



Organizational Practices & Workplace Culture Associated with Injury Rates

Findings from the Center's Boston Hospital Workers Health Study

Total Worker Health Implications

Hospital non-physician patient-care workers experience higher injury rates at the workplace compared to other industries. While efforts to prevent injury usually focus on physical aspects of the workplace, attention should be also be paid to the psychosocial work environment, organizational practices, and verbal abuse.

- Among all injuries, musculoskeletal are the most prevalent and partly attributed to job tasks, work culture, supervisor support, and job title.
- Verbal abuse is frequent in health care settings, and associated with increased risk for musculoskeletal disorders.

Data Collected

Survey data from patient-care workers at two Boston hospitals were linked to injury records from employers.

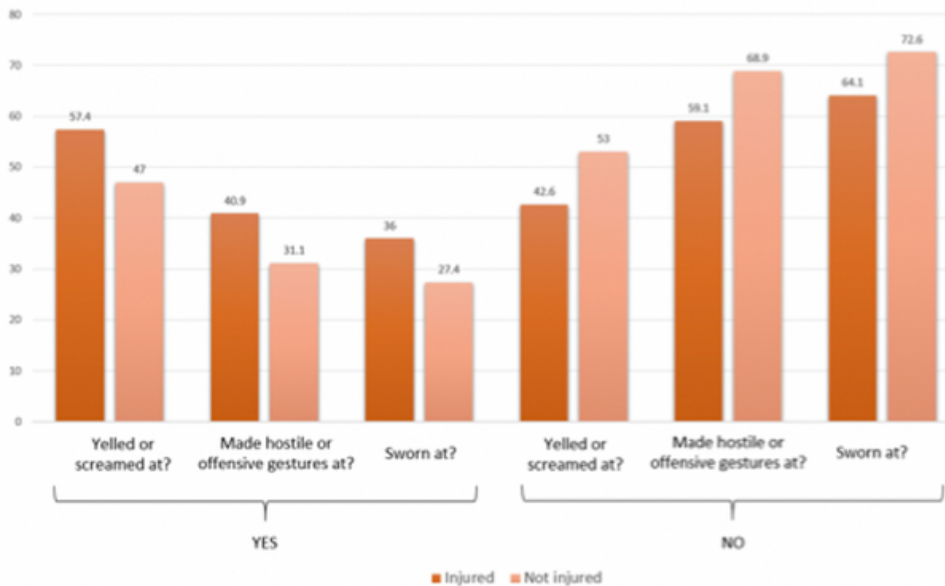
- Researchers examined the relationship between rates of occupational musculoskeletal injury and organizational, psychosocial, and structural factors.
- The relationship between reports of verbal abuse at work and occupational injuries was also studied.

Study Findings

Experiencing verbal abuse was associated with a higher risk of all types of injury; the effect is stronger in musculoskeletal injuries.

- Lower people-oriented culture, lower supervisor support, and job title were associated with higher rates of musculoskeletal injury.
- Patient care assistants experience more musculoskeletal injuries than nurses.
- Verbal abuse by patients or patient families was related to injury risk more than verbal abuse from co-workers, supervisors, or physicians.

Percentage of workers who experienced verbal abuse during the previous year



Full Publications

Sabbath EL, Hurtado DA, Okechukwu CA, Tamers SL, Nelson C, Kim SS, Wagner G, Sorenson G. Occupational injury among hospital patient-care workers: what is the association with workplace verbal abuse? *Am J Ind Med.* 2014 Feb;57(2):222-32. doi: 10.1002/ajim.22271.

Reme SE, Shaw WS, Boden LI, Tveito TH, O'Day ET, Dennerlein JT, Sorensen G. Worker assessments of organizational practices and psychosocial work environment are associated with musculoskeletal injuries in hospital patient care workers. *Am J Ind Med.* 2014 Jul;57(7):810-8. doi: 10.1002/ajim.22319.

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