

Ergonomic Workplace Assessment - Health

Sector - Health Core NHS

Background

An NHS department contacted our ergonomist after receiving reports around Musculoskeletal Disorders (MSDs) and high sickness records within the Surgical Care Practitioners (SCP) teams.

SCPs are involved in the coronary bypass operations which involves the harvesting of the conduit for the surgeon to perform the operation. The coronary bypass is in high demand and the requirement to maintain the health and wellbeing of the workforce was paramount for the NHS department.

The general objective of the ergonomic workplace assessment was to provide information and recommendations that will contribute towards creating a working environment whereby the staff are able to meet the customer's requirements for a high quality service. Ensuring a high quality service and maintaining a health and wellbeing of the workforce was achieved by investigating how the physical, social and psychological aspects of the NHS department impacted on the workforce.

The Ergonomics Investigation

The investigation focused on the analysis of posture during the process of coronary bypass. Postural analysis tools including Rapid Upper Limb Assessment (RULA), Rapid Entire Body Assessment (REBA) and Manual Handling Assessment Chart (MAC) were used to assess postures adopted by the SCPs.

An ergonomics based questionnaire was completed by the SCP workforce. The purpose of the questionnaire was to understand and identify areas of the SCPs capability (including ability, motivation, group dynamics and leadership against the worker's demands (including technical, social and physical environments, management, quality control and reward systems) under the premise that an imbalance can lead to ill health.

Results

- ✓ Reduction in reported discomfort
- ✓ Reduction in absenteeism and presenteeism
- ✓ Improved staff wellbeing
- ✓ Reduction in staff turnover



Recommendations

The results of the ergonomic investigation indicated a number of areas where the imbalance between staff resources and work challenges could be effectively strengthened.

1. Physical environment improvements. e.g MSDs, Upper Limb Disorders (ULDs) and physical activity
2. Psychological environment e.g Organisational culture, employee participation, knowledge sharing.
3. Social Environment e.g Workload, control and description, repetitiveness, ambiguity.

Benefits

- ✓ Reduction in presenteeism and absenteeism.
- ✓ Improved wellbeing and productivity.
- ✓ Reduction in staff turnover.
- ✓ Improved user experience and working conditions.

