



Senior Living

Senior Living Pillars of Prevention

Creating a Foundation for Injury Prevention in the Modern Workplace

CAC believes employee safety has a direct correlation to the safety of senior care residents and overall fewer compensation and professional liability claims which means lower litigation and insurance costs.

Worker compensation insurance protects employees injured on the job and provides employee benefits for medical care, lost wages, and rehabilitation. Traditional, or historical, approaches to managing Workers Compensation have not been effective in reducing frequency or severity of injuries and claims. These approaches included paying incentives, providing prizes for “injury free” time frames, and disciplinary actions.

Concerns with those approaches is they can lead to under-reporting or failure to report injuries. Data indicates these measures are not effective in preventing worker injuries.

Five Pillars of Injury Prevention



1ST PILLAR: RECOGNITION

Positive worker recognition and regard is essential in preventing injuries. Establishing recognition and regard may be as simple as consistently greeting employees and “catching” and acknowledging them doing the right thing to prevent injuries.

2ND PILLAR: LEADERSHIP

Clear and consistent leadership, discussion of Best Practices and why they are important to the safety of employees, colleagues, and residents is essential. Responsive leaders set the tone by being well trained

in safety rules and providing necessary equipment and materials to reinforce safety. Leaders benefit from including employees in championing safety efforts and problem-solving connects them to better outcomes.

3RD PILLAR: COMMUNICATION

Open communication reduces risk for accidents and incidents. Leaders trained on developing and using open communication channels promote feedback. Open communication channels permits expressing work-related ideas, suggestions, and concerns without fear of reprisal. Workers who are comfortable communicating with leadership are more likely to voice needs for equipment and training.

4TH PILLAR: PREDICTABILITY

A stable and predictable work, break, and rest periods reduces fatigue, stress, and errors while promoting alertness and morale. Awareness of employees accruing excessive overtime and shifts is necessary to ensure attentive and focused employees. This can eliminate “ghost employees” who are physically present but exhausted and more likely to have accidents. Availability of well-maintained equipment and clear training on use is another component of this pillar. A predictable workplace regularly inspects and verifies equipment is appropriate for the work, ergonomically designed, and easy to use.

An aspect of a predictable workplace includes the employee break area. How welcoming and tidy is the breakroom? Is it bright and cheerful? Is there a working coffee machine with coffee and cups? Is furniture clean and comfortable? What do employee bathrooms and locker rooms look like? Leadership earns serious commitment when asking for, and implementing, employee feedback to make these areas comfortable and clean.

5TH PILLAR: EDUCATION

Intentional training, education and information reduce injuries. Effective education/training is retained by employees. Learning can require eight or more information interfaces. Employees cannot use training skills without easy equipment access. Strains and injuries from lifting and positioning are the most common healthcare worker injuries. Placing lifts in easy access areas promotes use. Gait/transfer belts as part of the work uniform is another example of reinforcing training/education to reduce accidents and incidents.

Summary

Sustained safety culture begins with top organizational leadership. Encourage leaders to receive professional communication training and use evidence-based strategies to reduce injuries. Provide a quality and intentional format to worker involved Safety Committees demonstrating leadership’s commitment to a safe workplace.

CAC Specialty can provide Worker Compensation Program support to help reduce accidents, incidents, and injuries. Contact us today.

TAKE THE NEXT STEP

If you would like to learn more or have questions, please reach out to your local CAC specialist or visit our website at: cacgroup.com.

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