Successful Performance: Sharing lessons learnt rolling out a participative ergonomics program to reduce manual tasks injuries in Australian workplaces

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1. Overview

The Participative Ergonomics for Manual Tasks (PErforM) program has been a key initiative for building industry capacity to reduce risks associated with hazardous manual tasks. This evidence based approach is team centred, with the underlying premise that the worker is the expert in their tasks.

Workplace Health and Safety Queensland (WHSQ) has been continually refining this program and its suite of resources over the last twelve years. This provides workplaces with the required knowledge, tools and support to better manage their hazardous manual task risks and comply with their legal requirements.

Specific campaigns that were led by WHSQ and delivered into a range of industry sectors, have generated a number of case studies which include productivity cost benefit improvements. The use of technology has allowed ongoing support for workplaces through regular network webinars and easy access internet based resources. This program is fundamental as part of WHSQ’s strategic advisory role to workplaces which include small to medium sized businesses and those with above average workers’ compensation claims for their industry. Flexible delivery options were created to meet operational needs of workplaces.

Critical to the success of PErforM in workplaces is the ongoing management support, existence of a robust risk management framework, effective communication, workforce participation and the solid presence of a site champion to enable the progress of PErforM. Workplaces commonly report the flow on success of PErforM includes improved productivity, safety culture, compliance with safe work methods and addressing other hazard area using a participatory approach.

2. Presentation Outcomes

This session aims to share the learnings and challenges from this journey and discuss the identified essential elements required for the successful implementation of the PErforM program in workplaces.

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