

# Hospitals should track workplace injuries and accidents

When a worker suffers a workplace injury, they often receive treatment from a hospital or clinic. While hospitals track a lot of information about their patients, they do not keep track of workplace injuries that require medical attention. Reports show that over four million workers are injured every year in the U.S. and workplace safety researchers are calling for hospitals to change their data collection policies to help improve safety in the workplace.

Researchers at the Drexel University School of Public Health said that hospitals, occupational medicine and other health clinics should revise their data collection policies to include information about a patient's occupation and industry. The researchers want hospitals and clinics to start collecting data on workplace injuries and accidents to help improve workplace safety initiatives and policies as well as address potential safety hazards.

New research suggests that hospitals should keep track of workplace injuries, including information about the type of injury, when, how and why the workplace injury happened. Many workers who are injured on the job end up getting medical treatment. Researchers believe that hospitals can help track this information to help address safety hazards and workplace accidents, as well as provide a more accurate description of the most common type of work injuries and illnesses for workers in a specific industry.

Supporters of collecting workplace injury information from all hospital and clinic patients say that it could significantly help determine how many workplace injuries are actually

happening and allow workplaces to develop more effective safety programs.

The researchers said that it would not be difficult for hospitals and clinics to include workplace accidents and injuries to their data collection methods. They suggested that hospitals could have this information be collected and added to hospital discharge data to help keep track of the different types of workplace incidences.

If hospitals and other health care communities start collecting this type of data from their patients, workplace safety advocates believe that the nation and industry experts can better track workplace accidents and injuries, and hopefully provide safety programs that can prevent accidents and injuries from happening in the workplace.

**Source:** News-Medical, "[Subtle change to hospital data collection policies can prevent workplace injuries](#)," May 7, 2013