What is new in Occupational and Environmental Health (Nursing)?

Barbara J. Burgel, RN, ANP, COHN-S, PhD, FAAOHN, Professor of Clinical Nursing, UCSF School of Nursing
March 12, 2016

Methods

- Email query
- 13 OHN leaders, current and former members of the California El Camino Real Association of Occupational Health Nurses (CECRAOHN) Board of Directors and Nominations Committee.
- 61.5% response rate.

Thanks to:
Susan Hazy (Keysight),
Matt DeAngelis (SLAC),
Denise Souza (J&J),
Maynard Lamusao (J&J),
Dana Drew Nord (UCSF/Premier Comp),
Wendy Corr (J&J),
Stephanie Phelps (SF Fire Dept), and
Bev Nuchols (Eden Medical Ctr)
Theme #1: Technology

- Increasing technology advances – “trying to stay ahead of the curve in order to protect the workforce utilizing these technologies”
- Sustainability as it relates to health of employees, communities we work in (including international), stewardship & environment.

Theme #2: Globalization

- Emerging/quickly spreading infectious disease with travel and bringing these disease into the workplace;
  - Processes / policies to lessen spread of infections between coworkers and clients/patients in workplace
- Globalization of work with travel, conference calls/webinars all times of day – early a.m./late at night
- International laws related to health care delivery & services, delivery of OH, wellness and EAP services.
Theme #3: Clinical Care

• Aging workplace population and the effect on injury treatment/apportionment/resolution
  – Assessing pre-existing health morbidities, injuries, core strength, upper extremity strength, balance and overall conditioning of workers and integrating strength, flexibility and conditioning exercises through Employee Health along with ergonomics training to prevent musculoskeletal injuries
• Influence of ~24/7 input device handling (i.e. phones, pads) and the effect on injury incidence/apportionment/modified duty/resolution

Theme #3: Clinical Care

• Understanding of the multi-cultural and political influences on providing services and expanding programs; e.g. multicultural stress management programs; resiliency;
• Integrating motivational interviewing with case management and following treatment guidelines
• Opt-out WC plans in TX and OK that allow employers to provide WC benefits to employee through their own systems rather than the traditional Worker's Compensation system.
Theme #4: Expanding Team

- Importance of team remains a current issue
- Experience of closer working relationships between OHNs, HR professionals, and EHS experts will continue to expand
- Occupational health nurses who work for large bi-national multi-faceted organizations will forever reinvent themselves to stay viable in their organizations
- Working on cross-culture/cross-function teams
- Innovation and creativity

Theme #5: Leadership/Management/ Business Acumen

- Compliance with an expanding, complex regulatory environment, e.g. WC and the opt-out plans
- The multi-employer workplace
- HR and employment/labor
- Lean/quality principles
- Understanding of basic International finance and currency influences on conducting business outside the U.S.
- Vendor management
- Continuous Staff Development
- Communication and effective speaking skills
- Public Health and industry influence
- Health Policy
#6 New models of OHN delivery

- Small employers/hard to reach workers
  - New shared service models
  - Telehealth consultation models
- NP provision of limited primary health care services to employees while at work and integration with primary health care practitioners
- Biomonitoring—Interpretation of results/risk communication

#7 Challenges/Opportunities

- Future of Nursing/Workforce Development
  - Removing scope of practice restrictions to OHN/NP practice
- Aging of OHN workforce
- Recruitment and retention of racially/ethnically diverse OHNs to meet California population needs
- Importance of Northern California COEH and NIOSH ERC funding 😊