

ABSTRACT

Title: The Study on the Development of Health Risk Assessment Tools/
Guidelines for Occupational Health Doctor

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Abstract:

Health risk assessment (HRA) is a method used by occupational and environmental health practitioners to assess and manage health risks in the workplace and the environment outside the workplace. This in turn can prevent, control and protect the workers and public from injuries and illnesses due to hazards exposure. HRA involves the integration of several disciplines such as public health, industrial hygiene, occupational health and environmental health. In certain circumstances, Occupational Health Doctor (OHD) needs to self-assess occupational health risk. The results of occupational HRA are very important to link the likelihood of a person getting an occupational disease with the hazard exposure in the workplace. There are key differences between HRA conducted by OHDs and other occupational safety and health practitioners. The focus of OHD is to assess the health risks of individual employees while other practitioners assess health risks based on the work environment and procedures. Environmental HRA due to effluent and air emissions from industry is one of the marginalized aspects in Malaysia. Employers through OHD should be given the responsibility to conduct environmental HRA to protect the public. However, there is no specific guideline on the method or tool for OHD to conduct occupational and environmental HRA. A study on the development of a practical occupational health and environmental HRA guidelines for occupational health practitioners was proposed. These guidelines focus on the assessing of health risks against biological, radiological and environmental agents. HRA of hazardous chemicals and ergonomic risk assessment have well established in Malaysia. Therefore, a chemical checklist and an ergonomic checklist were developed to complement and support the existing Chemical Health Risk Assessment (CHRA) guidelines and Ergonomic Risk Assessment (ERA) in Malaysia. This study provides the guidance on risk management considering the readiness of OHDs and other occupational health practitioners as well as the suitability of the current systems, guidelines and legislation. The research methodology was through literature review, quantitative and qualitative research. Through gap analysis, the draft guidelines were developed and validated through face and content validity involving experienced experts and OHDs. Subsequently, the training modules were developed. During the training among OHDs, HRA tools and risk checklists were tested for their effectiveness using text and video simulations studies. Based on the validation results, reflections and feedbacks from the training participants, the final drafts of the HRA guidelines, checklists and training modules were established.