



Employers must introduce screening for skin cancer among workers to cut growing death rate

- ***One UK employee dies every week from skin cancer***
- ***Screening will save lives, costs to employers and insurers***

One of the country's experts in the diagnosis and treatment of skin cancer has called on employers to arrange screening for workers who are regularly exposed to intense sunlight.

Skin cancer is Britain's most common cancer and the number of cases is constantly increasing. A recent study by researchers at Imperial College, London, which was published in *The British Journal of Cancer*, showed that working in bright sunlight causes increasing numbers of aggressive malignant melanomas, with one person dying per week.

Consultant dermatologist, Dr Howard Stevens, says he and his colleagues are seeing more cases of skin cancer linked to a person's job.

"While the Imperial College study identified building industry and agricultural workers as the most frequent victims, we are seeing patients with a wide range of jobs coming for treatment – people working in the UK and those who have to travel and work abroad," he said.

"Just recently, for example, we treated an airline pilot with a malignant melanoma, a car company executive working in China with a basal cell carcinoma, an air steward with a basal cell carcinoma and a UN employee working in Africa with both a malignant melanoma and a basal cell carcinoma."

"Most skin cancers can be treated successfully if we find them early but all too often, if a malignant melanoma is ignored, it can prove fatal."

"Whilst we recognise only too well that regular screening adds to the cost of and employer, but the cost to a business of having a member of staff ill over a lengthy period and possibly dying can be far, far greater."

“For a lot less than £200 per employee, companies can prevent the worry and distress to the individual and his or her family and the massive financial cost of a worker developing a malignant melanoma,” said Dr Stevens.

Ends

Notes to Editors: **Dr Howard Stevens** has an international reputation as a dermatological surgeon who has introduced innovation and advances in the diagnosis and treatment of skin cancer and other conditions in both the NHS and independent sectors.

Dr Stevens, the founder of the Skin Care Network[®], treats both adults and children and specialises in the diagnosis and treatment of skin cancers, moles and sun damaged skin.

Dr Stevens has had a distinguished career in the NHS. As the Skin Cancer Lead and Chair at Barnet and Chase Farm NHS Trust, he set up and chaired the Multi-Disciplinary Teams (MDTs) for dermatology. In addition he is also a Honorary Consultant Dermatologist at The Royal Free NHS Trust where he still sees patients. Dr Stevens is an experienced Mohs and laser surgeons.

Dr Stevens set up The Skin Care Network[®] in 2010 and together with several other senior consultants and a team of highly trained dermatology nurse specialists, he treats the full range of skin cancers and other conditions working closely, with some of the country’s leading maxillofacial and plastic surgeons.

Dr Stevens recently set up the UK’s first private clinic carrying out virtual, or surgery free biopsy of the skin using confocal microscopy. This completely painless procedure enables almost instant diagnosis and can speed up the beginning of treatment. This virtual biopsy has helped many patients to avoid the discomfort of surgical biopsy and the anxiety caused by waiting days for the results.

Dr Stevens’ special research interests focus on screening of malignant and premalignant sun-induced changes in the skin and skin imaging.

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