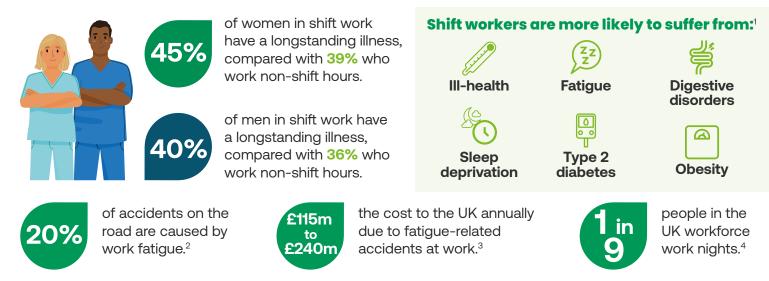




Shift work in healthcare

Patient care depends on the delivery of many NHS services working shift patterns. Poorly managed shift systems can impact on the health, safety and wellbeing of staff and patients, but organisations and individuals can help mitigate the risks.



The impact **poorly managed shift work** could have...

On your organisation:

Consult with staff and reps on any changes

Make sure risk assessments and personal

Have agreed protocols to cover unplanned

Consider the impact of fatigue on patient

Comply with HSE management standards.⁵

emergency evacuation plans are up to date

★☆☆☆☆ Poorer patient care and safety.



and review shift patterns.

and regularly reviewed.

Promote healthy food to staff.

shifts.

safety.

Reduced productivity.

Increased absenteeism.



On an individual:

Poor work-life balance.

Fatigue and sleep deprivation.

Increased risk of developing a long-term condition or being involved in an accident.

What can my organisation do? What can my manager do?

- Ensure that night shift workers are offered free health assessments.
- Tailor risk assessments to individual needs.
- Allow adequate breaks within and between shifts.
- Consider the needs of vulnerable workers i.e. lone workers.

What can I do?

- Alert your manager to any wellbeing issues.
- Speak to your trade union health and safety representative.
- Take extra care when driving at night or during/following extended shifts.
- Make sure you take adequate breaks, drink water and eat healthy foods.

For further advice go to: www.nhsemployers.org/health-safety-and-wellbeing-group-hswg

- 1 Redeker et al., (2019), Workplace interventions to promote sleep health and an alert, healthy workforce
- jcsm.aasm.org/doi/10.5664/jcsm.7734#d3e264
- 2 The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (2019) Fatigue and Driving iosh.com/media/8176/fatigue-and-road-accidents-2020ioshchilter.pdf
- Health and Safety Executive (2021), Human factors: Fatigue www.hse.gov.uk/humanfactors/topics/fatigue.htm
 TUC (2019) Older workers powering an increase in night working, TUC analysis reveals. www.tuc.org.uk/news/older-workers-powering-
- increase-night-working-tuc-analysis-reveals
- 5. HSE Management Standards https://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/standards/

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