

Presentation Title	Place in Schedule
Working conditions as drivers and indicators of a Total Worker Health Framework	Concurrent Session 1.4 <i>Day 2 – Wednesday</i> <i>May 9th, 2018</i> <i>1:00 – 2:15pm</i>
Description of Presentation	Presenter Name(s) And Credentials
<p>Despite growing evidence, much research in worker health has focused particularly on downstream factors such as injuries, illnesses, and behaviors instead of the upstream factors that are their root causes. This plenary presentation will describe an approach to protect and promote worker health through improvements in working conditions. To guide research and interventions, the presentation will describe a conceptual framework; a measure of the extent to which worksites apply this model; application of the model to social epidemiological research; and operationalization of the model in a set of implementation guidelines.</p> <p>A common conceptual model can structure social epidemiological and intervention research by elucidating the pathways through which occupational factors influence safety and chronic disease risk. This conceptual model is based on the premise that addressing multiple pathways in an integrated manner within the conditions of work will contribute to greater improvements in health outcomes than addressing each pathway separately. Working conditions are centrally located in the model as determinants of health and safety outcomes, also mediating the effects on health behaviors.</p> <p>This model guided the development of a measure of effective workplace organizational policies, programs and practices that focuses on working conditions and organizational facilitators of worker safety, health and wellbeing: the Workplace Integrated Safety and Health Assessment. The assessment measures six core constructs central to best practices: leadership commitment; participation; policies, programs and practices that foster supportive working conditions; comprehensive and collaborative strategies; adherence to federal and state regulations and ethical norms; and data-driven change.</p>	Glorian Sorensen, PhD, MPH <i>Harvard Chan School of Public Health</i> <i>Center for Work, Health, and Well-Being, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute</i>
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In social epidemiological research using this model, we have demonstrated that worker safety and health outcomes share common pathways in the conditions of work, underscoring the need for system-level changes. We will review, for example, findings from our studies of hospital patient care workers, showing that low supervisor support, harassment on the job, and high job demands each contribute to multiple health behaviors, such as sleep deficiency and inadequate physical activity, as well as increased risk of injury and self-reported pain.

In our work with employers, however, we observed that the usual first-line of action is not implementation of system-level policies and practices, but rather programs for individual workers, a trend we have labeled “regression to the individual.” With a focus on improvements in working conditions, we have applied our research findings to the development of a set of implementation guidelines to build organizational capacity for integrated approaches to worker safety and health, thus building TWH approaches into the work organization rather than relying on individual workers and managers to implement such programs. These guidelines are intended to help decision makers within an organization build support and collaboration, plan and implement a program, and evaluate their efforts.

Taken together, this model along with a set of measures of best practices for promoting and protecting worker safety and health, can guide both social epidemiological and intervention research. This implementation manual provides practical strategies to apply this model, with the aim of achieving optimal worker safety and health and employer outcomes through improved conditions of work.