

Developing Educational Materials for Homecare Workers and their Clients

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PROJECT OVERVIEW

Homecare workers, who provide personal care and housekeeping services to elderly, disabled or ill individuals, constitute one of the fastest growing occupational groups. Homecare workers are 90% female, predominantly poor, around 50% are racial/ethnic minorities and face one of the highest occupational injury rates.

Partnership for Safety is a 5-year community-based participatory intervention project to improve the safety and health of homecare workers and the consumers (clients) they serve. Project partners included NIOSH, the Labor Occupational Health Program at UC Berkeley, SEIU United Longterm Care Workers Union, and the Public Authority for In-Home Supportive Services Program in Alameda County, California. The Project team developed a Homecare Worker Safety Handbook and training workshop in English, Spanish, and Chinese designed to give workers and their clients the tools they need to identify potential hazards in the home and implement needed solutions. We also developed and implemented a social marketing campaign to promote the new materials.

Focus groups, stakeholder meetings and key informant interviews contributed to the development of culturally appropriate materials which communicate simple and low cost solutions to safety problems. A homecare worker/consumer leadership group provided input during the development of social marketing messages and the design of educational materials. These community leaders also conducted home visits to fellow workers/clients to test the prototype materials.

We are conducting a randomized controlled evaluation to examine the impact of the materials on worker awareness of hazards and knowledge about and ability to make improvements in the work environment.



TRAINING WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES

- To increase understanding of the importance of homecare worker health and safety
- To prepare people to use the handbook
- To promote effective communication with consumers
- To promote access to local resources for help

HOMECARE WORKER HANDBOOK

Cuidese a si mismo mientras cuida a los demás
ESTE SEGURO EN EL TRABAJO

Checklist
What hazards are you exposed to?
1. Do you mop, scrub, or do other housecleaning tasks for the consumer?
2. Do you use cleaning products such as bleach or toilet cleaner?
3. Do you do the consumer's laundry?
4. Do you help the consumer move (transfer) from place to place in the home?
5. Do you help the consumer take a bath or shower?
6. Do you use needles or other sharp objects such as scissors and diabetes sticks?
7. Do you cook and shop for the consumer?
8. Are there conditions in the home that could lead to trips and falls?
9. Are there fire and electrical hazards in the home?
10. Do you feel overwhelmed with stress and worry about your work?
11. Do you have injuries, aches and pains or other physical symptoms that might be caused by your work?
12. Do you want to know where to find help about these hazards?
Create your own action plan for safety on p. 82
Let's get started! Turn the page for tips on how to talk to each other about safety.

1 Mopping, scrubbing, and other housecleaning tasks
don't do
watch out for Back and shoulder injuries • General aches and pains
tools Use these things to make the tasks safer:
• A long-handled duster, mop, and scrub brush to limit bending while you clean the floor, walls, tubs, and toilets
• A stepstool to help you clean high places without overreaching and possibly losing your balance
• Knee pads or a folded towel to cushion your knees

tips
• Handle laundry soaked with blood or body fluids carefully. Follow "Universal Precautions" on p. 41.
• The laundry bags shut and make sure they don't leak.
• Keep your back as straight as possible when unloading items from a washer or dryer.
• Don't let the load you're carrying block your line of sight. You could trip or fall.
• Divide big loads into smaller ones to make them lighter and easier to carry.
talk it over You could say: "It's hard on my back to carry such a big laundry basket. Could we try to find a cart for me to use?"

照顧別人的同時照顧自己
家務工作者之實用提示
在工作時保持安全

WORKER AND CONSUMER LEADERS FIELD TEST THE HANDBOOK

Goal:

- To engage homecare workers and consumers in the field-testing of the handbook and suggesting improvements



Methods:

- We trained a select number of worker and consumers leaders through a day-long interactive training including role-plays and practice interviews
- Each leader completed 5 field interviews with peers
- 10 peer interviewers completed 50 interviews

SOCIAL MARKETING CAMPAIGN

Goals:

- Raise awareness about the importance of addressing health and safety
- Motivate workers and consumers to use the handbook

Strategies:

- Word of mouth- worker to worker
- Posters in central locations
- Grocery bags with key message
- Postcards for in person distribution and direct mail
- Spreading word through union meetings and agency trainings
- Partnering with community organizations



DISCLAIMER: The findings and conclusions in this presentation have not been formally reviewed by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health and should not be construed to represent any agency determination or policy.

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