



**Press release
22 April 2016**

Better utilisation of Group Risk services would improve stress management, says GRiD

Group Risk Development (GRiD) is calling for better utilisation of the benefits available within employers' incumbent Group Risk protection policies to improve stress management.

While 11.5 million people are covered by a Group Risk policy* (employer-sponsored life assurance, income protection and critical illness), GRiD's research** shows that about 50% of employers do not utilise the added-value inherent benefits. It would appear that employers are often unaware of the benefits and how to access them.

The mix of inherent benefits within Group Risk policies differs but many include valuable support specifically to target stress - including mental health first aid training, fast-track access to counselling and Employee Assistance Programmes (EAPs). These extra services help employers identify stress in their workforce and give support to employees dealing with stress.

One crucial point that can often be overlooked is that added-value Group Risk services are often available to the entire workforce and not just the insured population. Further, the services are not just for use when people go off sick - they support employers, line managers and employees on an everyday basis. There is also preventative support that can help employees manage stress before it becomes a problem.

The first step is to understand what is included under a Group Risk policy - it is then important for employers to communicate clearly the benefits available to staff, and then encourage regular utilisation. Encouraging use does not increase costs, it can actually help to reduce them - effective use can reduce claims and thus premiums. and the services can be used every single day, even if a claim is never made.

Katharine Moxham, spokesperson for Group Risk Development (GRiD) says: "Stress is one of the biggest causes of absence in the UK, but there is support available for both employers and their staff.

It is important that employers and employees realise these policies are not just there for when they need to make a claim. A wealth of support is available at no extra cost that can offer great help across many areas and, specifically, in managing stress. It is encouraging that many employers do utilise this support, but there is clearly still work to be done to encourage a greater number of employers to take full advantage of these services.

Our message to help employers improve stress management is this: get to know what help is offered within your Group Risk protection policies and encourage your employees and line managers to utilise it.

* Swiss Re Group Watch 2016 report

** Group Risk Employer Research, conducted in September 2015 among 501 UK businesses with between 5 and 1,000 employees. Research was conducted by Lightspeed Research for Group Risk Development (GRiD).

- ends -

For further information please contact:

Sharon Mason
SMUK Marketing and PR
smason@smuk.org.uk
Mob: 07747 611773
Land: 01252 843350

Katharine Moxham
Spokesperson for GRiD
Katharine.moxham@grouprisk.org.uk
Mob: 07887 512508

Notes for editors

About GRiD

Founded in 1998, Group Risk Development (GRiD) encourages awareness and uptake of corporate group protection benefits . income protection, group life insurance and critical illness cover . on behalf of its members which include insurers, reinsurers and intermediary businesses. Under the chairmanship of Lee Lovett, Head of Business Development UK and Ireland Life, Munich Re, GRiD aims to enhance the industry's profile among media and stakeholder groups. The Group provides a collective voice to Government and participates in industry wide initiatives such as the qualification in Group Risk launched jointly with the Chartered Insurance Institute. In May 2009, the Group appointed its first dedicated spokesperson, Katharine Moxham, to provide expert media comment on a full range of group risk issues. In July 2010, GRiD was named Organisation of the Year by the Protection Review. www.grouprisk.org.uk

Follow Katharine Moxham on Twitter @KMoxham