


Modified work, return-to-work, job accommodation in agricultural manufacturing industries



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Outline of presentation

Background:

- ❑ Return to work (RTW) for workers with physical limitations
- ❑ WCB legislation and policy on RTW
- ❑ Responsibility of the employers
- ❑ Modified (alternative or light) work
- ❑ Job accommodation (Human Rights Code)
- ❑ Determination of functional abilities

Objectives

- ❑ Understand concept and process of RTW
- ❑ Describe ways to implement gradual RTW programs
- ❑ Describe ways and means of modifying a job
- ❑ Contacts and resources
- ❑ Understand value of worker evaluation

WCB Legislation

- Vocational rehabilitation

- Return to work - 2007

Return-to-work

- ❑ Going back to previous job, same employer following an injury or illness
- ❑ Going back to modified or alternate job, same employer
- ❑ Going back to similar job, different employer
- ❑ Going back to different job, different employer
- ❑ Re-training or upgrading of skills

Job demands analysis

□ Evaluate the job

■ Physical demands:

- Mobility and balance – walking, climbing, crawling
- Postural endurance – sitting, standing, bending, reaching, crouching, kneeling
- Grip and hand coordination – hand strength and fine-motor coordination
- Strength activities – lifting, pushing, pulling, carrying
- Vision, hearing and touch

■ Frequency of the physical tasks:

- Never, Rarely, Occasionally, Frequently, Constantly

□ Evaluate the person

Modified work (light duties)

- Modify the job by:
 - fewer tasks,
 - less time on the job
 - more time to complete tasks
- Gradual return by:
 - adding tasks
 - increasing hours at work
 - increasing speed of work
- Specialized services:
 - job coach, interpreter, service dog...

Modifying work tasks (cont'd)

- Strength activities –
 - limit the LOAD and frequency of the activity
- Mobility activities –
 - Limit the distance or type of mobility
- Grip & coordination activities –
 - Limit strength of grip and frequency
 - Limit time spent on fine motor activities
- Postural changes –
 - Limit time spent in any one position; eliminate or limit “awkward and non-neutral” work postures

Job accommodation (Human Rights Code)

- Essential demands of the job
 - Core responsibilities and tasks
 - Without these tasks, the job could not be considered the Job!
- Reasonable accommodation
 - Changes in non-essential components
 - Changes will not put anyone at risk for injury
 - “Reasonable” cost (no undue hardship)
 - Examples: change to shift schedule, assistive technology, modify job tasks, provide support services, accessibility to buildings

Job modification – ideas...

- ❑ Physical workspace – work heights, sit-stand stool, storage access, reduce noise...
- ❑ Organization of work tasks – eg. alternate light and heavy tasks, reduce reaching distances...
- ❑ Assistive technology or adaptive tools – large switch options, voice-activated computers, enlarged tool handles, standing wheelchair...
- ❑ Energy/fatigue or pain management – flexible starting times, place to rest during break times...

Evaluate the person

□ Who

- Health care professionals (**ethics of privacy, confidentiality, trustee of health information**)
 - physicians, occupational therapists, physical therapists,
 - Other professional experts in work-related rehabilitation such as occupational health nurse, athletic therapists, kinesiologists, chiropractors

Evaluate the person, cont'd

□ What

- Functional or physical capacity assessments
- Physical demands assessment of person & job
- Observation and “hands-on”

□ Where

- Clinics, health professional's office, job-site

□ Costs

- Consultation – vary greatly...

Evaluate the person, cont'd

- Job description
- Health & rehab background
- Physical assessment –
 - Range of motion, strength, mobility, balance, coordination,
 - Evaluate safety in performance of all assessment activities
- Work function assessment
 - Lifting, carrying, standing, sitting, bending, reaching, crouching, kneeling
 - Job simulation or actual job activities

Evaluate the person, cont'd

- Pain behaviour –
 - chronic pain, chronic pain syndrome
 - pain management
- Energy/fatigue management
- Motivation – assessment of effort
- Perceived capacity testing (eg. WEST Sort)
- Activity tolerance (endurance)
- Interpretation and Recommendations

Resources

- National Occupational Classification
 - <http://www23.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/92/e/generic/welcome.shtml>
 - <http://www5.hrsdc.gc.ca/NOC-CNP/app/viewalltitles.aspx?lc=E&code=7316>
- Manitoba Society of Occupational Therapists,
 - Web site: www.msot.cmb.ca
- Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists
 - http://www.otworks.ca/otworks_page.asp?pageID=608
- Manitoba Federation of Labour
- Workplace Safety and Health