

# Jobs making British workers sick longer

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The number of British workers needing more than a week off because of preventable health problems is rising, a survey published Wednesday said.

One third of doctors polled in a Norwich Union Healthcare survey said they have noted a "dramatic increase" in requests for time-off letters. Of the doctors, 94 percent blamed the employers directly for not taking more preventive steps for the employees' health.

The survey also polled human resource directors at 214 medium- to large-sized companies and found 76 percent of employee health problems are stress, 63 percent for back problems and depression was involved in 57 percent of sick time.

Just 38 percent of the companies cited employee well-being as a priority and 40 percent of companies ignored it completely, the survey said.

Absenteeism costs British businesses \$23 billion a year, government statistics claim.

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