OWLinks
A publication of Singapore WSH Institute

SPOTLIGHT

WSH Institute Visiting Expert Series: Occupational and Environmental Risk Factors for Cancer and the way forward

A lunchtime talk on occupational cancers, was organised by the WSH Institute on 27 November 2014 which saw more than 130 participants, half of whom were from the healthcare sector.

Dr. Kurt Straif, Head of the Monographs section of the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), WHO, provided participants an overview of the work of the IARC in evaluating occupational and environmental risk factors for cancer, and the evidence for some occupational carcinogens. Dr. Lesley Rushton, Reader in Occupational Epidemiology at Imperial College London, presented key results from a study, which estimated about 12,000 occupational cancer cases in 2010 in Britain, and predicting a rise to 13,000 by 2060.

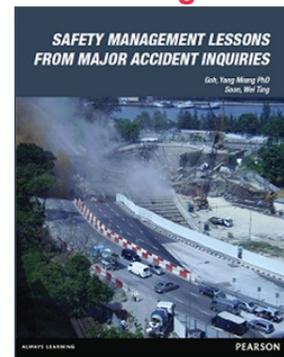Click here for a copy of Dr. Kurt Straif's presentation.

Recommended WSH Reading from the WSH Institute Collection* at the Public Libraries

70 e-Books are available for loan Check it out here.

View titles from the Singapore Workplace Safety and Health Institute Collection

WSH Institute

Recommended Reading

SAFETY MANAGEMENT LESSONS FROM MAJOR ACCIDENT INQUIRIES

Goh, Yang Miang PhD
Soon, Wei Ting

ALWAYS LEARNING   PEARSON

TITLE:
Safety Management Lessons from Major Accident Inquiries

AUTHOR:
Goh Yang Miang, Soon Wei Ting

AREA OF INTEREST:
Construction Industry, Safety Measures, Prevention, Investigation

For more information, please click here.

1 Developing best-practice guidelines for improving bus operator health and retention

Transit sector operators work in a challenging environment that can give rise to poor health outcomes. This translates into high costs for the employers from health care, absenteeism, staff turnover, and workers' compensation payments. The health of the workers also affects customer service and safe operations. While collaborative efforts have been made by these employers and unions to address operator stress and health issues, more could be done to improve on their overall health and wellness. This report describes the research undertaken and the best-practice guidelines and industry tools developed to help transit companies address health and safety issues common in the transit industry to improve workers' health, wellness and retention.

To read more, click here.

2 Mental illness hurts our economy – it's time companies get proactive
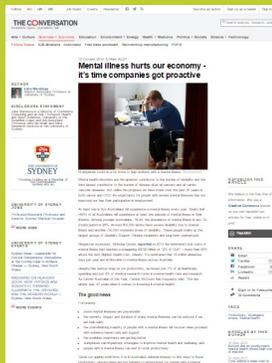
This article states that nearly half (45%) of all Australians will experience at least one episode of mental illness in their lifetime. The estimated total cost of mental illness was A$190 billion or 12 percent of GDP, with 19 million absentee days per year. Despite the negative impact on productivity levels, the authors highlighted that not much has been done to address this issue. However, companies can put in place strategies to improve mental health and wellbeing for those with mental health issues. Evidence has shown that a positive work environment without bullying or judgement and a well-designed job assists in recovery and reduces the cost of absenteeism. And the most effective strategies involve "integrated and systemic initiatives" such as (i) engaging company leaders, staff and stakeholders to plan a better future and (ii) reviewing existing policies and procedures to facilitate effective promotion and management of mental health and well-being, including recruitment and return to work.

To read more, click here.

3 How safety drives innovation and productivity: The high performance work perspective

In this video presentation, Professor Mark Griffin, Director of the Centre for Safety at the University of Western Australia shared a model that provides four approaches to safety that can enhance productivity and innovation. The first approach involves the implementation of business practices that are beneficial for health, safety, productivity and sustainability. The second approach adopts a cost-benefit perspective that weighed the benefits against the cost of implementing better safety systems. The third approach involves engineering oriented solutions to tackle major business challenges, especially for safety-critical and high reliability industries. Lastly, the dynamic capability approach demonstrates how safety can be a source of productivity in changing environments. In the second part of the presentation, Damien Renwick, General Manager of CSBP Ltd talked about the role of a good safety leader and the importance of having a vision for the business from a safety perspective. He highlighted that trust is critical in building an effective culture that empowers the employees to raise safety issues, knowing that management and others are going to listen and address their concerns. A video presentation of this discussion is available.

4 Filling the dark spot: Fifteen injured workers shine a light on the workers compensation system to improve it for others

Many reports on workplace injury or death tend to focus on the health and/or return-to-work outcomes of compensation processes instead of considering the impact of the process itself on the worker's health and recovery. This report looks at the issue from the injured workers' perspective. It examines how workers can be better supported after sustaining an injury and identifies changes that the relevant authorities, employers and unions can undertake to reduce mental anguish among injured workers covered by the Victorian WorkCover system. It also provides four recommendations regarding the handling of such cases, as well as identifies critical points in the WorkCover process and workers' experiences of workplace injury and mental health.

To read more, click here.

Other Useful Resources

- **Acute exposure guideline levels for selected airborne chemicals** *(The National Academies Press)*
- **Recurring accidents: Confined spaces** *(Institution of Chemical Engineers)*
- **How companies help workers with their mental health** *(Marketplace)*
- **Recommended practices: Protecting temporary workers** *(Occupational Safety and Health Administration and National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health)*

*OWLinks is brought to you by **Singapore WSH institute** that enables leaders and professionals to keep abreast of the latest WSH development and trends from around the world.*

For enquiries or feedback, please email us at *contact@wshi.gov.sg*
Visit the *WSH Institute website* for updates on WSH-related matters, information and events.

Vision: A leading Institute for WSH knowledge and innovations.
Mission: Enhancing WSH through knowledge, innovations and solutions.