

## JOINT CENTRAL COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND SAFETY

May 23, 2008

**To:** Co-chairs of Hospital Joint Health & Safety Committees

**Subject:** **Follow-Up Report: Ultrasound Technologist / Sonographer Ergonomic Assessments.**

In November 2006 we requested your assistance in supporting a survey of Ultrasound technologists to gather additional data on occupational injuries for this group. We appreciate your support and wish to provide you with some additional information.

After the survey results came in we requested that Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers (OHCOW) conduct a detailed sonographer ergonomic site assessment at four sites in Ontario and solicit hospitals willing to volunteer to participate in the assessments.

Grey Bruce Health Services, Brockville General Hospital, Hawkesbury & District General Hospital and the Chatham Kent Health Alliance volunteered to be part of this pilot project. We wish to thank these hospitals for their participation.

These ergonomic assessments were conducted in a professional and open manner and all pilot hospitals have benefited from the knowledge gained through this assessment.

At Brockville General Hospital, for example, the ergonomic recommendations lead to a number of equipment modifications and workload management recommendations, including the hiring of an additional full-time ultrasound technologist. These changes will assist in the reduction of disabling, painful and costly work-related strain injuries.

In addition, we have made available on the OHA and OPSEU websites a summary of the recommendations arising out of the assessments done at these four sites, as well as a full copy of the Grey Bruce Health Services ergonomic assessment report, to give you some sense of the scope and extent of the assessment.

A summary of the recommendations was also presented in the summer 2007 OHA Health & Safety Bulletin.

The recommendations arising from the ergonomic assessment were very well received by the Grey Bruce Corporate OH&S Committee. The report was a key contributor to the subsequent approval of four (4) new ultrasound machines that will significantly improve the ergonomics and work flow for the staff. A further result of

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the report has been the development by a physiotherapist of individualized assessments and exercise programs for the sonographers to address areas of muscle imbalance identified in the report.

Further information may be obtained by contacting Charlene Rourke, Musculoskeletal Disability Prevention Coordinator in the Grey Bruce Health Services OH&S department. ([crouke@gbhs.on.ca](mailto:crouke@gbhs.on.ca)).

We encourage you to review this report and the recommendations and hope that they will be useful and informative in your own injury prevention activities

Yours truly,

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