

For immediate release

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RSA and RoSPA join forces to encourage safer & more active lives

- New research into causes and impacts of accidents
 - 48% affected by serious accident
- Accidents have led to a third taking time off work

RSA today announces a new charity partnership with the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA). The two organisations are collaborating on a number of initiatives to highlight risks and to help reduce the number of people who are seriously injured or killed in accidents at home or on the road.

Every year, more than 14,000 people in the UK are killed following accidents, with hundreds of thousands more injured – but many of these accidents are preventable. Through this long-term partnership, RSA and RoSPA are focusing on accident prevention and on raising awareness of the things people can do to look after themselves and others. Three main accident groups will be addressed: those affecting under-fives in the home, 17-25 year olds on the road, and over 65s on the road and at home.

The programme will evolve across three key stages:

- 1) **research** and **analysis** to understand the main causes of accidents and who they affect
- 2) use **insights** to build awareness and highlight simple steps to reduce the risks
- 3) **advocate** wider systemic changes where appropriate to improve safety for all

Initial research* has found that almost **half of us** (48%) have experienced a serious accident or know someone who has. In addition, **two in five of us** (43%) have experienced anxiety or stress as a result of an accident involving close friends or family. Furthermore, **a third** of the UK workforce has had to take time off work to accommodate caring responsibilities such as accompanying children or a relative to medical appointments as a result of an accident.

Over 65s account for half of all accident-related hospital admissions – with the number of people being admitted up 11% since 2015 for this age group. Among over 65s, falls are the largest single cause of admissions and accidental deaths, so the first output from the partnership will be a series of virtual roadshows and online support material to help those approaching later life to improve their strength and balance – both of which are key defences to limiting falls at home.

Available from the end of November, these online support packages are designed to give over 65s clear and simple things they can do to live more safely and actively. Research also found that almost **half of us** (45%) don't feel comfortable talking to older friends and relatives about the risks they face, so there will also be guidance to help everyone else find ways to raise safety concerns.

Commenting on this strategic partnership, Karl Helgesen, RSA's chief claims officer and chair of RSA's corporate responsibility committee, said:

"Every year, more than 800,000 people are seriously injured or killed in accidents at home, at leisure, on the road or at work – many of them preventable. Through our partnership with RoSPA, we are using our relationships with families and business to increase awareness of risks, and find ways to reduce them.

"More often than not the ramifications of accidents on under fives, younger drivers or people 65 and above affect those in between – people who are responsible for caring for their children as well as older parents. This group juggle these caring responsibilities with their own busy lives, and the trauma and upheaval of an accident can introduce extra strains which could be avoided if the right support is in place ahead of time.

"With over half of all accident-related hospital admissions coming from the over 65s, we are focusing our initial practical advice and guidance here. But I'm looking forward to continuing to work with RoSPA throughout the course of our partnership to develop solutions that get to the heart of the causes of preventable accidents and help our communities stay safe."

RoSPA chief executive, Errol Taylor, added:

"Across England and Wales, more than 9,000 people aged over 65 die as a result of an accident each year and there are more than 430,000 accident-related hospital admissions in England among this age group. A leading cause of these accidents are falls in the home.

"Strength and balance exercises are one intervention which can help prevent a fall among over-65s. This is why RoSPA and RSA are working together to provide free resources and five online strength and balance roadshows which will help people in later life to stay on their feet and promote wellbeing.

"I look forward to sharing the continued success and positive impact of our partnership."

- ENDS -

* A nationally representative YouGov survey of 2,000 UK residents was conducted in March 2020.

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