

Working Solutions

Monday

Stream C

Session 1

1145– 1230

Session 2

1500– 1545

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Exploratory evaluation of hospital porters in relation to MSDs

This Theory session is aimed at Adult and Child Care in an Acute setting at Strategic Advisors

Biography:

Ex RAF environmental health technician where I completed my NEBOSH certificate and diploma, HND in Environmental and Occupational Health and undertook to undertake my MSc in Health, Safety and Environment. Having joined the NHS in 2013 I completed my MSc and am currently undertaking a PhD focusing on Hospital porters and their Musculoskeletal health.

Abstract:

Following a detailed literature review of MSDs in healthcare staff the hospital porter was identified as being a vulnerable occupation which had had little investigation. Therefore this was the occupation group that was selected for my PhD. This presentation will cover the initial stages of research incorporating the semi-structured interview and second study design.

The interviews were conducted to:

1. Explore the types, current levels and severity of MSDs in the target population.
2. Detail the target population's work history and any pre-existing musculoskeletal symptoms.
3. Clearly define the role of the hospital porter through identification of tasks undertaken.
4. Determine the current equipment/training provided in relation to moving and handling tasks undertaken by hospital porters.

The interviews followed the Nordic Musculoskeletal Questionnaire style (Kuorinka et al., 1987) as a commonly used and verified assessment of Musculoskeletal symptoms. As well as descriptive questioning for demographic and employment information.

A 56% (56/100) response rate was achieved though directly approaching porters during their normal working day. Porters were only approached once and those who declined to participate were thanked for their time.

77% were male (n=43) and 23% female (n=13). Most respondents, 59%, were in the 46 to 66+ age ranges (n=33). Four percent (n=2) of respondents were 18, and 14% (n=8) were above normal retirement age of 65 years old. Half of the respondents were employed on full-time contracts (37.5 hours or more) and a quarter were employed part-time. The remaining quarter were divided equally into bank staff and volunteers (n=7 each).

Over the last 12 months lower back, at 27% (n=15), and knees, 23% (n=13) were the most reported symptoms. however, in the last 7 days knees were the highest reported at 20% (n=11), followed by lower back and both shoulders, with 13% for both lower back and both shoulders (n=7).

The porting role incorporated a number of manual tasks (push/pull, lift/carry) as well as driving, walking, mail sorting and computer working. To undertake these tasks a variety of equipment was identified although usage and knowledge of equipment varied widely. Despite this portering staff had a good idea of the types of equipment and training that they felt would be beneficial to assist them in their roles to reduce the manual effort required or to understand better techniques.

A further study is required and planned to understand the risks from the tasks that are undertaken.

Objectives:

To provide information on the role of the hospital porter Discuss the techniques used to gather information Explain the next study