



Policy Implications of Research Findings, 2011-2019

Total Worker Health Implications

Workers' health, safety, and well-being are shaped by both public policies and organizational policies.

- Designing policies based on evidence-based research at these two levels may be challenging as links between scientific evidence and policy-making may not be straightforward.
- Identification of evidence-based policy recommendations that support the health, safety, and well-being of workers as well as organizations is an essential part of a *Total Worker Health* approach, informing priorities and identifying gaps to address in future research.
- Dissemination of findings and translation into best practices for implementation are integral components of TWH research.

Data Collected

Our Center's Policy Working Group conducted a literature review of the Center's publications between 2011 and 2019 to identify implications for organizational and public policy that may inform policy decisions and identify priorities for future research.

- Researchers conducted a review and analysis of 32 of the Center's publications to identify cross-cutting themes that focus on working conditions or related health outcomes and their organizational and public policy implications.
- The publications included in this review were limited to those involving analysis of an association between aspects of the work environment and health outcomes.
- The publications were from studies in the healthcare and construction industries.

Review Findings

Twelve cross-cutting themes were identified with their respective organizational and public policy implications.

- The cross-cutting themes fit under two umbrella topics that reflect the majority of the center's research: working conditions (e.g., social support, safety practices) and related health outcomes (e.g., mental health, physical activity).
- There are notable overlaps as shared pathways of certain working conditions can affect multiple health outcomes.
- Examples of policy implications from Center findings may be found on the next page.

Full Publication

Gómez MAL, Sparer-Fine E, Sorensen G, Wagner G. Literature Review of Policy Implications from Findings of the Center for Work, Health and Well-being. *Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine* 61(11):868-876, November 2019.

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Examples of Policy Implications from Center Findings

Focus of Center Papers	Implications Based on Center's Work	
Working Conditions	Organizational Policy	Public Policy
Ergonomic Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Policies to improve ergonomic practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Policies to improve ergonomic practices
Harassment and abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Policies to prevent abuse, harassment, discrimination, and violence ▪ Policies to build respect for the ideas, values, and beliefs of others ▪ Building shared responsibility of violent acts through processes in which workers discuss constructive strategies to change the situation and prevent future occurrences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Zero-tolerance policy toward workplace harassment and abuse by agencies at the local, state and federal levels
Safety practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Policies that support positive safety practices and improve communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Policies to support positive safety practices
Social support (supervisor and/or coworker)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Policies that hold supervisors accountable for taking actions that support their employees ▪ Policies and trainings that aim to prevent abuse, harassment, discrimination, and violence, and that encourage employees and supervisors to build respect for the ideas, values, and beliefs of others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Regulations and/or standards for psychosocial factors
Staffing level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Regular assessment of staffing adequacy ▪ Policies to evaluate and address the extent to which job demands are aligned with resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Staffing ratio regulations
Work-family conflict	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Scheduling policies to reduce work-family conflict ▪ Discourage stigmatization and/or sanctioning of workers for exercising control of their schedules 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Scheduling regulations
Work schedules	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Scheduling policies ▪ Break policy consistently enforced 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Scheduling regulations
Work stress/Job demands/ Decision making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Regular review of job responsibilities to ensure appropriate work load ▪ Changes in job demands and shift scheduling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Scheduling regulations and/or standards ▪ In Healthcare: regulations requiring measurement of nurse-to-patient ratios to assess job demands
Health Outcomes	Organizational Policy	Public Policy
Injuries and injury reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Procedures that allow for easy reporting of injuries and that also prohibit retaliation of injury reports ▪ Data-driven surveillance systems that can capture distribution and disparities of injuries within the workplace ▪ Implementation of policies in diverse populations should be responsive to disparities present in the targeted population 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reporting regulations and/or standards ▪ Create surveillance systems for occupational injuries that segregate by occupation, type of work and context
Mental health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Policies that contribute to a psychologically safe and healthy environment ▪ Implement an internal monitoring system that is able to capture psychological hazards at the workplace ▪ Policies that allow for easy access to mental health resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Policies that protect workers against psychological hazards created by economic changes ▪ Policies that make employers accountable in the protection of workers against psychological hazards at the workplace
Physical activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Policies to evaluate and address the extent to which job demands are aligned with resources ▪ Implement integrated interventions that target improvements in physical activity and other outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Policies that support healthy lifestyle habits such as tobacco cessation, healthy diets, reduction of alcohol abuse, and improvement in sleep habits
Sleep deficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Scheduling policies designed to protect sleep cycles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Scheduling regulations