Workplace Health: A Picture of Occupational Health Provision in Wales

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Presentation

- Study background and aims
- Contributors
- Methods
- Results
- Recommendations
- Contact details for further information
Background to Research

• Commissioned by WAG Feb 2006
• Completed in August 2006
• Aims
  – To identify OH courses accessible to people in Wales
  – To map current OH service provision by employers in Wales
  – To identify independent OH service providers
Study Team

This study was undertaken as a collaboration between:

- **AWARD**: All Wales Alliance for Research and Development in Health and Social Care, School of Medicine, Swansea University

- **LEED**: Leadership Enterprise and Economic Development Unit, Cardiff Business School, Cardiff University

- **CHEE**: Centre for Health in Employment and the Environment, Department of Occupational Medicine, Bristol Royal Infirmary
Steering Team

- Christopher John Beadle, WAG
- Steve Coppell, HSE
- Chris Dolan, Institution of Occupational Safety and Health
- Matt Downton, WAG
- Lynda Spear, RCN, OH Forum Wales
- Susan Taylor, Senior Nurse, South East Wales
- Zoe Whale, Wales Centre for Health
Research Methods

1. Review of policy frameworks and relevant literature

2. Desk research to identify relevant OH training courses and independent OH service providers

3. Postal survey sent to:
   - All major public sector employers
   - A sample of private (including not-for-profit) sector employers

   *Non-responders were followed-up by telephone*
Results

Four Key Areas:
1. OH courses
2. Public sector OH provision
3. Private sector OH provision
4. Independent OH providers
1. OH Training Courses

The search, which focused on training leading to professionally recognised OH qualifications, identified very few courses easily accessible to people in Wales.
OH Courses in Wales

Cardiff University

• MSc/Diploma OH (Policy and Practice)
  – 2 yrs via on-line study (3 students in 2006)

• PGD/MSc Specialist Community Public health Nursing (OH)
  – NMC accredited, no 2006 OH stream due to lack of numbers (8 min)

Glamorgan University

• Diploma in OH (Nursing)
• Diploma in OH (Technicians)
  – first in the UK

• BSc Hons Specialist Community Public Health Nursing (OH)
  – To commence Sept 2007 (Pursuing NMC accreditation)

• MSc Specialist Community Public health Nursing (OH)
  – To commence Sept 2008 (Pursuing NMC accreditation)
Accessible courses

Chester University
• BSc (Hons) Specialist Practice in the Community (OHN)
• PGD Specialist Practice in the Community (OHN)
• MSc Specialist Practice in the community (OHN)
• Occupational Health Nursing (leading to SCPHN)

Manchester University (via distance learning)
• MSc/Advanced Diploma in Occupational Medicine (for Drs)
• MSc/Diploma in Occupational Hygiene
• Diploma in Occupational Medicine
• Medical Undergraduate Education in Occupational (& Environmental) Medicine
2. OH Provision in the Public Sector

78 organisations contacted:
  – Welsh Assembly Government
  – NHS Trusts
  – Local Health Boards
  – Local Authorities
  – National Public Health Service
  – Fire & Police Service
  – Tertiary Education
Response Rate

• 81% response rate: 63 respondents
• A total of 200,000+ employees
• All reported providing an OH service
Services Provided

• 30 out of 63 provide in-house OH services
• Of these, 14 are also able to provide an external service
• 26 contract-in an NHS organisation
• 7 contract outside the NHS
Continued

• Majority of services available 5 days a week
• 94 nurses employed in-house
  – *Only 41 of these were reported to hold an OH qualification*
• 37 doctors employed in house
  – 33 reported holding an OH qualification
• OH services provided…
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-employment medicals</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sickness/absence management</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counselling and other psychological support</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and safety advice, info and promotion</td>
<td>69%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health surveillance</td>
<td>68%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Workplace risk assessments for health</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vaccination for work purposes</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management of workplace incidents</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff training in health and safety</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physiotherapy</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (eg chiropody, health clinics)</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. OH Provision in the Private and Not-for-profit Sector

- Sample of 4,978 micro, small, medium and large organisations contacted
- 18% response rate: 907 respondents
  - 384 micro, 244 small, 213 medium, 66 large
- Total of 100,000+ employees
Services Provided

• 17% reported providing some OH services

• When analysed further only 6% offer more comprehensive OH services

• Size matters
  – Only 2% of micro-organisations reported providing OH services
OH Provision by Size

Size of organisation by number of employees:
- Micro (0-9)
- Small (10-49)
- Medium (50-249)
- Large (250+)

Provision of OH Services (%)
## OH Services Provided:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Total %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Workplace risk assessments</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H&amp;S advice, info &amp; promotion</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff training in H&amp;S</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sickness/absence management</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workplace incidents</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health surveillance</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-employment medicals</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counselling, psychological support</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vaccination</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physiotherapy</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Private Sector Continued

• OH service level and delivery varies greatly across sectors:
  – 94% of large production organisations provide some OH service
  – 14% of retail and hotel sector provide some OH service
  – Less than 5% of construction orgs deliver comprehensive OH services in a safety-critical industry

• How OH services are delivered:
  – Majority are contracted-out or delivered by H&S staff without professional OH qualifications
  – Private sector employers more likely to buy-in services from commercial OH providers
  – Only 2% of organisations employ healthcare professionals directly
  – Most services (58%) provided ‘on-demand’
4. Independent OH Service Providers

- Desk research identified independent OH providers in Wales
- Many operate on small-scale, local, and freelancing/contract basis
- But: there is no centralised or comprehensive database for providers of OH services in Wales
Recommendations
OH Training Courses

• Consider implications for future workforce planning for OH professionals
  – Under-provision of OH services
  – Under-qualified workforce
  – Under-subscription to OH courses
  – Filling the gaps (physiotherapists?)

• Explore ways of encouraging wider access to OH training
  – Courses for different entrant levels
  – Financial support for students

• Training and support for the professional development of OH staff
  (including those managing service provision)

• Accreditation issues
Public Sector OH Provision

• Find out why many health care professionals working in OH in Wales do not hold an OH qualification

• Investigate arrangements for out of hours OH provision for employees in the public sector
Private Sector OH Provision

• Research the barriers that prevent private companies from providing OH services and identify measures to overcome them
• Consider means of promoting the benefits of OH service provision to employers
• Promote existing support for companies through the HSE’s ‘Workplace Health’ hotline
Other Providers of OH Services

- Develop a nationwide directory of companies, organisations and individuals who provide OH services. Details to include contact information, services offered, professional qualifications and geographical coverage
  - Could explore the possibility of working with the Commercial OH Providers Association (COHPA), an OH trade body that is developing a UK database of OH providers
Other Issues Raised by the Research

• Include service quality, regulation and industry standards issues in future work.

• Some exceptions:
  – RCN Competencies for OH nurses and their employers
  – National Occupational Standards promoted by Wales Centre for Health working with Skills for Health

• Need for further research through forums of OH professionals, including workshop session today!
Further Information:

• AWARD website:
  – OH Wales full report
  – www.awardresearch.org.uk/reports.html

• RCN Forum stand:
  – OH Wales executive summary
  – AWARD info and contact details

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