

A Study of Leading Indicators for Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems in Healthcare

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Leading indicators research is a burgeoning area in occupational health and safety. While there is an increased focus in Ontario's occupational health and safety system on compliance and fines, injury statistics have not improved significantly. Since 2009, the healthcare sector has ranked second highest for lost-time injury rates among Ontario sectors with female healthcare workers ranked highest among all occupations for lost time claims. Approximately \$2.5B is spent yearly on occupational injuries in this sector. Key to changing this trend is the development of a culture of healthy and safe workplaces, including the effective utilization of leading indicators within Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems (OHSMSs). In contrast to lagging indicators, which focus on outcomes retrospectively, a leading indicator is associated with proactive activities within selected OHSMSs program elements. The purpose of this study is to conduct a longitudinal study implementing six elements identified by Bennett and Foster (2005) as leading indicators and evaluating the effectiveness of this intervention on improving selected health and safety workplace indicators within two acute care hospitals.

In partnership with the Public Services Health and Safety Association, this study is examining a new approach to strengthening current OHSMSs by utilizing leading indicators. The high costs of occupational injuries along with the growing public demand for quality healthcare are strong motivators for organizations to create a culture of safety. Study results will be presented to guide participants in the assessment of leading indicators in their OHSMSs and provide recommendations to reducing barriers to changing current systems.

Speaker Credentials:

Dr. Joan Almost is an Assistant Professor and Associate Director (Graduate Nursing Programs) in the School of Nursing, Queen's University. She has been an invited speaker at over 60 provincial, national and international conferences and has presented several workshops to professional and organizational audiences.

Louise Caicco Tett has run her own health and safety business for almost 20 years. Since its inception, Health & Safety Professionals Inc. has conducted almost 1,200 training sessions, to close to 14,000 participants. Most of those courses were developed by Ms. Caicco Tett. As a volunteer for the WSPS (formerly IAPA) Louise has been invited to present at numerous WSPS regional conferences with excellent evaluations.

Level of content: Advanced