

Should UK workers be drug tested?

Submitted by: Perfectly Picked

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Drugs council chief calls for mandatory workplace drug testing

“One million workers are taking drugs. It’s a health and safety issue and every company should have the discussion.”

Reported today (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-23969260>), a call by the chief executive of Wales' drugs council for mandatory drug testing in the workplace has raised the issue of whether it is necessary in the UK.

Wynford Ellis Owen, chief executive of the Welsh Council on Alcohol and Other Drugs, said drug users often thought they could function normally at work, when it emerged that one in three employers in Wales would not know how to tell if a worker was under the influence of recreational drugs.

“Employers shouldn’t introduce drugs and alcohol testing without considering all the implications.”

Says Matthew Taylor, Managing Director, ScreenSafe (<http://www.screensafe.co.uk/>), one of the UK’s leading providers of substance misuse testing programmes. “Companies often approach us to introduce a drug and alcohol test programme, when they have discovered a drug concern in the workplace, and sometimes want us to carry out testing immediately.”

“But it’s essential for any business to have a robust workplace drug and alcohol policy in place first. Well considered, legally correct and properly implemented policies protect not only an employer but also their employees, and provide reassurance that the testing is being carried out legitimately.” Mr Taylor continues.

“It is a fact of life that drugs are readily available in the UK, and are used recreationally by its workforce. Estimates from a report last year put a figure of about one million workers taking drugs. Apart from criminal liability that employers are bound by these days, this is a health and safety issue. Bringing it to the notice of organisations and their staff is right, as is the issue of mandatory drug tests. Every company should at very least have the discussion.”

“Whilst traditional illegal drug use on the whole is decreasing, the use of NPS (so called legal highs) are dramatically on the increase, with the UK being referred to as ‘the addicted man of Europe’. Therefore, it is important that employers also consider other factors such as training, education treatment and counselling when developing their policy.”

ScreenSafe are specialists in the provision of drug, alcohol and blood borne virus testing services. They provide bespoke training and testing by analysing results from oral fluid, urine, hair or blood samples.

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To speak to Matthew Taylor for more information or for an interview, call 077 222 82 946

For more information, please go to www.screensafe.co.uk or to arrange for one of our representatives to meet with you, please contact enquiries@screensafe.co.uk

