

Are your crew members getting enough sleep?

A recent US study into sleep found that sleep deprivation is one of the main contributory causes of accidents. George Radu from our San Francisco office explains.

Experts say that most people need seven to eight hours' sleep each day. Getting enough sleep enhances reaction time, memory function and problem solving skills, which are, of course,

essential onboard ships. Sleep will help your immune system and cut your risk of colds and other illnesses. The study also found that people who sleep less are more prone to being overweight.

Attaining enough sleep can be difficult during periods of bad weather, so it is important to get all crew back on a sound sleep schedule as soon as possible after the weather improves.

Unsurprisingly, the study found that crew engaged in shift work suffer more from sleep deprivation than those who work during the day. If vessels rotate crew members' shifts, experts recommend that they rotate in a clockwise rotation. Crew reported an increase in productivity and happier working conditions when changing shifts in a clockwise rotation.

How to achieve better sleep

Here are some useful tips to help promote better sleep for crew members:

We recommend posting signs in the mess rooms listing ways in which sleep can be improved. Exercise regularly - being unfit leads to sleep disorder as this will increase your deep slow wave sleep phase at the beginning of the sleep cycle. It is recommended that ships have suitable exercise equipment onboard: exercise bikes, treadmills and weights will help crew members get the exercise they need to keep fit.

Preparing for sleep is important: turn off all electronic devices, mobile phones, televisions and/or computers at least one hour before bedtime.

When circumstances allow, take a nap - naps can bring a burst of energy and help compensate for sleep disorder.

The ideal temperature to enhance sleep is about 15C, higher than 18C can diminish sleep quality.



PEME (PRE-EMPLOYMENT MEDICAL)

The Club was the first to launch a PEME scheme in 1996 due to increasing crew illness claims and a lack of accountability of clinics. Since 1996, the PEME programme has become one of the Club's leading loss prevention initiatives. The aim of the programme is to reduce the volume and value of crew illness claims which are caused by a pre-existing illnesses or disease. These underlying conditions often impact on the crew member's fitness for service and can endanger not only the health of the seafarer but also the onboard safety of other crew.

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Sophia joined Thomas Miller in 1992 and from 1994 worked as a claims handler dealing mainly with French and Spanish Members. In 2004, Sophia became the PEME Programme Director. Sophia has undertaken a large number of clinic audits, implemented the standard medical form and clinic guidelines. She has also lead the scheme through the largest period of growth and development with a doubling of approved clinic facilities and a four fold member increase. Sophia is a Director of Thomas Miller & Co. Ltd.

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Saidul Alom joined PEME from the European Region Service Team in 2004. Saidul provides administrative support to the PEME programme and is responsible for liaison with the approved clinics on financial billing matters and ensuring prompt payment of all clinic fees

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Stuart joined Thomas Miller in 1998 as a claims trainee for UK P&I Club's Greek Members. In April 2005 Stuart joined PEME as the Team Administrator. Stuart is responsible for co-ordination of Member entries and administration for the clinic approval process.

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George Radu joined Thomas Miller (Americas) in 2007 after spending 19 years at a major container shipping line including ten years as Claims Manager. He handles all types of P&I claims. He handles all types of P&I claims and is our Loss Prevention representative in San Francisco