

Discussion: Addressing the impacts of personal safety with patient care staff

Discussion Leaders: Address the following potential effects of an occupational injury with staff for injuries of different severities:

- Strained shoulder from manually boosting a patient in bed (4 days away from work)
- Broken arm from tripping over cords that were hanging from patient bed and not neatly bundled (6 weeks away from work)
- Back surgery for herniated disc from years of poor body mechanics (6 months away from work)

Occupational injuries can be both short and long term. Have you thought through how an occupational injury would affect you and the people in your lives?

Effect on injured person:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Physical pain and discomfort• Feeling like a burden on coworkers and family members• Career-ending injuries = no longer being able to do the work that you love
Effects on injured person's family:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Impacts of caring for injured person• Loss of income• Change in normal routine• Emotional impact of a family member being injured
Effects on coworkers:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Workload is redistributed among remaining staff• Work with backfill staff that may not be as efficient and/or familiar with processes• Emotional impact<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Worry about the wellbeing of the injured person– Worry about an injury happening to them
Effects on patients:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Patients could be injured• Change in care staff• Patients with obesity or mobility issues may feel at fault because they believe their weight or injuries helped to cause the injury• Change in perception of organization:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Organization does not value the safety of their employees– Staff are not well trained– Organization does not provide the highest level of care
Effects on the organization:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Occupational injuries cost our country billions of dollars each year. The money an organization spends on managing and treating preventable occupational injuries could be allocated toward other expenses and benefits such as:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– New technology and equipment– Additional staff– Better benefits– Building and workspace improvements (renovations, remodels, repairs)