Patient handling injuries in Minnesota nursing homes: an equity perspective

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THE STUDY
This study assessed (1) whether occupation is associated with patient handling-related injuries and (2) whether workers’ compensation claim outcomes are different for certified nursing assistants (CNAs), registered nurses (RNs), and licensed practical nurses (LPNs).

We analyzed lost-time workers’ compensation claims from Medicaid-certified nursing homes in Minnesota.

INJURY RATE BY OCCUPATION, MN NURSING HOMES (2005-2016)

- CNA = certified nursing assistant, FTE = full-time equivalent worker
- LPN = licensed practical nurse, RN = registered nurse

DIVERSITY IN DIRECT CARE WORKFORCE

- 20% Black or African American, 4% Asian
- 20% born outside of the U.S.
- 16% speak language other than English at home
- Leading countries of origin: Liberia, Kenya, Ethiopia, Somalia, Nigeria, Cameroon, Philippines

THE FINDINGS

- CNAs 2x as likely as RNs to have a patient handling-related injury claim (vs. another type of claim).
- CNAs only ½ as likely as RNs to receive traditional workers’ compensation benefits (i.e., total temporary disability). Instead, CNAs were more likely to receive a lump-sum settlement.

KEY TAKEAWAY

There is a direct link between employee safety and Quality of Care:
Healthy, happy employees = Healthy, satisfied patients

KEY MESSAGES

Direct care workers
“Protect your health and income”
• Understanding and navigating workers’ comp

“You own the Culture of Safety”
• Training in ergonomics and lift equipment
• Patient Centered Care

“Participate in Quality Improvement”
• Patient handling committee

“Importance of reporting”

Owners and managers
“Reduce costs”
• Direct (injuries)
• Indirect (turnover, recruitment, training)

“Focus on Quality of Care”
• Invest in patient handling training
• Maximize employee satisfaction and retention

“Remove barriers to health and safety”
• Offer clear, culturally appropriate resources
• Involve your employees in Culture of Safety and QI

Dissemination

How do we best communicate the link between worker health & safety and Quality of Care?

Additional key messages or frames?

What venues or media should we use to reach workers? And You?

REFERENCE


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Have ideas or feedback?
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