

What are our priorities?

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

- Mitigating the effects of suboptimal work organization characteristics such as scheduling, workload, sleep quality and duration, on outcomes such as stress, anxiety, fatigue, depression, burnout, suicide, and chronic illnesses.
- Preventing injuries from lifting, falls, sharp instruments, and a variety of physical hazards including radiation and noise.
- Interrupting work-related transmission of infectious diseases including those transmitted through aerosols, droplet sprays, direct and indirect contact, and sharps injuries.
- Minimizing exposure to hazardous drugs and chemicals, allergens, and other substances associated with risk for cancer, adverse reproductive outcomes, dermal diseases, and work-related asthma.
- Reducing injuries associated with violent acts, especially among home care workers and workers in non-standard work arrangements.

What do we do?

- Conduct surveillance for work-related deaths, injuries, diseases, and risk factors. Provide findings to the research community, employers, workers, and other stakeholders to guide research and prevention efforts.
- Address knowledge gaps and barriers to developing effective prevention strategies. Examples include determining risk factors for disease transmission and injury mechanisms.
- Develop and demonstrate effective methods of prevention. Make recommendations that

can be used by professional organizations, employers, workers, and government agencies.

- Disseminate useful prevention strategies for all HCSA workers. Reduce disparities through outreach to higher-risk, underserved, and vulnerable HCSA worker populations.
- Seek opportunities to make workers safer and healthier by addressing hazards without negatively affecting patient care.

What have we accomplished?

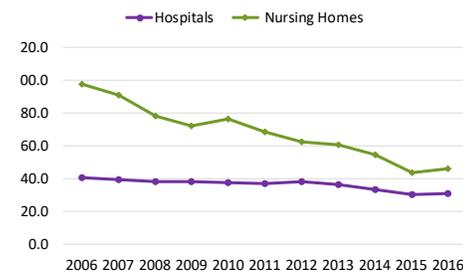
- Released a [position statement on nurse fatigue](#) with the American Academy of Nursing recognizing that safe nursing practice requires high quality sleep of adequate duration.
- Described an association between exposure to mold, dampness, construction materials, cleaning and disinfecting products, and tasks, and asthma and asthma-like symptoms among Veterans Administration Medical Center healthcare workers.
- Estimated the prevalence of [hearing loss](#) among noise-exposed U.S. workers within the HCSA sector.
- Pilot tested a bullying educational program for nursing students, "[Nurses Eat Their Young](#)", at five university campuses.
- Developed and reported a [new sampling and analytical method](#) for assessing exposure to quaternary ammonium compounds often used as disinfectants in healthcare settings.

What's next?

- Characterize the use of personal protective equipment among pregnant and non-pregnant nurses who administer antineoplastic drugs using data from the Nurses' Health Study 3.
- Describe respirator use practices for prominent hazards in healthcare settings, and differences in safety climate perception by individual and work characteristics using data from the [NIOSH Health and Safety Practices Survey of Healthcare Workers](#).
- Compare effectiveness of N95 filtering facepiece respirators versus surgical masks in preventing the incidence of influenza and other respiratory illnesses in a clinical trial among healthcare providers.
- Describe suicide mortality among U.S. veterinarians during 1979–2015 by sex, species specialization, and practice setting.

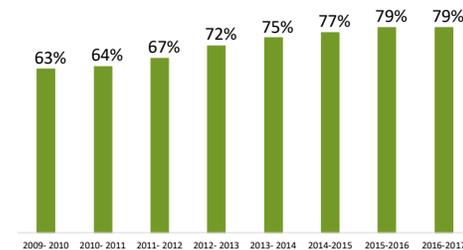
The Healthcare and Social Assistance Program's mission is to eliminate occupational diseases, injuries, and fatalities in industries providing human and veterinary healthcare and social assistance services across a broad range of settings such as hospitals, clinics, nursing and private homes, and child 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 (per 10,000 workers/year) in:



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

Estimated percent of healthcare personnel who received influenza vaccine



Source: CDC Internet Panel Survey

Position Statement on Nurse Fatigue



To learn more, visit
<https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/programs/hcsa/default.html>

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