

The Need for Ergonomic Regulation

Barb Noel

WHSC Representative



Preventing Repetitive Strain Injuries

- There is a growing international trend towards regulatory prevention.

Preventing Repetitive Strain Injuries

- Employer duties under the provision:
 - a responsibility to ensure that work which is physically monotonous, repetitive, closely controlled, or restricted, does not occur.
 - Workers must have the opportunity to influence the arrangement and performance of work.

Preventing Repetitive Strain Injuries

- And related worker training and information is mandatory.

Models for assessing work

Checklist for identifying potentially dangerous physical load factors

Participatory approach

- Studies report worker participation is critical to an effective prevention plan
- B.C and Saskatchewan regulations are successful

Participatory approach

- Although regulatory action is limited in British Columbia, their regulations require JHSC participation in identifying assessing, controlling hazards.

The need for regulation

- The Government of Ontario developed a health and safety action group.
- Ergonomic Sub-Committee
- Mandate to examine strategies to reduce work related MSD

The need for regulation

- The Committee made recommendations to
- the Government for Ergonomic Regulations.

The need for regulation

- The Government of Ontario must enact ergonomic regulations which will help workers in this province.
- Regulation will give Inspectors authority to address specific debilitating ergonomic injuries.

The need for regulation

- Currently, Joint health and safety workplace committees are left to make recommendations on changes in the workplace.

Successful interventions

- Some workplaces have negotiated interventions to address RSIs & MSI"s.
- But all workers deserve this kind of protection

Successful interventions

- GDX Precision (auto parts manufacturer) Welland, Ontario
- Establishment of a joint RSI Committee, and implementation of the “Stop RSI Program” at the Toronto Star.

Successful interventions

- Ergonomic intervention in cooperation with Air Canada, at Toronto Pearson's International Airport.

Conclusion

- “By targeting workplace pain and strains we are protecting Ontario’s workers and strengthening our economy.”

Minister of Labour Steve Peters

Conclusion

- Injuries from MSI'/ RSI's may not be life ending but it can alter the lives of workers and their families it can rob them of their mobility and their dignity.