

Study Says Disabled Workers More Prone to Injury



Employers in Canada have a duty to accommodate disabled workers to the point of undue hardship. Making appropriate accommodations may not only comply with the law but also help protect disabled workers from injury on the job, says a new study.

The study, which was conducted by researchers at the Center for Injury Research and Policy of The Research Institute at Nationwide Children's Hospital and Ohio State University, compared non-occupational and occupational injuries among US workers with and without disabilities.

It found that workers with disabilities are significantly more likely to experience both non-occupational and occupational injuries than those without disabilities. Rates of occupational injuries:

- Workers with disabilities: 6.0 per 100 workers per year
- Workers without disabilities: 2.3 per 100 workers per year.

The study's co-author Huiyun Xiang, MD, PhD, MPH said, "The increase in occupational injuries to workers with disabilities found in our study shows the need for better accommodation and safety programs in the workplace and the need for a safer working environment."

In addition, regardless of disability status, falls and transportation were the two leading causes of both occupational and non-occupational injuries among workers studied. So taking steps to reduce the occurrence of fall- and transportation-related injuries among workers with disabilities will also benefit those without disabilities. For example, use this slips, trips and falls inspection checklist to identify fall hazards.

For articles and cases involving disabled workers and accommodations, check out the "Disabilities" topic page.