

# NIOSH Healthcare and Social Assistance Program

May 2016

## What are our priorities?

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) Healthcare and Social Assistance Program works with partners in industry, labor, trade associations, professional organizations, and academia. The program focuses on these areas:

- Reducing non-fatal work-related injuries in priority healthcare and social assistance areas, such as injuries caused by patient lifting; violence; slips, trips, and falls; and use of sharps devices.
- Reducing work-related diseases and associated risk factors in healthcare and social assistance, including infectious, respiratory, dermal, and other diseases and health outcomes.

## What do we do?

- Conduct surveillance for injuries, diseases, and risk factors in healthcare and social assistance. Provide findings to the research community, employers, workers, and other stakeholders to guide research and prevention efforts.
- Develop and demonstrate effective methods of prevention in healthcare and social assistance. Make recommendations that can be used by professional healthcare organizations, employers, workers, and government agencies.
- Disseminate useful prevention strategies for all healthcare and social assistance workers. Reduce disparities through outreach to higher-risk, underserved and vulnerable healthcare and social assistance worker populations.
- Address knowledge gaps that are barriers to developing effective prevention strategies in healthcare and social assistance. Examples include determining risk factors for disease transmission and injury mechanisms.

## What have we accomplished?

- Inspired a National Public Radio (NPR) [investigative report](#) on safe patient handling that reached an audience of 1.8 million "All Things Considered" listeners. As a result, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) launched a new initiative to investigate safe patient handling among nurses in hospitals.
- Published a training course "[NIOSH Training for Nurses on Shift Work and Long Hours](#)," available for desktop and mobile devices on the NIOSH website. As of February 29, 2016, more than 1000 nurses and nurse managers completed the course, with most receiving continuing education credits.
- [Published a study](#) supporting the need for annual fit testing for users of N95 filtering face-piece respirators.
- Published training course "[Workplace Violence Prevention for Nurses](#)," available for desktop and mobile devices on the NIOSH website. As of January 31, 2016, 15,442 nurses had completed the modules, most receiving continuing education credits.
- Led an interdisciplinary group that [published a report](#) in a peer-reviewed journal identifying knowledge gaps and other challenges related to cleaning and disinfecting in healthcare.
- Developed OSHA-cobrand "[Hospital Respiratory Protection Toolkit](#)" to help hospital respirator program administrators. The toolkit emphasizes preventing the spread of infectious diseases to healthcare workers.

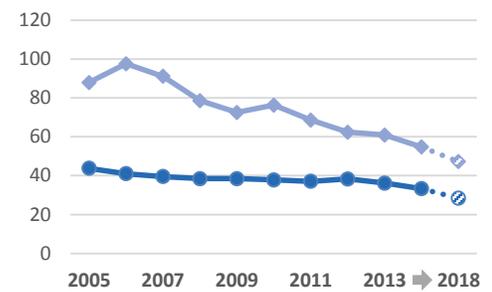
## What's next?

- Publish findings from a survey of private dental practices on extent of use of bloodborne pathogens exposure control plans, barriers to use, and strategies to overcome barriers.
- Publish findings from a survey of healthcare workers showing to what extent engineering controls are used for minimizing exposure to surgical smoke and anesthetic gases in hospitals and ambulatory care settings.
- Add a surveillance module to NIOSH's Occupational Health Safety Network (OHSN). It will allow participating hospitals to track sharps injuries and benchmark their performance.
- Release an update to the NIOSH Hazardous Drug list.

## At-A-Glance

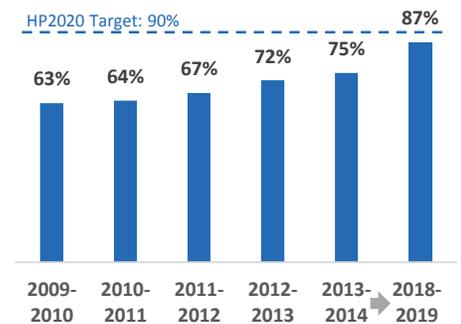
The Healthcare and Social Assistance Program's mission is to eliminate occupational diseases, injuries, and fatalities in industries providing human and veterinary healthcare and social assistance services across a broad range of settings such as hospitals, clinics, nursing and private homes, and child day care. This snapshot shows recent accomplishments and upcoming work.

Rate of work-related sprains and strains where moving the patient was the source of injury in Nursing homes and Hospitals (per 10,000 workers/year)



Source: NIOSH, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Estimated percent of healthcare personnel who received influenza vaccine



Source: CDC Internal Panel Survey and Healthy People 2020

### Publication Spotlight: Hospital Respiratory Protection Toolkit

