Health Like Safety™

Occupational Health Risk Management in Construction

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A healthy worker, in a healthy workplace, making healthy lifestyle choices™

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The Unique Challenge of Health
The Unique Challenge of Health
Extent of the Problem Worldwide

More than 2 million deaths per year
Every 15 seconds a worker dies from a work-related accident or disease

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The Unique Challenge of Health
Extent of the Problem UK

HSE Statistics – all industries
- 2 million suffer work related ill-health
- 28.2 million working days lost annually
  - 23.5 million ill-health
  - 4.7 million accidents

Ill health accounts for:
- 46% of the health and safety incidents
- 83% of the related sickness absence
- 99% of the work-related deaths each year
The Unique Challenge of Health

Construction related ill health

- Over 5000 occupational cancer cases arise each year as a result of past exposures in the construction sector.

- The construction industry has the largest burden of occupational cancer amongst the industrial sectors, over 40% of the occupational cancer deaths and cancer registrations this year were from persons who have worked in construction.

- 2.3 million working days were lost in 2013/14 – 1.7 million of these from ill health – almost ¾ of the time lost is due to ill health - this is 30% higher than for all industries.
The Unique Challenge of Health

Why?

Health perceived as difficult compared with other management topics

- Latency - causes not obvious
- Interventions not perceived as easy
- Reasons
  - Lack of information
  - Lack of knowledge - domain of doctors and nurses
- Positive outcome not immediately obvious

We need to break the chain!
A strategic approach to OH management
A strategic approach to OH Management

The 3Ws™ Strategy

- Managing the impact of work on health through an occupational hygiene led Workplace focussed ill–health prevention programme

- Managing the impact of health on work through a nurse led Worker focussed clinical service

- Promoting Well-being by using the workplace as a venue to promote healthy lifestyles
A strategic approach to OH Management

The Pieces of the Puzzle

Occupational Health

Occupational hygiene

Health & Safety

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A strategic approach to OH Management

What is an occupational hygienist?

Occupational hygiene is the science of anticipation, recognition, evaluation, control and prevention of hazards from work that may result in injury, illness, or affect the well being of workers.
A strategic approach to OH Management

What does an occupational hygienist do?

Occupational Hygiene brings to your project:

- **Occupational Health Risk Assessment** development
- Ill health prevention at **Design** phase
- Review of **RAMS** for health risks and controls
- On site, Occupational hygienists are responsible for **identifying, assessing and controlling** occupational health issues. This includes exposure to hazardous substances, noise, vibration and ergonomic issues
- **They can be the link between your Health and safety team and occupational health**
- **OH Training**
  - From Tool Box Talks to full courses covering everything your managers. Designers or operatives might need to know about preventing ill health.
Focus on the workplace: 
*The impact of work on health*
Focus on the workplace
Recognising the risks – the WHY question

GAME OVER

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Focus on the workplace

The top 5 health impacts in construction are:

1. Skin hazards
2. Respiratory hazards
3. Noise
4. Hand Arm Vibration
5. Musculoskeletal disorders
Focus on the workplace

Hazardous substances

Skin Conditions - Dermatitis

Irritant contact dermatitis - most common - 95%
- Caused by contact with a ‘skin irritant’ (chemicals such as solvents and thinners, grease, oils, fuels)
- Direct skin contact or via contamination of the air
- Damage outer layers of the skin - typically hands

Allergic contact dermatitis - less common
- Caused by contact with a ‘sensitiser’ (Nickel, Chromate which is found in cement, glues and coatings such as epoxy resin)
- Does not occur on 1st contact - become sensitised/allergic
- Can occur within days, but usually months/years
- Once “sensitisation” occurs it is lifelong
Respiratory Diseases

Silicosis

- Caused by respirable crystalline silica (RCS).
- Found in clay, slate, rock, concrete, cement granite, kerbs, sand, ceramics.
- High risk activities include - stone masonry, demolition, jack hammering, cutting, rock drilling, tunnelling.
- It only takes a small amount to cause a problem.
- To give an example the image below shows the maximum amount of silica you can breathe when averaged over a normal working day.
Focus on the workplace
Hazardous substances
Silica
Focus on the workplace

Hazardous substances

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Focus on the workplace

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Noise

Why take noise at work seriously?

• Over 1.1 million workers exposed to noise levels between 80dB(A)-85dB(A)

• Suspected that 170,000 workers experience deafness, tinnitus or other ear conditions as a result

• Gradual and increasing loss of hearing is from repeated exposure to loud noise

• At first, any hearing loss is temporary

• If exposure continues and ear not given time to recover, hearing loss becomes permanent / irreversible
Focus on the workplace

Noise
Focus on the workplace

Hand Arm Vibration

Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome

Blood vessel damage
• Initially finger tips occasionally go white on exposure to cold
• Whiteness increases with continued exposure
• Fingers go numb, get pins and needles
• After attack fingers go very red and painful
• Severe cases can cause gangrene

Nerve damage
• Senses of touch and temperature reduced
• Difficulty with manual dexterity
• Permanent numbness / tingling
• Weakness of grip

Damage to muscles, bones and wrists
• Pain in wrists and arms
• Carpal tunnel
• Frozen shoulders
• Golfers/tennis elbow
Focus on the workplace
Musculoskeletal disorders

- Highest rates in manual and skilled occupations
- Significant reduction in cases over last 10 years
- Highest rates in agriculture, construction and postal and courier activities
- Highest rates for workers aged over 45
- Approximately 40% of disorders affect the back, and 40% affect the upper limbs
- 2011/12 statistics:
  - New cases: 141,000
  - Pre-existing cases: 297,000
- 7.5 million working days lost
Focus on the worker and wellbeing: 

*The impact of health on work*
Focus on the worker and well-being

Clinical Intervention

- Industry accepted practices – tailored to fit size and nature of site
- Fitness for work
  - Questionnaire
  - Safety critical medicals
- Drugs and alcohol testing
- Health surveillance (a legal requirement)
- Treatment service?
- Emergencies?

~ 10,000 safety critical medicals undertaken
Focus on the worker and well-being
Engagement through wellbeing

• A key mechanism in engagement of workers
• Quarterly themes or monthly campaigns
• Delivered as outreach
• Use a worker and workplace focus
  – Lifestyle screening
  – Health promotion
  – Linked with national campaigns
  – Linked with safety
Further advice and assistance

Health *Like Safety™*

- Define what good looks like
- Worker, workplace, wellbeing
- Risk management drives the process
- Access to hygienists
- Know the difference between health surveillance and wellbeing checks

- CONIAC guidance on the key issues:

Thank you for your time!

Any Questions?