

Occupational Health and Safety Workshop December 20, 2016

Organized by: Home Net Pakistan
Conducted by: Department of Community Health Sciences,
Aga Khan University, Karachi, Pakistan

Facilitators

*Dr Asaad Nafees
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Occupational Health and Safety Workshop

Introduction

The workshop on Occupational Health and Safety was conducted by the Department of Community Health Sciences, The Aga Khan University in coordination with Home Net Pakistan for Home Based Workers on December 20, 2016 at the Sales & Display Center, Karachi.

Objectives

The objectives of this workshop were:

1. To promote general and occupational health among home based workers
2. To raise awareness regarding general and specific occupational hazards in home based workers
3. To raise awareness about measures that can be employed for the prevention of various hazards
4. To equip home based workers with coping skills

Pedagogy and overall plan

For accomplishment of 1st objective, two sessions were conducted. One of the sessions was an interactive multimedia based general health & hygiene session, which was conducted to cover comprehensively most of the health related issues. Second session consisted of role play, in which health promotion was contextualized to home based work environment. For accomplishment of 2nd objective, an interactive session on general occupational hazards and preventive techniques was held. For accomplishment of 3rd objective, two sessions were conducted; one of the sessions was based on chart making activities in which every worker was required to make a sketch of preventive measures for their common hazards. This activity was then also declared as their home assignment. Second activity consisted of arranging flash cards in an order of hazard identification, unhealthy outcomes of hazard, preventive measures and outcome of preventive measures. For 4th objective, hands on practice was conducted in which workers were demonstrated skills of hand washing, appropriate standing & sitting positions, lifting of daily household heavy items, and stretching & relaxation. Each skill was then also performed by volunteer workers (For detail please refer Annexure 1: Workshop Schedule).

About 30 female Home Based workers participated in the workshop. They were domestic workers and from informal sector. Mean age was 31 years (19 - 48). 12 of workers were married, 15 were unmarried while 3 were widowed. Their work was mainly related to embroidery, stitching, jewelry making and domestic work. About 19 of the workers used to work in their own homes. About 19 of the workers said that their working area didn't have sufficient space. Common health issues were headache, backache, asthma and eye-sight weakness. The workers said that they learnt important health messages in the workshop and that they will also communicate the messages to other workers who are not present in the workshop.

Content

Workshop was started with the recitation from Holy Quran by a workshop participant. Then each participant introduced herself. Workshop was introduced to the participants by describing the schedule and objectives of the workshop. Norms were set by committing to limit our discussion to occupational health and safety.

Each participant was asked separately to list her wishes regarding occupational health and safety. The purpose of this activity was ice breaking with the participant, in order to ensure maximum participation. All the enlisted wishes were then summarized and discussed shortly. This activity also helped in clarifying scope of the workshop for participants as they were informed that concerns related to occupational health and safety will be discussed.

PowerPoint-based presentation was delivered in the interactive session conducted on general health and hygiene. It was a general and broad session designed to address general health related issues of the participants. Session was focused mainly on importance of health, healthy diet (including concept of food pyramid and balanced diet), personal hygiene and exercise; harmful effects of drug abuse; and important areas of mother and child health (including vaccination and breast-feeding). Content of the session mainly contained health promotive and preventive messages. Messages were conveyed mainly through pictures. At the end of session, queries of the participants regarding the session were answered.



Dr Yousaf describing importance of healthy diet to Home based workers

A group activity was conducted to emphasize hazard identification and preventive measures in home based workers. All the participants were divided into 5 groups. Each group was given 5-6 flash cards. Each flash card contained a picture which contained message related to hazard identification, unhealthy outcome of hazard, preventive measures and outcome of preventive measures. Each group was asked to arrange the flash cards in an order and make a story. Each group then described their perceived messages to all the participants. Flash cards were related to ventilation, mental stress, heat exhaustion and ergonomics.



