

Illinois Risk Management Services

Workers' Compensation

CAPSTONE SERIES
Workers' Compensation

Hazard Prevention

Capstone Achievement

A community hospital implemented a top-down safety awareness culture using creative measures to increase employee hazard prevention awareness and accountability.

The Process

- Conduct daily environmental rounds to identify hazards, recognizing that new hazards can emerge without warning (e.g., a leaky roof or pipe can create a slip/fall hazard). 
- Perform surprise departmental safety inspections.
 - Utilize detailed department-specific risk and safety checklists to ensure all key areas are inspected. 
 - Ask employees questions that will demonstrate whether the entire department maintains a safety focus.
 - Conduct exit interviews with staff to discuss successes and areas for improvement.
- Encourage employees at all levels to report safety hazards.
- Use employee accidents as learning opportunities.
 - Re-enact each workers' compensation incident at the accident scene and document with photos. 
 - Identify the root cause of the accident, (i.e., what the outcome would be by removing the contributing factor).

- Look beyond employee incident reports to fully understand why an accident occurred and how to prevent further injuries. 
 - **Example:** An environmental services staff member reported a finger injury caused by a closing door. Further questioning and a re-enactment at the accident site revealed that the door was not closing properly and could have severely injured others.
- Initiate creative employee safety and risk management education learning methods, such as: 
 - **“What Happened to Mickey?”** contest: Using a mannequin posing as a patient (Mickey), the hospital's risk and safety team rigged a real patient room with approximately 40 serious risk and safety “violations.” Employees who identified at least 15 violations were eligible for a \$50 cash prize drawing. 
 - Staged violations included: extension cord use; bathroom cord tied to the handrail; bedrails down while “patient” was in bed; medications in a cup at bedside; HIPAA infringements; expired intravenous (IV) bag; and missing barcode on wristband.

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- Foster safety awareness with daily hospital website reminders:

- **Tip of the Day:** Addresses specific topics with detailed information and reminders about hospital policies and procedures. Each Friday's **Tip of the Day** ties back to the "What Happened to Mickey?" contest by addressing one of the issues noted in Mickey's room.



Example: The IV Bag **Tip of the Day** discussed the importance of checking the IV expiration date; verifying the IV tubing is properly labeled; securing the IV to the patient; and ensuring the IV is not touching the ground.

Outcomes:

- Overall improvement in employees' risk management and safety awareness;
- Increased employee accountability for hazard prevention; and
- Heightened emphasis on employee education.

Keys to Success:

1. Top-down management commitment to safety and risk management.
2. Relentless search for emerging causes of potential loss.
3. Implementation of corrective measures to prevent future losses.
4. Creative approaches to employee education.

TIP of the DAY (example) Frayed Bed Cord

What does our policy say?

Prior to using any electrical medical equipment, inspect it for:

- A. Loose or missing switch
- B. Broken cord
- C. Frayed cord
- D. Damaged housing

Turn off equipment before you plug it in or unplug it.

If a tingling sensation is felt while touching or using the equipment, turn it off, remove the plug from the outlet and call for repair service.



IHA Insurance Solutions/Workers' Compensation

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Our unique knowledge of the regulatory environment and practice patterns within Illinois health care organizations provides the expertise needed to reduce risk and claim expenses. Relying on a proactive and cooperative claims philosophy, our experienced team focuses on getting your injured employees back to work sooner and closing your claims as quickly as possible.

For more information about this best practice or Illinois Risk Management Services' programs, please contact:
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