



Issue 36 (July 2015)

SPOTLIGHT

WSH Institute welcomes new Governing Board Chairman, Mr Khoo Teng Chye



Mr Khoo Teng Chye, who is currently Executive Director for Centre for Liveable Cities will succeed Mr Khoo Chin Hean, as WSH Institute's new Chairman of the Governing Board effective from 1 July 2015 for a tenure of 2 years.

The WSH Institute has benefitted greatly from Mr Khoo Chin Hean's active leadership as the Chairman since June 2012. Besides enhancing the vibrancy of WSH knowledge, innovation and solutions in Singapore, Mr Khoo also fostered close collaboration between the Institute and the WSH Council to move towards realising Singapore's vision of a safer and healthier nation.

Mr Khoo Teng Chye was formerly Chief Executive of PUB, Singapore's National Water Agency from 2003 to 2011 and served as Chief Executive Officer at the Urban Redevelopment Authority from 1992 to 1996.

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

70 e-Books are available for loan
Check it out [here](#).



Recommended Reading



TITLE:
Safe by accident? : Take the luck out of safety : leadership practices that build a sustainable culture

AUTHOR:
Judy L. Agnew & Aubrey C. Daniels

He is actively involved in numerous boards and committees, such as Board of Tropical Marine Science Institute at National University of Singapore (NUS), Advisory Board for the World Future Foundation, Advisory Committee for the Nanyang Technology University (NTU) School of Civil & Environmental Engineering, among many others.

The WSH Institute looks forward to working with Mr Khoo Teng Chye and thanks Mr Khoo Chin Hean for his leadership and guidance for the past four years.

Click [here](#) to find out more about Mr Khoo Teng Chye.

AREA OF INTEREST:

Industrial safety - Psychological aspects, Industrial safety – Management, Safety Management, Occupational Health & Leadership

For more information, please click [here](#).

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1 Minimising Occupational Exposure to Hazardous Drugs in Clinics

Date of publication: April 2015

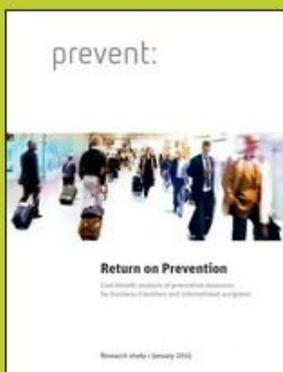
Author: Kong, H. L.

Source: SMA News

Many chemotherapeutic agents that are used in clinics for cancer treatments are hazardous drugs. Healthcare workers handling these drugs are at risk of toxicity via three main modes of exposure: (i) inhalation of hazardous drugs, (ii) direct skin or mucosal contact with hazardous drugs, and (iii) accidental inoculation of hazardous drugs through the skin. Scenarios where healthcare staff are at risk of increased exposure are highlighted and these include drug preparation, drug administration, drug and waste disposal. The article suggests minimising these risks through proper staff education and training, use of engineering control measures such as biological safety cabinet (BSC) during drug preparation, use of safer equipment such as Luer-Lok fitted syringes and intravenous sets for drug administration, safe work practices and appropriate use of personal protection equipment (PPE). Besides risk minimisation measures, emergency measures for management of hazardous chemical spillage are also discussed in the article.



To read more, click [here](#)



2 Return on prevention: Cost-benefit analysis of prevention measures for business travellers and international assignees

Date of publication: January 2015

Source: Prevent

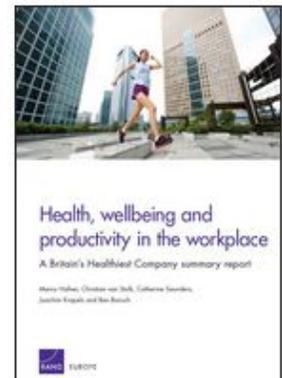
More and more employees are going on overseas work assignments. The overall average investment for an international work assignment is US\$311,000 per annum – a substantial amount for companies. Business travellers may encounter difficulties and challenges when abroad, and failing an overseas assignment may impact both the employee and the company. Hence, effective and focused prevention policies by the employer are necessary to mitigate the risks; and there is evidence that there is a return on investment for good practices. In a case study that estimates the cost-benefit of two travel prevention programmes in a company, it was found that the benefits of a pre-travel medical check for employees and a malaria prevention programme outweighed the operating costs. An investment of US\$1 in the medical check programme returned a benefit varying from US\$1.60 to US\$2.53 and for every US\$1 invested in the malaria prevention programme, the payback was US\$1.34. The malaria prevention programme was also found to reduce the occurrence of fatal cases by 70 percent. The integration of health and safety in the company's strategy and policy is important and can positively influence company performance and contribute to company goals.

To read more, click [here](#).

3 Health, wellbeing and productivity in the workplace: A Britain's Healthiest Company summary report

Date of publication: 2015
Source: RAND Corporation

Companies often choose to invest in health promotion programmes only if the benefits outweigh the cost of investment in the longer term. Many fail to understand the direct link between wellbeing and productivity. This report presents data from the 2014 Britain's Healthiest Company (BHC) competition which aims to examine the association of wellbeing and workplace productivity. The survey sample includes 21,822 employees from 82 UK companies. It was found that the average work impairment due to absenteeism and presenteeism in the study population is 8.8%. The findings indicate that sleep deficiency (25.9%), financial issues (26%) and mental health issues (3.9%) are factors contributing to productivity loss. The rates of absenteeism and presenteeism are also found to be higher amongst employees with musculoskeletal conditions (77.3%) and other chronic health conditions (24.8%). With regards to work environment, workplace bullying (5.1%), unrealistic demands (45.6%) and strained relationships (13.9%) are among the causes for high levels of absenteeism and presenteeism. The study findings also revealed that while organisations may be aware of the factors that contribute to work impairment, more could be done by making it an organisational priority starting from the top to put in place effective strategies to improve the health and wellbeing of staff.



To read more, click [here](#).

4 Health risks in international container and bulk cargo transport due to volatile toxic compounds



Date of publication: 2015

Author: Baur, X., et al

Source: Journal of Occupational Medicine and Toxicology

Toxic fumigants and substances are often used as disinfectants and preservatives for goods against foreign substances and to curb their spread to foreign countries. Dock workers, seafarers, inspectors, and uninformed workers in the freight transport and logistics industry face possible adverse health effects due to exposure to volatile toxic chemicals from goods. Some of the most common toxic substances such as phosphine may cause respiratory and gastrointestinal symptoms. Neurological and skeletal muscle effects may also occur rapidly thereafter. Methyl bromide (bromomethane), a common agricultural fumigant, and formaldehyde may cause headache, vomiting, sore throat, vertigo and visual disturbances, followed by reduced consciousness, coma and convulsions. Biomonitoring and medical examination scheme are recommended for exposed workers. The article also proposed preventive measures for safe handling of freight containers which includes appropriate measurement of air samples; appropriate aeration, where forced extraction ventilation was shown to be most effective; using alternatives for fumigation such as heat treatment; replacing toxic industrial chemicals with harmless substances; correct labelling; knowledge and awareness among managers and workers; guidelines for safe procedures; measurements; ventilation and personal protective devices.

To read more, click [here](#).

Other Useful Resources

- Sun safety in construction: Evaluation of a sun safety intervention for the UK construction sector (*IOSH*)
- Hospital Respiratory Protection Program Toolkit (*Occupational Safety and Health Administration*)
- Symptoms of Depression and Their Effects on Employment (*The Work Foundation*)
- Cold Exposure and Health Effects Among Frozen Food Processing Workers in Eastern Thailand (*Safety and Health at Work*)

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

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