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PERSPECTIVE

Occupational Health: Identifying Safety and Health Hazards

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Description

The goal of the interdisciplinary medical area known as occupational health is to help people work in ways that are least harmful to their health. It is in line with the advocacy for workplace health and safety, which is focused on preventing injury from dangers. The goals of occupational health should be the promotion and maintenance of the highest level of physical, mental, and social well-being for workers in all occupations, the prevention of health problems among workers brought on by their working conditions, the protection of employees from risks associated with factors that are harmful to their health, and the placement and maintenance of the worker in an occupational environment that is suitable for his or her physiological and psychological needs [1].

Hazards, risks, outcomes

Different countries have different terms for OSH, but generally speaking;

• Something that could harm people if it is not controlled is a hazard.

• The damage brought on by an uncontrolled hazard is the outcome.

• The likelihood that a specific outcome will occur and the seriousness of the harm involved combine to form a risk.

In other fields, terms like "risk," "outcome," and "hazard" are used to indicate things like equipment damage or environmental harm. However, in the context of OSH, "harm" often refers to the direct or indirect impairment of the physical, mental, or social wellbeing of workers, whether this degradation is temporary or permanent. For instance, handling big goods manually repeatedly is dangerous. An acute back or joint injury or a musculoskeletal condition (MSD) could result from the situation. A multi-dimensional classification system, relative phrases, or a numerical representation of the risk can all be used to communicate it [2,3].

Hazard identification: A crucial element in the whole process of risk assessment and risk management is the identification or assessment of hazards. Individual work hazards are located, evaluated, and controlled or removed there as closely as is reasonably possible to the source (site of the hazard) [4,5]. Hazard analysis directs controls more closely at the source of the hazard as technology, resources, social expectations, or legal requirements change. Hazard control is a dynamic prevention programme as a result. Another benefit of hazard-based programmes is that they don't assign or imply that there are "acceptable risks" in the workplace. Although a hazard-based programme may not be able to completely remove risks, it also does not tolerate "satisfactory" but nonetheless unsafe outcomes [6]. A hazard-based strategy might avoid the inherent contradiction in a risk-based approach because managers are typically the ones who calculate and manage risk. The information that must be acquired from sources should be relevant to the particular line of employment where the hazards may arise. As was previously noted, some examples of these sources are official records of work and the hazards encountered, history and analysis of prior accidents, and interviews with persons who have worked in the field of the hazard. The personnel interviews may be the most important of these in locating unrecorded practices, incidents, discharges, risks, and other pertinent data [7,8]. It is advised to digitally archive the information after it has been compiled from a variety of sources (to facilitate quick searching) and to have a physical set of the same information to make it more accessible. A historical hazards identification map is one creative technique to present the intricate historical hazard data since it simplifies the data into a simple graphical format. Job Hazard Analysis (JHA) software enables safety managers and crew members to recognize possible dangers at the job site and enhance accident prevention, particularly in the construction industry.

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