

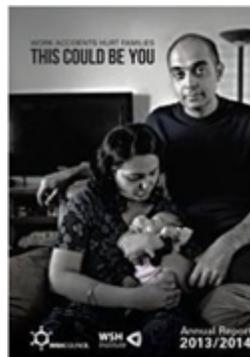
OWLinks is brought to you by the Workplace Safety and Health (WSH) Institute to enable leaders and professionals to keep abreast of the latest WSH developments and trends from around the world.

SPOTLIGHT

WSH Council and WSH Institute's Annual Report 2013/2014

At the [WSH Awards](#) on 18 July 2014, the WSH Council and WSH Institute's Annual Report "[This Could Be You](#)" was unveiled.

The joint annual report takes on a personal approach with stories from family members who have been affected by the loss of a loved one or have been injured at work. These compelling stories are meant to remind ourselves of the importance of working safely and healthily to ensure that everyone will return home safely. The annual report also highlights the efforts and initiatives by WSH Council and WSH Institute in Financial Year 2013.



Articles Reviewed In This Issue:

1. [Memorandum from the Occupational Cancer Working Group 2013](#)
2. [Priorities for occupational safety and health research in Europe: 2013-2020](#)
3. [The long struggle to protect workers' lungs against Silicosis](#)
4. [Creating a mentally healthy workplace: Return on investment analysis](#)

Memorandum from the Occupational Cancer Working Group 2013

Date of publication: 2013

Source: Finnish Institute of Occupational Health

Author: Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, the Finnish Ministry of Social Affairs and Health (STM), the Finnish Federation of Accident Insurance Institutions (TVL), as well as medical experts from the Central Organisation of Finnish Trade Unions (SAK) and the Confederation of Finnish Industries (EK)

Synopsis:

This memorandum provides recommendations regarding the diagnosis and compensation of occupational cancers. It reviews carcinogenic substances according to exposure, together with a literary overview. The occupational cancer working group provides recommendations for the compensation of occupational cancers caused by asbestos, crystalline silica, other carcinogenic metals and metal compounds, environmental tobacco smoke, solvents, dusts and fibers, other physical factors, and shift work. Other recommendations include: lung cancer screening among people exposed to asbestos; forming a specialist group for occupational cancer diagnostics; standardisation of data collection regarding asbestos exposure; and using chest radiographs to define the manifestation date of asbestosis.

To read more, click [here](#).

Priorities for occupational safety and health research in Europe: 2013-2020

Date of publication: June 2013

Source: Reports, European Agency for Safety and Health at Work

Author: European Agency for Safety and Health at Work

Synopsis:

This review seeks to provide a better understanding of the cancer risk associated with working in shipyards.

This report identifies priorities for Occupational safety and health (OSH) research in Europe in the coming years. The objective is to identify research priorities at national level and to facilitate better coordination of research activities and more efficient allocation of resources. Four major themes are identified: sustainable work for healthier and longer working lives; globalisation and the changing world of work; OSH research for safe new technologies as a prerequisite for sustainable growth; and research into new or increasing occupational exposures for the benefit of a smart and sustainable economy. The report also underlines the importance of translating research findings into practical and accessible workplace solutions and interventions; and the necessity to build bridges between OSH research and other disciplines e.g. economic, general health and environmental issues, so as to mainstream OSH when important decisions are made at societal and company level.

To read more, click [here](#).

The long struggle to protect workers' lungs against Silicosis

Date of publication: June 2014

Source: The Milbank Quarterly, Vol 92, No. 2, 2014 (pp. 191-194)

Author: David Rosner

Synopsis:

Silicosis is reported as one of the oldest industrial diseases, identified in the United States as an epidemic in the early 20th century. By the 1930s, it was considered as the “king of occupational diseases,” threatening more than 500,000 American workers. This article reports that after facing many challenges, the US Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has finally proposed a silica safety standard aimed at protecting construction workers, miners, sand blasters, foundry workers, and stone cutters from silicosis, the deadly lung disease that has “choked hundreds of thousands of American workers since the early decades of the past century.” The new proposed exposure limit (8hr time weighted average of 50mcg/m³ of air) would cut in half the current amount of silica dust allowed in general industry and nearly 90 percent for construction workers. The proposal included preferred methods for controlling exposure, worker training and medical surveillance when needed.

To read more, click [here](#).

Creating a mentally healthy workplace: Return on investment analysis

Date of publication: March 2014

Source: Australian Policy Online

Author: PricewaterhouseCoopers

Synopsis:

This report measures the return on investment (ROI) for employers who invest in a mentally healthy workplace. It uses an economic model to measure different scenarios based on the workplace environment. It found that while mental health conditions present substantial costs to organisations, the successful implementation of an effective action to create a mentally healthy workplace and organisation will bring positive ROI. The benefits are improved productivity via reduced absenteeism and presenteeism (reduced productivity at work), and lower numbers of compensation claims. The productivity gains generated differ according to the industry and size of an organisation. Smaller sized organisations tend to have more effective implementation as the most important success factor is employee participation. Hence, for larger organisations actions are best implemented on a team or group basis. Critical success factors for a positive ROI were leadership and management support for improving culture and mental health of the workplace.

To read more, click [here](#).

Other Useful Resources:

- [Preventing the development of depression at work: A systematic review and meta-analysis of universal interventions in the workplace](#) (BMC Medicine)
- [Health and safety at work: Strategic framework sets out EU objectives for 2014-2020](#) (European Commission)
- [Workplace strength training prevents deterioration of work ability among workers with chronic pain and work disability: A randomised controlled trial](#) (Scandinavian Journal of Work, Environment & Health)
- [Chronic conditions worsen outcomes for injured older workers, but not by much](#) (Institute for Work & Health, Toronto)
- [Annual Report 2013: Working for safer, healthier and more productive workplaces in the European Union](#) (European Agency for Safety and Health at Work)
- [Predictors of sickness absence related to musculoskeletal pain: A two-year follow-up study of workers in municipal kitchens](#) (Scandinavian Journal of Work, Environment & Health)