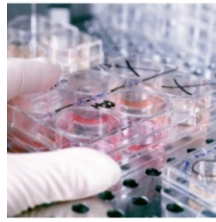




NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR
OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH

Division of the National Health Laboratory Service



MEDICAL SURVEILLANCE

Muzimkhulu Zungu

Muzimkhulu.zungu@nioh.nhls.ac.za



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
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National Institute for Occupational Health

- Unique institution in South Africa and Africa with a proud history of:
 - occupational health and safety innovation,
 - pioneering research history
 - service delivery
 - Reference centre providing specialised services
- Multidisciplinary composition team & intellectual independence

Context

- Basics of medical surveillance programme (MSP)
- MSP and the law
- MSP for health-care workers (HCWs)

Health Worker

Health workers: are people whose job it is to protect and improve the health of their communities.



What is Medical Surveillance

- A planned programme or periodic examination, which may include clinical examinations, biological monitoring or medical tests of employees by an **occupational health practitioner (OHP)** or in prescribed cases, by an **occupational medicine practitioner (OMP)**

OHS Act 85 of 1993

Cont...

- Medical Surveillance Programme:
 - Based on Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (HIRA)
 - Systematic examinations
 - Initial
 - Periodic
 - Special
 - Exit

AIMS OF MSP

- **Systematically** establish workers' health status where **exposed** to hazards.
- Establish need for **removal from or return to** a particular work environment.
- Ensure **appropriate** medical treatment.
- **Monitor effectiveness** prevention & control measures.
- **Not a tool** for discovering hazards i.e. **NOT HIRA**

Biological Monitoring

- Biological monitoring (BM) is the measurement of a substance or its metabolite in biological material in order to provide a quantitative estimate of its uptake into the body by all routes of exposures.
- BM is part of the MSP

Objective of BM as part of MSP

- to ensure that current or past exposure of worker is not harmful to his/her health by detecting potential excessive exposure before overt adverse health effects occur.

MSP and the law

- The Occupational Health and Safety Act (85 Of 1993)
- And its Regulations
 - Hazardous Biological Agents Regulation
 - Hazardous Chemical Substances Regulation
 - Noise Induced Hearing Loss Regulation

Routine clinical tests based on these regulations

Regulation	Exposure	System affected	Tests
HBA	Tuberculosis	Respiratory	Chest X-RAY GeneXPERT
HCS	Latex	Skin/ Respiratory	SPT / Lung Function Tests / Blood tests
NIHL	Noise	Ears	Audiometry

Hazardous Biological Agents Regulation

- Requires an employer after consultation with the health & safety committee (HSC) to ensure that employees are adequately informed & trained on:
 - Content & scope of the HBA regulation
 - The **NECESSITY FOR MSP**
- Employees exposed to HBA **MUST** be under MSP
- OHPs to submit to **HSC written protocols for abnormal results**

Responsibilities

- Employers must ensure that:
 - HIRA
 - MSP
 - Immunizations
 - PPE
 - Education and training
- HCWs must ensure that they:
 - Present at MSP
 - Adhere to policies & protocols of MSP
- OHPs & OMPs – draw appropriate MSP based on occupational risks profiles

MSP & workers' rights

- Medical practitioners & dual loyalties
- Law does not give employees **right to refuse** MSP but regulations say employer must fully inform workers
- Employee has **right to results** of MSP
- **Reporting** of occupational diseases to DoL
- Record keeping
- Right to exit medicals

Ethical guidelines for Practitioners

- South African Society of Occupational Health Nurses (SASOHN)
- South African Society of Occupational Medicine (SOSOM)
- International Code of Ethics for Occupational Health (ICOH)
- Importance of **confidentiality & written consent** in disclosing medical test results

A good MSP includes

- MSP undertaken by **mutual agreement** (unions, workers & employers)
- Before MSP:
 - HIRA
 - Prevention & control measures
 - MSP policy
 - Agreement on protocols with HSC
 - List of all test and testing intervals
 - Mutual agreement on criteria for disability
 - Definitions on abnormal results
- Employer commitment on confidentiality

Cont...

- No victimisation and or discrimination
- Free choice of health service provider
- Job security and anti-discrimination associated with rehabilitation programme
- Employer to fund occupational diseases
- Equitable access to health and social security benefits
- NB link between occupational diseases & living conditions e.g. TB
- Access to educational programmes

Acknowledgements

- NIOH-NHLS
- IHRG/UCT
- UP SHSPH
- SASOM

Ngiyabonga

Muzimkhulu.zungu@nioh.nhls.ac.za