



# American Public Health Association

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### Prevention and Wellness Across the Life Span

APHA 140TH ANNUAL MEETING & EXPO  
OCT 27-31, 2012 SAN FRANCISCO, CA



Infancy



Teen Years



Retirement

#### 269220 Determinants of Health and Work Outcomes among Chinese Immigrant Food Service Workers

*Monday, October 29, 2012 : 12:45 PM - 1:00 PM*

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**Background and Objective:** Emerging, yet separate, lines of research document the influence of social determinants on mental health and work performance. We tested an expanded, theory-driven model positing the effects of social discrimination and job concerns on mental health, as mediator of work performance and injuries for Chinese immigrants in the U.S. **Methods:** Chinese immigrants ( $N=194$ ), working in food service, completed a comprehensive in-person interview, with scales using Likert-type response options. Using SEM, we tested for the effects of social discrimination and job concerns on mental health problems and the mediating effects of mental health problems on work performance loss and work-related injuries, controlling for relevant covariates including gender, English proficiency and health status. **Results:** On average, participants had lived in the U.S. 10.7 years ( $SD=9.0$ ); 57.7% understood some spoken English; and 53.6% were female. The findings revealed support for the hypothesized model. Specifically, job concerns ( $\beta=.55$ ,  $p<.05$ ) and social discrimination ( $\beta=.21$ ,  $p\sim.05$ ) affected mental health problems. Mental health problems mediated the influence of discrimination and job concerns on work performance and injuries ( $\beta=-.56$  &  $\beta=-.55$ ,  $p<.05$ ). **Conclusion:** This study advances understanding of the mechanisms by which social determinants influence worker health and work performance and the relevance of mental health in this process. The confirmed links with social discrimination and job concerns raise compelling questions about whether focused mental health promotion would be efficacious in preventing or reducing work performance loss and injuries among Chinese immigrant workers or whether broader work policy interventions would be necessary, or both.

#### Learning Areas:

Implementation of health education strategies, interventions and programs  
Occupational health and safety  
Public health or related nursing  
Public health or related research  
Social and behavioral sciences  
Systems thinking models (conceptual and theoretical models), applications related to public health

#### Learning Objectives:

1. Describe the mechanisms by which social discrimination and job concerns affect Chinese immigrant workers' health or work performance outcomes. 2. Identify the relevance of study results to occupational and public health practice and research that will promote Chinese and other immigrant workers' work performance and health

**Keywords:** Immigrants, Health Disparities

#### Presenting author's disclosure statement:

**Qualified on the content I am responsible for because:** I have been the PI of multiple federally funded grants focusing on immigrant worker health and disparities. I am the PI of the study reported in this abstract.

**Any relevant financial relationships?** No

I agree to comply with the American Public Health Association Conflict of Interest and Commercial Support Guidelines, and to disclose to the participants any off-label or experimental uses of a commercial product or service discussed in my presentation.

Back to: **3252.0: Occupational Health Disparities Institute: New Research and New Policy**

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