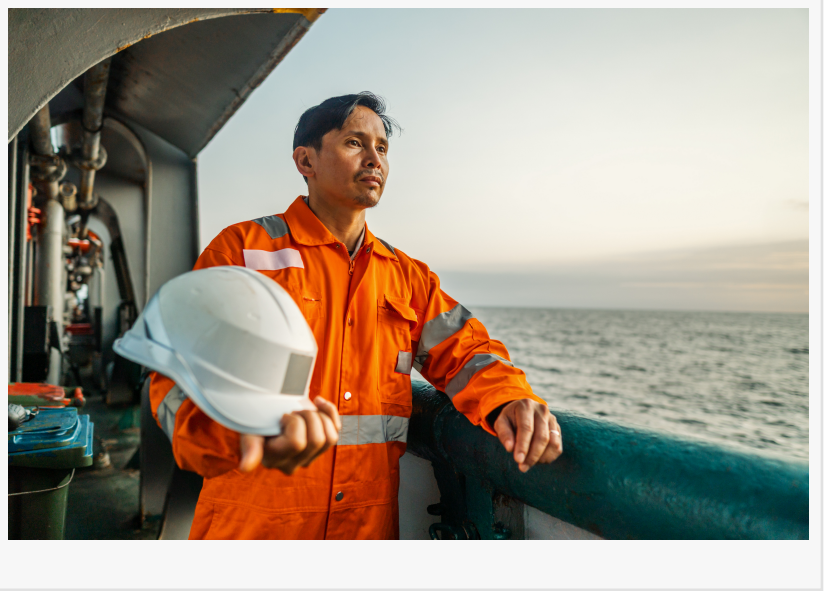


World Maritime Day Safety and The Importance of Managing Chronic Conditions

KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA, September 25, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- World Maritime Day, celebrated annually on the last Thursday of September, recognises the significant role of the maritime industry in the global economy. This year, it falls on 26 September, with the theme "Navigating the Future: Safety First".



Reflecting upon the theme, Anuj Velankar, General Manager at MedSea, an International SOS company, and former maritime Captain, says that "In

the maritime industry, 'safety' often centers around preventing accidents and injuries, which is undeniably important. At MedSea, however, our focus is on reinforcing the relationship between safety and health. A large number of seafarers suffer from chronic conditions, so by raising awareness about these issues, we can better address wellbeing and, by extension, safety onboard".

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Dr Katherine Sinclair

New data from MedSea indicates that hypertension is the most common chronic condition among seafarers, accounting for 67% of all chronic conditions on board. Other common conditions include diabetes, high cholesterol and gout. When incorrectly managed, Noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) pose significant health risks to seafarers, potentially leading to complications and even medical emergencies, which can necessitate vessel diversions and delays.

The World Health Organization (WHO) stated that the increasing trend of NCDs will continue worldwide. By around 2050, chronic diseases such as cancer, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases and respiratory illnesses are projected to account for 86% of the 90 million fatalities each year.

The unique maritime environment can also exacerbate the challenges of managing chronic conditions. Limited access to medical care, long periods away from home, and the physical demands of the job can lead to seafarers neglecting their chronic conditions.

Dr Katherine Sinclair, Senior Medical Advisor at MedSea, says, “While crewmembers are often aware of their own chronic conditions, managing these conditions can sometimes be overlooked, posing significant risks to safety onboard. Captains typically lack the bandwidth to closely monitor the health of crewmembers. Therefore, management should consider implementing proactive measures such as regular health check-ups, providing health education and ensuring access to necessary medical resources.”

MedSea shares top tips for organisations to prevent common injuries and illnesses among seafarers onboard commercial vessels:

- Pre-employment Medical Examination (PEME) can aid in detecting underlying conditions and monitoring the general health of seafarers to ensure those going to sea are in their optimal condition which can aid in reducing illnesses and accidents at sea.
- Provide support for those with chronic conditions: Develop programmes that encourage seafarers to be open about the support they need for their chronic conditions. This can help prevent them from hiding their conditions and ensure they receive the necessary care.
- Promote healthy lifestyles: Actively encourage all seafarers to maintain healthy diets, engage in regular exercise and avoid tobacco use. Providing resources and creating a supportive environment can help seafarers adopt these healthy habits.
- Ensure that seafarers follow recommended medical treatment prescribed by their doctors: Regular check-ups and adherence to medical advice are crucial for managing health conditions effectively.
- Early intervention: If there are any changes in a crew member’s medical condition, it is essential to ensure that medical attention is sought as soon as possible. Early intervention can prevent minor issues from becoming serious health emergencies.

Through the better management of chronic conditions onboard and by promoting health initiatives, we can ensure a safer working environment for those who navigate our seas.

To find out more about how to safely manage chronic conditions onboard, contact us here: <https://www.internationalsos.com/get-in-touch>

MedSea will also be hosting a webinar on Thursday, 26 September on healthy eating – sign up here: <https://events.teams.microsoft.com/event/ca3374ae-092e-44c2-aa99-e15f37bc2f66@e6eeb1b8-bcbc-4324-a43b-2c2c7f925a13>.

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