Considering Work and Short-Haul Drivers’ Health

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National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH)
Presentation to Pittsburgh AIHA
Safety, Health and Wellness in Transportation – A Discussion of Current Research and Practice
Disclaimer

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Overview

- Work Organization
- Work Organization concerns in Trucking
- Total Worker Health® as a lens to study occupational risks and health, to inform interventions
- Pilot Project: Work Organization Risks to Short-Haul Truck Drivers’ Health & Safety
Changing World of Work

• Workplaces are rapidly evolving: Industry shift to services, technology, work schedules

• Downsizing, corporate restructuring

• Changes in employment contract (contingent, temp workers)

• People: Labor shortages, work-life balance concerns, diversity, aging, work accommodations

• Organizational concerns: Increasing emphasis on costs, productivity, absenteeism, “presenteeism”
Model of Work Organization and Worker Safety and Health

WORKER DEMOGRAPHICS
- Labor Supply
- Technology
- Economy

WORK ORGANIZATION
- Org Practices
- Job Design

Physical and Chemical Exposure

MECHANISMS
- Biological
- Behavioral
- Cognitive
- Etc.

OUTCOMES
- Illness
- Stress
- Injury
- Dysfunction
- Disease
Organizational Demands Exceed Employee Resources

Work-related stress is the NO. 1 WORKFORCE HEALTH ISSUE and a major occupational risk, ranking above physical inactivity and obesity.

Source: 2013 Towers Watson Survey
Stress is Very Common

“Do you find your work stressful?”

Never..................... 7%
Hardly ever.............. 16%
Sometimes.............. 42%
Often..................... 22%
Always.................... 13%

35% Often to Always find Work Stressful

Source: General Social Survey, NIOSH Quality of Worklife Survey (2006)
SYMPTOMS OF STRESS

BASE: ALL QUALIFIED RESPONDENTS 2014 (n=3068)

Q810 Which of the following, if any, have you experienced in the last month as a result of stress? Please select all that apply.

Q7170 Which of the following, if any, have you experienced in the last month as a result of stress? Please select all that apply.

Physical Exposures and Health

• **~4,679 Fatal work injuries** in 2014; many more serious injuries

• **Chemicals:** About 20% of US workers experience frequent occupational skin contact with chemicals

• **Exposures:** 1 in 4 US workers reported chronic exposure to vapors, dust, gas, or fumes on the job
  
  — 1 in 10 non-smoking US workers are exposed to secondhand smoke at work, increasing their risk for lung cancer.

• **Interactive effects:** Smokers who work long hours, are harassed at work, worry about becoming unemployed, and/or are exposed to skin and respiratory hazards in the workplace (including secondhand smoke) are less likely to quit smoking

(Source: 2010 National Health Interview Survey – OHS module)
Psychosocial Aspects of Work and Health

- More than 16% of US workers have trouble combining work and family responsibilities\(^1\)
  - WFC relates to health problems and substance abuse\(^2\)
- High demands, low control relate to poor mental, physical health and CVD\(^3\)
- About 1 in 3 US workers worries about becoming unemployed\(^1\)
- Almost 8% of US workers have been threatened, bullied, or harassed on the job\(^1\)
  - Mistreatment at work and job insecurity have been associated with hypertension\(^1\)
- Exposures to workplace stressors are strongly associated with obesity\(^1\)

(Source: 2010 National Health Interview Survey – OHS module\(^1\); Frone, 2000\(^2\); Goh et al., 2015\(^3\))
Work Schedules and Health

• Work Schedules increase health risks\(^1\)
  • Working 48 or more hours per week in 2010 (about 1 in 5 US workers)
  • Non-standard arrangements / shifts (almost 1 in 5 US workers)

• Women who usually work alternative shifts have increased risk of breast cancer, but less likely to get screened

• Long work hours. Number of hours relates to increased incidence of acute occupational injury\(^2\)

• Long hours and shift work relate to poor health, unhealthy behaviors (e.g., smoking)\(^2\), hypertension\(^2\)

• Fatigued workers have reduced productivity, more injuries, poorer family outcomes

(Source: 2010 National Health Interview Survey – OHS module\(^1\); Goh et al., 2015\(^2\))
Work Affects Life Expectancy

WORKPLACE STRESS'S BIGGEST IMPACT

The Stanford study found the lack of health insurance had the biggest impact on physician-diagnosed illness and mortality, while work-life conflict greatly affected people's mental and physical health in self-reporting.

### Top Stressors on Doctor-Reported Illnesses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stressor</th>
<th>Odds Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Job Insecurity</td>
<td>1.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long Work Hours/Overtime</td>
<td>1.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Social Support at Work</td>
<td>1.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Job Control</td>
<td>1.60</td>
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<tr>
<td>Secondhand Smoke Exposure</td>
<td>1.50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unemployment</td>
<td>1.50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exposure to Shift Work</td>
<td>1.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Job Demands</td>
<td>1.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Organizational Justice</td>
<td>1.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Health Insurance</td>
<td>1.50</td>
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### Top Stressors on Mortality

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<td>Secondhand Smoke Exposure</td>
<td>1.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work-Family Conflict</td>
<td>1.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long Work Hours/Overtime</td>
<td>1.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Health Insurance</td>
<td>1.50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unemployment</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Job Control</td>
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### Top Stressors on Self-Rated Physical Health

