Traffi and Sepsis Research to bring life-saving sepsis training to construction sites this Sepsis Awareness Month

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Traffi and Sepsis Research are launching a new health and safety training partnership to help construction workers recognise the early warning signs of sepsis, a medical emergency that kills an estimated 50,000 people in the UK every year - more than breast, bowel and prostate cancer combined (Sepsis Research).

The initiative launched on World Sepsis Day on 13 September, a global awareness day held annually since 2012 to unite people worldwide in the fight against sepsis (World Sepsis Day).

The partnership was inspired by Brian Hume, Health and Safety Manager at Balfour Beatty Scotland, who survived a serious episode of sepsis earlier this year following a gallbladder infection that led to three hospital admissions and, ultimately, intensive care at Hairmyres Hospital. Brian, who has worked in health and safety on civil engineering sites for decades, is now sharing his story with his own workforce. He has brought together Traffi, the UK's hand protection and safety glove specialist, and Sepsis Research, the UK's leading charity dedicated to funding research and raising public awareness of the condition, in order to build sepsis awareness directly into existing site safety training.

A minor cut, graze or puncture on a construction site can become a serious infection fast. Whilst Traffi's high-performance safety gloves offer hand protection that is designed to prevent such injuries, sepsis awareness training will now equip workers to stay vigilant in the event of an injury. It will help workforces recognise when a wound, however minor, has stopped healing as it should and needs urgent attention. It was that connection, between preventing the wound and staying alert once one occurs, that led Brian to introduce the two organisations.

"I've spent my career telling people on site to report every cut, every graze, every near miss," said Brian Hume. "Sepsis is exactly why. On a site like ours, where injuries happen, any infection - from a graze or wound that doesn't heal, or like in my case, a gallbladder complication or the flu - can turn into sepsis within days. I'm sharing my story because it could save someone."

Sepsis is increasingly recognised not only as a clinical emergency but as a workforce and economic issue. Workplace absence in the UK is currently at a 15-year high, around 50% above pre-pandemic levels, while rising antimicrobial resistance and global instability are increasing both the likelihood and severity of infections. In high-risk sectors such as construction and engineering, where injuries are more common, the pathway from infection to sepsis can be rapid, with significant operational and financial consequences when projects and workforces are disrupted.

Stephen Moore, CEO of Sepsis Research, said: "Sepsis sits right at the centre of the conversation about workforce health and economic resilience. It remains the leading cause of preventable death in the UK, and for the 50% of survivors who face long-term physical or psychological effects - from limb loss to PTSD - the impact doesn't end at hospital discharge. Real progress against sepsis depends on three things working together: preventing infections before they take hold, diagnosing sepsis early when it does, extending the critical window for treatment, and ensuring survivors get the treatment and long-term support they need. Partnerships like this one with Traffi tackle the first and most powerful of those three - prevention - by stopping a wound or infection ever reaching the point of crisis."

The training, developed jointly by Sepsis Research and Traffi, will be rolled out to construction site teams across Scotland this September, and made available to Traffi's wider customer base in the coming months. It builds sepsis recognition into existing hand safety and injury-prevention training, using the same simple, visible approach that underpins Traffi's red-amber-green TraffiSystem®, whilst helping workers spot the signs of sepsis in the event of an injury, or an illness, before it becomes a medical emergency. 70% of all workplace hand injuries occur when gloves are removed. A poorly fit, ineffective glove choice, or wearer complacency can increase this likelihood. Together, the training addresses the full journey from risk to recovery: preventing the wounds and infections that can lead to sepsis in the first place, equipping workers to recognise and diagnose the early warning signs on site, and ensuring anyone affected knows how to get fast access to treatment.

Wesley Dempster, Aftersales Team Lead at Traffi, who works closely with Brian said: "Our mission has always been prevention - reducing hand injuries at the source, before they ever have the chance to

become something more serious. A cut or a wound that goes unnoticed or untreated is exactly the kind of everyday risk that can escalate into sepsis, so building sepsis awareness into our safety training is a natural extension of the work we already do. We're proud to bring our approach to hands-on, practical training into this partnership, and to help workers prevent, recognise and respond to sepsis risk before it becomes a medical emergency.

The training launch coincides with growing national momentum on sepsis, including NHS England's development of a Modern Service Framework for Sepsis and innovative new studies aligned with the charity's internationally recognised Top Ten Sepsis Research Priorities (Sepsis Research).

As part of the launch, Brian has recorded a short video sharing his story, which will be played during on-site training sessions and shared across the partners' social channels throughout Sepsis Awareness Month, and beyond.

The common symptoms of sepsis in adults are:

- A very high or low body temperature
- Vomiting and diarrhoea
- Uncontrollable shivering
- Confusion or disorientation
- Passing less urine than normal
- Extreme pain or discomfort
- Blotchy, cold or discoloured skin
- Fast, or difficulty in, breathing
- Rapid heartbeat
- Feeling dizzy or faint
- The feeling that you are going to die

Anyone with a wound, infection, or illness who notices any of these signs should trust their instincts and seek medical help urgently and state: "I'm concerned this could be sepsis".

-- ENDS --

Notes to editors

About Sepsis Research
Sepsis Research is the UK's leading charity dedicated to funding sepsis research and raising public awareness of the condition. Supporting Se?sis Research today helps provide the early investment that can turn a promising scientific question into evidence, evidence into innovation, and innovation into better outcomes for patients and families. (Sepsis Research).

About Traffi
Traffi is the UK's hand protection and safety glove specialist and inventor of the three-colour TraffiSystem®, the red-amber-green coding that lets workers see a glove's cut-resistance level at a glance. Traffi is on a mission to reduce hand injuries, costs, waste and carbon emissions across industry (Traffi).

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