

Home Healthcare Hazards and Solutions

Stats and Facts



FACTS

Risk #1: Patient Care Environment – Slips, trips and falls are the second most common cause of injury in a home healthcare setting. This includes injury to the client or to you – so utmost precautions should be taken to avoid both.

Risk #2: Infection Control – As a home healthcare worker, you are responsible for the safe use and disposal of all sharps equipment you use in the patient's home.

Risk #3: Patient Handling – One of the leading causes of injuries to patients and employees comes from the way patients are physically handled.

Risk #4: Pets and Animals – Animal bites and scratches are a risk unique to healthcare workers in the home setting. Bites may inflict significant injury and result in the need for surgical care. Scratches, tripping over pets and allergic reactions are other associated risks. Unless you know the animal well, avoid any contact with pets.

Risk #5: Documentation – Complete and accurate documentation is important for all home healthcare workers. Uniquely challenging circumstances may occur in a home healthcare setting, and it's important to never let negative or defensive emotions drive your documentation.

STATS

- In 2018, nationally, there were 49,040 reported injuries and illnesses among home health care aides (BLS, 2018a). Among the injury and illness cases, 43% were 45 years or older (BLS, 2018c).
- The most frequent injury type among home health care aides were strains, sprains, and tears, with an incidence rate of 205.6 injuries per 10,000 full-time workers (FTEs) and a prevalence of 36% (BLS, 2018g). Pain and soreness were also a frequent injury type, accounting for 26% of the reported cases and having an incidence rate of 111.0 injuries per 10,000 FTEs (BLS, 2018g). Bruises and contusions were reported at a rate of 32.3 injuries per 10,000 FTEs (BLS, 2018g). In 2018, 46% of the reported injuries and illnesses required 5 days or less away from work, while 26% required more than 30 days of time loss (BLS, 2018b).
- Injuries to healthcare workers accounted for 73 % of all nonfatal workplace injuries and illnesses due to violence in 2018.
- in 2018 the incidence rate of intentional injury for nonfatal cases involving

- days away from work in the health care and social assistance was 13.9% 10,000 full-time workers (1,050 cases) in local government, and 89.3 (4,850 cases) in state government. The all-worker incidence rate for cases involving days away from work for local government was 163.9 and for state government was 142.6.
- In 2018, workplace homicides in the private healthcare and social assistance industry accounted for 4 percent of the total workplace homicides. For total fatal cases, homicides to healthcare workers made up less than 1 % of the 5,250 workplace fatalities in 2018.
 - There were 156 workplace homicides to private healthcare workers, averaging about 20 each year. The most common assailant in workplace homicides to healthcare workers was a relative or domestic partner of the injured worker.