

- Telecommuting

Study unveils the mental health of the remote rotational workforce

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WHETHER on or offshore, the work and lifestyle of a remote rotational worker is unique. While lucrative for some, it has long been associated with a high impact on mental health and wellbeing. A groundbreaking global report from the International SOS Foundation and Affinity Health at Work, 'Mental Health and the Remote Rotational Workforce', showed the psychological impacts of this unique mode of working. The new study revealed the high level of suicidal thoughts, clinical depression, impacts on physical health (such as diet), and the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on this workforce.

Dr. Rodrigo Rodriguez-Fernandez, medical director of Wellness and Noncommunicable Diseases (NCDs) of International SOS said, "There is an urgent need for increased focus, understanding and strategies to mitigate mental ill-health and promote the better mental health of the remote rotational workforce. This is highlighted in our survey, which uncovers significantly high levels of critical mental ill health issues, including suicidal thoughts and depression. The Covid-19 environment has also added increased stress on this already pressured working arrangement."

Some of the most alarming key findings detailed that 40 percent of all respondents experienced suicidal thoughts on rotation sometimes or all the time (compared to the average of 4 to 9 percent). This meant that one in five felt suicidal all or most of the time. While 29 percent of participants met the benchmark for clinical depression while on-rotation. Another 52 percent reported a decline in mood and flagging mental health while on rotation. What's even more alarming is that 62 percent of respondents at work had worse mental health than would be the norm in a typical population or setting. While 31 percent of workers off rotation reported experiencing lower mental health than the general population.

The full report, including practical recommendations on mitigation measures for companies is now available in <https://www.internationalsosfoundation.org/remote-rotationalworker-survey>