

## **The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH)**

December 5, 2013

1-2:30 p.m. (EDT)

### **Presenters**

- **Amanda Harney**, Health Communication Specialist, NIOSH
- **Steve Wurzelbacher**, Director of the Center for Workers' Compensation Studies, NIOSH
- **Ted Scharf**, Research Psychologist, NIOSH

### **Summary**

**Facilitator:** Mike Lipka, Knowledge Officer, NASA Safety Center

**Attendees:** 54 (approximately)

**Purpose of the Safety and Health Learning Alliance:** Share experiences and collaborate ideas across various government and defense agencies, related industries, and professional organizations for the mutual goal of achieving high levels of safety and health.

**Goal:** Increase involvement, communication, and participation among safety and health professionals.

The [SHLA website](#) includes a video of the presentation. Please submit questions, comments, and event recommendations on the website or by emailing [NASA-NSC@nasa.gov](mailto:NASA-NSC@nasa.gov).

### **Questions**

- **How does NIOSH differ from OSHA?**

#### ***Amanda***

NIOSH is the federal agency responsible for conducting research and making recommendations to prevent work-related injury, illness, and death, as opposed to OSHA, which regulates and enforces said regulation.

- **You mentioned that NIOSH has a fall protection program. NASA has been tasked with some external oversight committees to work fall protection programs. Who could we contact for follow up for our program?**

***Amanda***

The NIOSH Division of Safety Research in Morgantown, WV leads a lot of the safety research activated that concern falls. The contact information would differ depending on whether you're looking for more information about falls in a sector area or fall protection in general.

- **You mentioned leading indicator studies. If we contact you would you be able to provide information on the different kinds of work on leading indicators that you're working on?**

***Wurzelbacher***

Definitely. There is some information on the website in terms of evaluating some of the safety and health program elements, mainly looking at organizations policies and procedures, somewhat related to the I2P2 outline for safety and health programs, but also looking at disability management as well. If you contact me, I can give you full information on the actual indicators themselves that we're looking at.

- **How do you work the mechanics of measuring safety equipment training or social support. Social support is soft, so how do you really measure that?**

***Scharf***

The NIOSH Generic Jobs Stress Questionnaire is a good place to start, for a lot of that stuff. You can see some of the kinds of measure we have in that. It is one of the good, established surveys out there that I would recommend as a starting place. It's just a matter of picking the right survey for your needs.

- **Do you have examples of leading indicators that you've identified that have actually resulted in reduction of certain kinds of incidents?**

***Scharf***

That is something NIOSH is currently working on. There have been anecdotal examples of success and failure in respect to leading indicators

***Wurzelbacher***

There are some studies that I know of that have looked at, on a cross-sectional basis, organizations policies and procedures that are linked to lower losses. There are a few prospective ongoing studies; two of the top in my head are in Ohio and a large one in Canada.

**Final Key Points from Panelists**

- If people were to remember one thing about NIOSH, it should be \_\_\_\_\_.

***Harney***

A couple of things from the perspective of the organization, we really do value partnership activities and collaborations nationally and internationally. One of our core values is transparency, so we have a robust website that can be almost difficult to navigate due to the vast information, but we really value transparency so all of our information is out there. We are more than happy to consult, answer questions, provide technical assistance, and partner in any way that's possible.

***Wurzelbacher***

We are about research, not regulation. NIOSH is built on collaborations and we constantly look for ways to partner with other organizations.

***Scharf***

Everybody goes home safe at the end of the day or shift.