proportion that has been increasing year-on-year. Suicide is the single biggest cause of death in men aged 20-45 in this country.

The tragedy of suicide among young men is not only the many years of life that are lost, but the quality of those years that are lost (not to mention the impact on everyone around them). Andy was 42 when he died, physically very

An End to Quiet Desperation (Continued)

healthy, and a huge contributor to his local community. The average life expectancy of a man born today is 79. We consider it reasonable to spend up to £30,000 on drugs or other treatments that might keep a patient with a terminal physical illness alive for another year. I wouldn't argue with this. But just think about the return on the public investment that could be had by keeping our otherwise fit and healthy young men alive for an extra 40 years or more.

So what's the answer? How can we do better? That's what I plan to try and explore further in this blog over the coming months and years. I now understand that mental health is just as important as physical health, it's just not as well understood and we can't see it as easily. The Government is onto it with its "parity of esteem" initiative for mental health. In English, this is about putting mental and physical health on a level footing. It's absolutely right – our brain's an organ like any other, and it can go wrong. A broken ankle, or even a weak heart, can be diagnosed, understood, accepted, treated – mental illness is much harder to spot, diagnose, comprehend and treat, but is equally debilitating and dangerous, if not more so, than a physical injury. So we've all got to look after our brains, just as we do our bodies. And for the Government's part, we need a better balance of spending on mental health to create better access to services and improve our general mental wellness.

But I genuinely believe it's about more than this, and it's a change in attitudes and behaviours that's needed. My advice? You haven't asked for it, but I'm going to give it to you anyway. If you're a bloke, accept that life can be hard and that it's ok to feel like shit and to let people know you're feeling like shit. Speak to your GP if you

feel really shit. And if you're not that bloke who is feeling down, try and look out for the blokes around you who might be, as they're generally not very good at telling you when they are (women are, and that's why they're so much less likely to commit suicide...). Try and spot when they're having a hard time, look out for them, and don't judge them. Let them know you're there. Let them know you've got their backs. I can't tell you how much strength I got from the messages of support I received from so many people close to me when Andy died. If Andy knew how many people cared so deeply about him when he had his darkest moment, he might still be here today.

So having dished out the advice, what am I personally going to do? Four things.

First, I'll be taking my own advice and trying to be the best friend I can be. I'll actively look out for my friends and family and encourage them to talk about their problems, not bury them.

Second, I'll write this blog to raise awareness of the issues affecting young men in particular.

Third, I'm pledging my support for a fantastic charity called CALM (the Campaign Against Living Miserably – www.thecalmzone.net), which is focused on preventing male suicide. It's a relatively small charity, but it's growing all the time and doing brilliant work, including having set up a helpline (if you're feeling really, REALLY shit, you could ring this – 0800 58 58 58 – open everyday 5pm-midnight).

Finally, I'll be focusing my energies on my own sons, Alfie (5) and Charlie (2), and bringing them up to be as happy and secure as they can be. I know that with their mum and my own rock solid pillar of support, Amy, behind them, their

An End to Quiet Desperation (Continued)

lives will be full of love, positivity and happiness. But we'll also make sure they know that life can be challenging at times and that it's ok to feel sad, to help them to understand why they might feel sad, and to encourage them to speak about it when they do feel sad. Let's try and change behaviours and attitudes for the next generation.

If we can all try and do some of these things for ourselves and those around us, we might have a chance of reducing the number of future tragedies among young men and making "quiet desperation" a thing of the past.



My blog

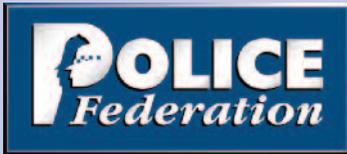
In December 2014, my brother Andy committed suicide. He was fit,

healthy and physically well. He had lots of family and friends around him who loved him very much and a job he absolutely loved.

There are many reasons why Andy took his own life, and they're very complex. But I can't help thinking that if we lived in a different culture, with different attitudes and behaviours, that his death could have been avoided. That's why I've started this blog. It's not a blog about Andy, although I will no doubt refer to him at times. It's a blog to raise awareness of the issue of male suicide and to think about what we (men, in particular) can do to look after ourselves and each other better.

**<https://endquietdesperation.wordpress.com>
/ 'd love to hear people's thoughts and
comments.**

HUMBERSIDE



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0139 Alex Park Operations, Grimsby	James Staff Operations, Scunthorpe	5513 Brett Rutty Priory
1144 Rich Eglen Communities Beverley	1948 Graeme Roberts Ops Scunthorpe	
1265 Marcus Liddle OST Warners Gym		5514 Jon Cliff** IRT Beverley **Also H&S Lead**
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2058 Mark Lilleyman PVP Brigg PS	835 Danny Patrick Clough Road	5723 Andy Robinson Bridlington
1831 Julie Kitchen PVP Clough Road	1534 Helen McGill-Sanderson** Goole	5665 Maxine Teasdale Traffic Melton
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