



Official workplace fatality figures hiding thousands of covid deaths

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Deaths must be acknowledged so lessons can be learned

Official worker fatality figures are hiding thousands of covid deaths, says GMB Union on Workers' Memorial Day [April 28].

Just 111 people have died at work during the year to March 31, according to HSE figures.

But according to the Government's own statistics, more than 5,000 people had died from covid - at least some from catching covid at work.

Indeed, ONS figures this year found at least eight thousand working age deaths were linked to covid in England and Wales in 2020.

The official statistics should reflect this in all forms, regardless of whether a RIDDOR notification was made or not says GMB Union.

“ Workers still have to use inadequate PPE and unbelievably many still have to go into work sick because they can't afford to self-isolate. These deaths must be properly acknowledged so we can make sure the same thing doesn't happen again.

Rehana Azam, GMB National Secretary



GMB is calling for a proper public inquiry, covid to be classified as an industrial disease and more occupational support for long covid sufferers.

Workers' Memorial Day is an annual event remembering those who have lost their lives at work, or from work-related injury and diseases, and takes place in the same week as International Workers' Day (IWD) on May 1.

GMB National Secretary Rehana Azam is speaking at an IWD rally in Chesterfield on Monday May 3.

Rehana Azam, GMB National Secretary, said:

"Worker death figures are always massively understated and exclude huge swathes of fatalities in the workplace.

"But after 12 months of a pandemic that has hit keyworkers hard – the gap is stark.

"The deaths of eight thousand working age people is a devastating and bitter milestone that could have been avoided.

"But unless Ministers acknowledge the UK was too slow to respond to the outbreak in workplaces, lessons can't be learned.

"Workers still have to use inadequate PPE and unbelievably many still have to go into work sick because they can't afford to self-isolate.

"These deaths must be properly acknowledged so we can make sure the same thing doesn't happen again."

