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The Migrant Adolescent WorkLife Study

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Abstract

Background: Little published data describe chronic disease indicators among migrant farmworker adolescents, a vulnerable working population.

Methods: To address this gap and through a partnership with the Weslaco Independent School District and Migrant Education Department, we are conducting a 5-year combined cross-sectional/cohort study (2006-2011) to examine the prevalence of and risk factors for hypertension, overweight, hyperinsulemia, and back symptoms among students from two South Texas high schools. Along with physical examinations, we administered a questionnaire soliciting information on work history, health risk behaviors, acculturation, and other factors.

Results: Among 628 sampled students, 508 participated (80.9%) after completing consent procedures. Of these, 257 were migrant education students and 251 were their nonmigrant counterparts. Approximately, 96.7% of participants are Hispanic and 50.0% are male. Initial analyses of data from the fourth year (2010) of the project, comparing migrant and nonmigrant students, show a prevalence of 36.9% vs. 26.6% for acanthosis nigricans (AN, a marker of hyperinsulemia); 7.7% vs. 13.9% for high normal or high blood pressure (>90th percentile for age, height, and gender), and 40.0% and 41.5% for overweight or obese. Among males and females, the prevalence of AN was 31.6% and 31.9%, the prevalence of high normal or high blood pressure was 12.1% and 9.7%, and the prevalence of overweight/obese was 50.0% and 33.3%, respectively.

Conclusions: These preliminary results suggest a compelling need for a comprehensive intervention to prevent significant chronic disease in this high-risk Hispanic adolescent population. This study addresses the Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishing Sector Strategic Goal 2.2.

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Public Health Partnerships to Address Workplace Stress and Cardiovascular Disease

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Abstract

"Stress@Work" is a project of CPH-NEW, a Center for Excellence in the NIOSH Work-Life Initiative. It is an outreach, translation, and dissemination project to increase awareness of health professionals about the causal association between job strain and cardiovascular disease (CVD), with the long term goal of incorporating occupational safety and risk reduction into broader CVD public health risk reduction programs. A secondary goal was to identify opportunities for broader integration and collaboration between Occupational Safety and Health and Chronic Disease prevention within public health structures.

Building on a long history of partnership between the University of MA Lowell, Department of Work Environment and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health Occupational Health Surveillance Program, we identified cardiovascular disease (CVD) as one public health priority of mutual interest. Expanding our partnership to include the MDPH Chronic Disease division, we leveraged the MDPH state heart disease coalition (The Partnership for a Heart-Healthy, Stroke-Free MA) as an opportunity to lead a statewide initiative to raise awareness among health professionals about work related stress as an important risk factor for CVD. A CPH-NEW researcher joined the coalition executive committee, and took responsibility for a formal objective in the MA Statewide Heart Disease plan to "increase awareness among health and occupational professionals of the causal relationship between work-related stress and the development of heart disease and stroke."

We interviewed a broad range of professionals in public health, clinical and workplace settings to understand their knowledge about and perceptions of the role of job stress (also known as job strain) in the development of cardiovascular disease. We also assessed perceived barriers to intervening at the level of the organization to reduce or prevent sustained excessive exposures to psychosocial workplace stressors, such as unmanageable workload, low decision making, and low social support. Among state public health program personnel we found low collaborations between OHS and chronic disease and wellness programs, low attention to workplace hazards (including stress) and very low awareness in regards to work organization interventions. Low knowledge generally of occupational health and safety and OHS interventions was an important theme for a range of health professionals, and one that was frequently cited as barriers to professionals' belief they could intervene in a preventive way to control exposure to workplace stressors in their professional roles to reduce risks for chronic diseases.

The interview findings informed educational messages and formats used when collaborating on MA state heart disease prevention coalition meetings and conferences. CPH-NEW researchers also educated Massachusetts employers with stress intervention education through the state health department's workplace wellness training initiative for employers.

MDPH and CPH-NEW have partnered on developing and publishing findings from a survey of employer practices in OHS and health promotion. Future collaboration in the areas of intervention studies, educational outreach, and joint research are planned for the Spring of 2011 and beyond.

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Abay Asfaw, Kerry Souza
NIOSH Division of Surveillance, Health Evaluations, and Field Studies, Washington, DC, USA

2.310 **Paid Sick Leave and Nonfatal Occupational Injury**
Abay Asfaw, Regina Pana-Cryan, Roger Rosa
NIOSH Office of the Director, Washington, DC, USA

Cardiovascular Disease

2.311 **Examining the Role of Occupation in Cardiovascular Disease: A Collaboration between NIOSH and REasons for Geographic and Racial Differences in Stroke (REGARDS) Study**
Leslie MacDonald[1], Virginia Howard[2], Sherry Baron[3], LeaVonne Pulley[4]
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Poster Session 1

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