Collecting I/O Data in a Community Clinic Setting: A NIOSH Pilot Project in South Los Angeles

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Western States Occupational Network (WestON) Meeting
Denver, Colorado
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OHS and Community Health

- Community health centers as primary source of healthcare for many low-wage workers and their families
- Many CHCs lack the capacity to diagnose, treat, advise or refer patients with work-related conditions
- Potential roles for CHCs:
  - Clinical care for injuries/illnesses
  - Occupational health surveillance and detection
  - Partnerships to identify and combat hazardous workplaces
St. John’s Well Child and Family Center

- One of the largest safety-net healthcare providers in Central and South LA
- Network of Federally Qualified Health Centers and school-based clinics
- Over 266,000 patient visits each year
- Commitment to social determinants of health
Context: South Los Angeles

- Home to a large population of low-wage, immigrant workers and their families
- Many rely on community health centers as primary source of medical care
Work and Health Initiative Partners

- UCLA Labor Occupational Safety and Health Program (UCLA-LOSH)
- CLEAN Carwash Campaign
- Garment Worker Center
- Restaurant Opportunities Center of Los Angeles (ROC LA)
- Instituto de Educación Popular del Sur de California (IDEPSCA)
- Los Angeles Black Worker Center
- Southern California Coalition for Occupational Safety and Health
Components of Work and Health Initiative

- Health screenings and preferred treatment for worker center members
- Pilot occupational health clinic
- Collection of industry and occupation data
- Support for workers’ compensation access
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Health Screenings and Treatment
Components of Work and Health Initiative

- Health screenings and preferred treatment for worker center members
- **Pilot occupational health clinic**
- Collection of industry and occupation data
- Support for workers’ compensation access
Pilot Occupational Health Clinic

- Total of 34 patients referred over 3 months
- **Common industries:** garment manufacturing, restaurant/food service, construction, small factories/warehouses
- **Common Px concerns:** back and joint pain, tingling in legs and arms, skin irritation, work-related stress
Components of Work and Health Initiative

- Health screenings and preferred treatment for worker center members
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- Support for workers’ compensation access
Collecting Industry and Occupation Data

- Funding through NIOSH NORA mechanism

- Contract with primary healthcare organization to:
  - Oversee EHR modifications and training of relevant staff
  - Collect patient I/O data for 8-12 months
  - Evaluate quality of data collected and effect on workflow

- Contract awarded to St. John’s in October 2013; project work began Spring 2014

- UCLA-LOSH provided project support and technical assistance
Collecting Industry and Occupation Data

- Scope of work detailed requirements for a modified HER system that would capture minimum of I/O for multiple jobs, archive data over time, and allow work to be visible in the medical module
  - Contractor added capture of current employment status and employer to I/O
- Data to be collected during patient registration by front desk staff or medical assistants
“Pilot-within-a-pilot”

- Capture of I/O pairs for 869 patients

- Valuable lessons learned for project:
  - Occupation completed more often than industry; industry concept evidently less well understood
  - More mini-training/refreshers needed
  - EHR ‘workaround’ entry not ideal for data collection
  - Registration staff able to capture codeable data
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment Status</th>
<th>Employer</th>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Refused to provide Info</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retired/Disabled</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is this information current?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make All Previous Employment Inactive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Front Desk Guide to Collecting Industry & Occupation Data

1. Employment Status
   - Are you currently working?

2. Employer
   - Employer Name?

3. Industry
   - What kind of place do you work in?

4. Occupation
   - What is your job? What do you do?

Understanding Industry vs. Occupation

Industry: Type of business
- Examples: Forklift Operator, Construction

Occupation: Type of work that an employee does
- Examples: Cashier, Restaurant
Results of Data Collection

- From September 1, 2015 through April 18, 2016, **26,480 patient visits** were recorded; **10,384 unique patients**

- Employment status recorded for 10,359 patients:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment Status</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>7,043</td>
<td>68.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
<td>2,968</td>
<td>28.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>348</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- About 23% of records include missing Industry field
Data Sample: Sept-Nov 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry/Sector</th>
<th>Pct.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Restaurant/food service</td>
<td>10.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic work</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warehouse</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail/sales</td>
<td>7.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garment manufacturing</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing (non garment)</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Childcare</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day labor</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 1,643
I/O Data Collection: Some Lessons Learned

- With some training, registration personnel were able to collect basic I/O data
- Industry more difficult concept than occupation for registration personnel
  - Asking employer before I/O seemed to facilitate capture of Industry
- Staff turnover necessitated repeated (short) training
- Small HIT project vastly different from changes potentially made by EHR vendor
Components of Work and Health Initiative

- Health screenings and preferred treatment for worker center members
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Workers’ Compensation Access
Challenges

- How to bring pieces of initiative together???
- CHC staff turnover
- Competing demands of health center providers and staff
- Replacement of St. John’s EHR system (June 2016)
Lessons Learned and Future Directions

- Importance of addressing work and health concerns in community-based setting

- Feasibility of collecting I/O data from patients, using data to develop OHS programs

- Role of “cheerleaders” within CHC to promote OHS activities

- Value of collaboration with worker advocates and those with OHS expertise
Thank you

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