

8th February 2010**Lawyers advise on health and safety**

MANAGING employee health, safety and stress was the hot topic at the latest Carey Olsen breakfast seminar.

A crowd of more than 60 gathered at St James to hear a presentation by Carey Olsen's employment and personal injuries team on the ways in which improving employee healthcare can affect corporate welfare.

Advocates Mark Dunster and Abby Lund with Associate Rachel Richardson discussed companies' responses to staff injury or sickness and employer liability.

Advocate Lund said: "It is important for companies to ensure health and safety policies and procedures are put in place and then followed through. Excessive absences due to work-related stress and injury result in a loss of output and profitability and increased cost to the company in the form of sick pay, overtime and insurance premiums."

Figures from the UK Health and Safety Executive show that more than 400,000 workers experienced work related stress at a level which made them ill during 2008/9. Inclusive of injury, this resulted in 11.4 million working days lost during this period.

Rachel Richardson explained that as well as statutory duties, there common law duties that outline the duty of care of employers. She said that "these duties must be in place in order to prevent reasonably foreseeable physical or psychological injury to employees." In Europe, direct insurance costs of workplace accidents alone are estimated at €20 billion per year.

Advocate Dunster encouraged employers to seek advice on ways to maximise productivity and minimise any potential exposure to health claims presented by employees through the Guernsey Health and Safety Executive.

The breakfast seminar was one of a series of free events organised by the Carey Olsen employment team which has also covered redundancy, restrictive covenants and office parties.

Issued by Cat Herod, Orchard PR, Tel. 01481 240600
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NOTES TO EDITORS:

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