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Work, Stress and Health 2019

FULL PROGRAM



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The Healthier Workforce Center of the Midwest: Theoretically and Data Driven

Shelly Campo (University of Iowa)

Employers need to reduce the burden of higher healthcare costs and lost productivity on their businesses caused by injuries and illnesses. Therefore, the goal of the Outreach Core of the Healthier Workforce Center of the Midwest (HWC) is to change Total Worker Health® (TWH) knowledge, attitudes, and/or behaviors by translating research findings into tools for employers to use to create a healthier, safer workplace. Evidence-based social science, utilizing communication and health behavior change theories, drive the development, implementation, and evaluation of all outreach activities. Theories point to how and why change may occur which enhances evaluation efforts to measure impacts. Each theory provides different insight into aspects such as adoption, readiness for change, planning models, levels of influence, and message design to reach culturally- and educationally-diverse audiences. The theory is coupled with data collected from employers and employees by the HWC including site visits, case studies, and surveys of Midwest employers to inform the dissemination of Total Worker Health programs, policies, and practices. This evidence base is used to develop communication strategies that are tailored to the needs of specific audiences, including employers, intermediaries, and academics, that are delivered via the appropriate interpersonal and media channels. Our research with smaller employers (<250 employees) identified the need for low cost, easy to implement TWH solutions. These employers are far less likely to have skilled staff members whose primary focus is health and safety. As a result, they have less knowledge and time to learn about new resources and would like to know that other small employers have successfully adopted TWH and suggestions about implementations strategies for TWH programs, policies, and practices. This has driven our approach to provide education in smaller doses via short videos (most less than 5 minutes) and podcasts, provide testimonials and examples from Midwest employers, and create more engaging content such as a hazard mapping exercise to employ at local meetings/conferences. The HWC is uniquely positioned at the University of Iowa along with several other NIOSH-funded centers including the Heartland Center for Occupational Health and Safety (the Federal Region VII Education and Research Center), and the Great Plains Center for Agricultural Health (serving nine states of the Upper Midwest). Since its inception, the HWC has collaborated with the Heartland Center and Great Plains Center to develop TWH programs and materials that are jointly disseminated throughout the Midwest. Another dissemination strategy for the outreach core is to reach employers throughout the four-state region (Iowa, Missouri, Nebraska, and Kansas) by partnering with intermediaries to disseminate TWH. Washington University in St. Louis and the Nebraska Safety Council/WorkWell, bring together an interdisciplinary team of researchers, practitioners, and advisors who are an integral part of the Outreach team. The HWC has worked closely for the past five years with the Nebraska Safety Council/Workwell, a NIOSH TWH Affiliate, which reaches over 550 Nebraska employers with TWH education and resources. Their expertise and networks are an essential part of our Outreach core. Their team has enhanced our ability to design, implement, and evaluate programs, practices, and policies that can be tailored to employers of various sizes with changing needs and high burdens of adverse health effects, particularly the needs of small employers in our states. We have recently developed a new relationship with WorkWell Kansas to incorporate TWH into their training and

resources. WorkWellKS provides leadership and resources for business and organizations to support worksite health. Since its inception in 2011, WorkWellKS has worked with 1,123 worksites across Kansas. The HWC is also actively engaging trainees in TWH approaches including an upcoming case competition for undergraduate, graduate and professional student teams that requires them to work with a Midwest community to provide expertise in solving community and workplace issues from a TWH perspective. These teams will include students from health sciences, management programs, urban and regional planning, and engineering among others. Through the integration of theoretically based approaches, data collections, and collaborations with organizations throughout our region, we are able to expand the outreach efforts of the HWC.

The Center for Work, Health, and Well-being: Four Pillars of Our Approach

Lisa Burke (Dana-Farber Cancer Institute/Harvard University)

The mission of the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health Center for Work, Health, & Well-being, one of six Total Worker Health® Centers of Excellence, is to protect and promote the health, safety, and well-being of workers through designing, implementing, and disseminating effective workplace policies, programs, and practices. Over the past 20 years, researchers at our Center have endeavored to expand the evidence supporting an integrated approach and to develop the resources to apply it. The Center's approach to outreach and education is comprised of four pillars: Disseminating Evidence-Based Practices The Center creates best practices to simultaneously improve working conditions and optimize health and safety investments in multiple industries. The Center's Workplace Integrated Safety and Health (WISH) Assessment measures effective workplace organizational policies, programs, and practices, and focuses on working conditions and organizational facilitators of worker safety, health, and well-being. The WISH Assessment is based on the Center's validated "Indicators of Integration" that were designed to assess the extent to which an organization has implemented an approach integrating occupational safety and health with worksite health promotion. The WISH assessment measures six core constructs identified as central to best practices and may inform organizational priority setting and guide research around causal pathways influencing implementation and outcomes related to these approaches. Several Center studies are utilizing WISH Assessment items, testing their psychometric properties. Shaping Workplace and Public Policy To inform policy decisions affecting the workforce, the Center examines the potential impact its research has on policies that enhance worker health and safety while supporting productivity and engagement. Our Center's Policy Working Group identifies, examines, and influences workplace and public policy issues related to Total Worker Health® by bringing together policy experts to explore implications of our past and current research. These experts recommend changes to workplace and public policies that can improve worker health, safety, and well-being. In addition, as part of our evaluation process, we examine how the research findings published by the Center can inform policy decision makers. The Center has also created "Policy Implication Summary Sheets" based on recent publications and written for non-academic audiences. These convey key messages from our research in non-academic language, for use at Conferences and available on the Center's website. Building Organizational Capacity to Improve the Conditions of Work To support organizations in adopting an integrated approach, the Center trains professionals, presents at conferences and on webinars,