

Health care workers not protected from workplace hazards

Health care workers in Pennsylvania face many workplace hazards and are at risk for suffering workplace injuries throughout their career. All workers are supposed to be protected from workplace hazards but a new report found that health care workers are not protected as well as other workers in the U.S.

A new report by the Public Citizen group says that the Occupational Safety and Health Administration does not protect health care workers from safety hazards. They said that OSHA does not conduct enough safety inspections and they have not created standards to protect against common workplace hazards.

The report says that OSHA does not pay enough attention to the health care industry even though these workers have higher rates of workplace injuries and accidents. Health care workers suffered twice as many injuries as workers in the construction industry in 2011 but OSHA conducted fewer safety inspections in the health care industry. The report said that this could be due to the fact that more construction workers are killed on the job compared to health care workers.

The health care industry has seen an increase in employees during the last decade, with 2.6 million jobs being added to the health care industry over the last 10 years. This is a significant increase in workers and it appears that OSHA is not equipped to deal with the safety hazards these workers face.

In 2010, 141 health care and social assistance workers died from workplace injuries, compared to 744 construction workers and 329 manufacturing workers being killed on the job,

according to the report. This may be why OSHA conducts more inspections in the construction industry but the consumer safety group said that OSHA should be paying attention to all workers in the U.S., especially since there has been a significant increase in health care workers during the last decade.

Even though OSHA may not be keeping health care workers as safe as they could be, it is still up to employers to protect their workers. Employers are responsible for keeping health care workers free from injuries and illnesses and when workers do suffer an injury, their employer could be held liable. Injured workers should consult a workers' compensation attorney to discuss their specific injury and what options are available to receive workers' compensation benefits.

Source: Bloomberg BNA, "[OSHA Fails to Protect Workers in Growing Health Care Industry, Advocacy Group Says](#)," Robert Iafolla, July 18, 2013