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<td>Low Organizational Justice</td>
<td>1.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Social Support at Work</td>
<td>1.50</td>
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<tr>
<td>No Health Insurance</td>
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<td>Job Insecurity</td>
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<td>Work-Family Conflict</td>
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### Top Stressors on Self-Rated Mental Health

<table>
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<td>Long Work Hours/Overtime</td>
<td>1.50</td>
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<td>Exposure to Shift Work</td>
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<td>Low Social Support at Work</td>
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Odds ratios higher than 1 indicate that the exposures listed here increased the odds of negative health outcomes. No health insurance, for instance, increased the odds of a physician-diagnosed health condition by more than 100 percent. Odds ratios for exposures marked with † were calculated with two studies or fewer, and may be less reliable.
Risk of obesity by number of work stressors [Nursing home study, CPHNEW]

Stressors: low decision latitude, poor co-worker support, heavy lifting, night work, physical assault at work in past 3 months. (Multivariable models adjusted for gender, age, education and region.)

Truck Drivers

- ~ 2.8 million drivers in the U.S.
- 7 times more likely to die on the job
- 2.5 times more likely to suffer an occupational injury or illness
- Work more hours than European Union or Australian counterparts
- Work long hours, irregular shifts, are away from home
- High turnover – 121% in large truckload sector 2005

Source: DHHS (NIOSH) Publication No. 2007-120
Trucking is Challenging

• One of the highest-risk occupations
• Time pressures
• Loneliness
• Financial pressures
• Poor driving conditions (weather, accidents, construction, traffic)
• Road rage
• Violence

Truckers Experience cont’d.

- Racism / discrimination / negative perceptions
- Little control
- Higher stress for long-haul drivers
  - Away from home & support networks for longer periods of time
- Experience significant fatigue and sleep loss
- Sedentary lifestyle
- Reduced access to healthcare and support

Local/Short-haul vs Long Haul

• Classification complications
• Some of the same risks as LH
• L/SH driving may differ from LH
  – Time spent loading and unloading
  – Customer service responsibilities
  – Physical demands may differ
  – May have resources that are limited for LH drivers such as time, access to exercise facilities, ability to return home
Total Worker Health™

...,policies, programs, and practices that integrate protection from work-related safety & health hazards with promotion of injury and illness prevention efforts to advance worker well-being.
Research Needs that Apply to Trucking

• Need for ecological approach and *multiple levels* of intervention to support health promoting efforts, including the community level (Faghri et al., 2010; Baker et al., 1996; DeJoy & Southern, 1993).

• Need to integrate work org, eco, and systems approaches into OHS research (Stuckey et al., 2010)

• Consider financial cost/benefit, personal effort required, time commitment, compatibility with existing systems and behaviors, and expected outcomes associated with intv (Rogers, 2003; Maddux, 1999).
Current Project
Pilot Project: Work Organization Risks to Short-Haul Drivers Health & Safety
Project Aims

• **AIM 1**: Investigate work organization and personal factors that contribute to health and safety outcomes in local / short-haul (L/SH) drivers.

• **AIM 2**: Disseminate products that summarize findings and raise awareness of factors that present risks to L/SH drivers’ safety and health.

• **AIM 3**: Inform the development of future intervention that follows TWH to protect and promote L/SH drivers’ health and safety.
Learn more about existing research on Short-Haul truckers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Health</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Air quality</td>
<td>Risks to health – smoking, poor diet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Truck design, terminal design and</td>
<td>Fatigue, sleepiness at work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>safety</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall risk factors</td>
<td>Injury</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loading / unloading risks</td>
<td>Low back pain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Contingent work, work-life</td>
<td>Lung cancer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conflict</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Violence, boredom</td>
<td>BMI / Obesity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Characterizing L/SH Driving

- **Top Issues** (Hanowski et al., 1999)
  - Problems caused by other drivers
  - Time pressure (e.g., need to meet delivery time)
  - Inattention, focus on other things while driving
  - Problems caused by roadway or dock design
  - Driver fatigue

- **Customer service challenges** (Olsen et al., 2009)

- **Poor air quality** (Steenland et al., 1990; Tan & Chang, 2006)

- **Physical design: Posture demands, manual materials handling, vibration risks for low back pain** (Okunribido et al., 2006; Olson et al., 2009)
Safety Risks

• Risks for injury / fatality during crashes: Tired drivers, excessive speed, fatigue, not seat belt use, type and age of vehicle

• Fatigue:
  – Not enough sleep
  – Hard or physical workday
  – Heat or no air conditioning
  – Waiting to unload
  – Irregular meal times
Project Activities

• Focus Groups
  – Organizational Factors in Trucking
  – Driver Perceptions about Health
  – Study Design Concerns

• Partner Development
  – Research Partners
  – Professional Associations
  – Industry / Organizations
Survey of L/SH Drivers

- Quality of work life within L/SH trucking
  - Employee characteristics and perceptions of the work environment. Organizational culture.
  - Work design / structure – industry, type of freight, job duties, health and safety training, benefits.
  - Work organization, psychosocial stressors – i.e., stress, scheduling, work-life conflict, emotional demands.

- Individual health, behaviors

- Organizational outcomes of interest
  - Absenteeism, turnover
  - Accidents, near-misses, injuries, MSD, workers comp
Anticipated Outputs

• Depiction of L/SH driving: Work design, occupational stress, driver health and safety
• For Drivers: Success stories, strategies for improving health on the road, well-being
• For Employers: Characterization of the association between work and health with recommendations for addressing key risks
• ...in collaboration with partners
Contact Information

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