Safety Professionals Should Be Prepared for Flu Season



A company's OHS program should ensure workers' *health* and safety'but sometimes the 'health' part of OHS gets short shrift.

For example, when we asked readers how concerned they were about a flu outbreak seriously impacting company operations this winter;

- 59% said they weren't worried at all
- 29% were a little worried
- 12% were very worried.

However, with flu season upon us, it's important to take steps to keep workers from getting sick and spreading it to their co-workers.

Sick workers impact the company's operations and its bottom line.

Researchers from Queen's University found that one-third of Canadian adults have a sore throat, a cold or the flu in any given month. Meanwhile, 83% of survey participants say they continued to go to work or school while experiencing symptoms of an influenza-like illness, meaning they then exposed their co-workers to the illness. And it costs employers twice as much in productivity losses for workers who come to work sick than for those who stay home.

So what can safety professionals do to protect workers from getting sick’ There are many simple steps you can take, such as encouraging workers who are sick to stay home and reminding workers who do come in to cough into a tissue or their elbow and not into their hands.

You can also encourage all workers to get a flu shot. And if you’re really ambitious, hold a flu clinic in your workplace to make it easy for workers to get vaccinated.

SafetyNowILT also has:

- A video on emergency preparedness
- A safety talk on eight ways to avoid catching and spreading the flu.

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