



POSITION STATEMENT

Worker Health Surveillance in Occupational and Environmental Health

INTRODUCTION

Worker health surveillance, also known as workplace or occupational health surveillance, is the ongoing systematic monitoring of workplace injury and illness trends for the purpose of improving worker safety and health (National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), 2019). This concept is often confused with medical surveillance, or medical screening, which is generally clinically focused, providing information obtained from the monitoring and analysis of medical surveillance data. Worker health surveillance extends beyond early detection and treatment to include the removal of the causative factors (NIOSH, 2016).

Federal, State and private industry partners regularly collect and provide current data about injuries and illnesses occurring among workers in different jobs and industries. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) mandates worker health surveillance in specific standards for general industry (United States Department of Labor, OSHA, 1970); other agencies, such as the United States Department of Transportation, provide guidance on specific worker health surveillance programs. The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) uses collective data to monitor trends in work-related injuries, illnesses, hazards, deaths, and exposures in the United States.

According to NIOSH, worker health surveillance makes a difference in worker safety

team, exposure evaluation and control, developing and maintaining training and education, ensuring compliance with safe handling and disposal of hazardous drugs or materials in the workplace, ensuring mandatory use of personal protective equipment, instituting additional engineering controls to safeguard workers and eliminate hazards, increasing or decreasing the number of employees tested, changing the screening test or frequency of testing, and recommending job modifications/removal from exposure for medical reasons.

- *Notification:* Employees need to be notified in a timely manner of all test results and what they mean. Significant findings should be communicated to the employer, ~~on a one-to-one basis~~ ~~(10.7-14.4.1 (.)-10tneermin(ed)T011.042 0 Td(,))~~

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