Home outcomes of hazard based workers discussing arrangement of flash cards in an order of hazard identification, unhealthy and preventive



Home based workers describing hazards of wrong posture and positions of correct posture

An interactive session on general occupational hazards and preventive techniques was held. In the session, participants were informed about the basic concepts underlying hazard and risk. Participants were then asked to brainstorm about various types of general hazards present in any working environment. Various charts were shown containing pictures related to general hazards. Participants were then asked to name various hazards depicted in the charts. The hazards that were discussed include: general work place health and safety hazards, physical hazards, chemical hazards, biological hazards, psychosocial hazards and ergonomics related hazards.



Dr Natasha Shaukat describing general occupational health and safety

A hands-on practice session was conducted; in which workers were demonstrated various health and safety related skills. The demonstrated skills included hand washing, appropriate standing and sitting positions, lifting of heavy items (daily household items), and simple stretching and relaxation exercises. Each skill was then also demonstrated by a participant.



Dr Hasan Nawaz Tahir performing hands on practice session on handwashing

A session on specific occupational hazards and preventive measures was conducted in order to emphasize specific hazards in their working environment and some easy, cost-effective ways of prevention. Participants were asked to think about various unique hazards and health related factors specifically associated with the diverse environments of home based workers. In the session, each participant was provided with stationery to make a chart. Each participant was then asked to list important hazards in her individual working environment and on the chart. Once all the hazards were identified, each participant was asked to draw 3-5 simple diagrams to depict what preventive measures could be adopted after returning back to the work. Participants were requested to keep the chart handy at their workplace as a daily reminder to take care about their health and safety.



Dr Asaad Nafees describing occupation health and safety concerns specific to Home based workers

In order to contextualize health promotion to home based work environment, a role play was conducted. Three workers participated in acting of the role play. Scenario was planned in a way that initially a careless worker starts cleaning work in a slippery wet wash room. The worker was wearing inappropriate slippers. While working, she sees an unusual solution in the washroom. Instead of asking her employer about the nature of solution, she accidentally mixes it with the bleach. The new solution makes a small explosion and fumes cover up the entire washroom. She screams for help. Her companion worker, whose attitude is careful in prevention, rushes to help her. The careless worker is about to slip but fortunately she is supported by her careful worker. The careless worker is about to faint. She is supported to sit down in the chair. In the meanwhile, the companion careful worker informs their employer. The employer asks for details of the entire episode and discloses that the new solution was actually acid for cleaning flushes; which shouldn't be mixed with bleach. She also points out various other situations where the careless worker had shown irresponsible attitude. She agrees to pay for the treatment charges and both of them then arranges for a transport to shift the careless worker to the hospital.

Workshop Closure

The workshop closed with a summary of the entire content and two key messages by Dr Nafees; realizing significance of individual responsibility for health and safety during routine work, and passing on the key concepts learned in the workshop to fellow workers. All the workers were praised for sparing time and actively participating in the workshop. Feedback was also taken regarding their experience of attending the workshop.

Annexure -1

Occupational Health and Safety Workshop Department of Community Health Sciences, Aga Khan University

Venue: Sales & Display Center, Karachi
Date: December, 20, 2016

Workshop Schedule

Duration	Description	Facilitator
Introduction		
5 mins	Recitation from the Holy Quran	Participant
5 mins	Participant introductions	NS
5 mins	Introduction to the Workshop & Norm setting	NS
10 mins	Ice breaking activity	NS
Theme 1: General Health and Hygiene		
20 mins	General Health and hygiene	YA
30 mins	Group activity for occupational hazards	HN
Theme 2: Occupational Health & Safety		
20 mins	General occupational hazards and preventive measures	NS
10 mins	Hands on practice	HN
20 mins	Specific occupational hazards and preventive measures	AN
45 mins	Role Play	NS, YA, Participants
Conclusion		
10 mins	Take home message & closing remarks	AN
Total: 180 mins		

Mnemonics

AN: Dr Asaad Nafees

HN: Dr Hasan Nawaz Tahir

YA: Dr Yousaf Ali

NS: Dr Natasha Shaukat