Workplace evaluation of an institution in the Inland Empire, CA suggests potential need for ergonomic awareness and intervention

Peter S. Soliman
Loma Linda University, USA

Ergonomics is the science of designing equipment and devices to fit the human body and its movements to better human interactions with these devices. Many devices and equipments that do not fit the human body and its movements result in musculoskeletal disorders (MSD) which account for many work-related injuries in employees. The purpose of this study is to evaluate a large institution in the Inland Empire which employs 3,668 people, of which 385 hold secretarial jobs, who are at high risk for MSD, to encourage an ergonomic intervention and awareness on proper workstation use. Research has shown the effectiveness of ergonomic intervention in the reduction of work-related MSD. In addition, we believe that increasing the comfort of the workplace will result in the increase in work efficiency.

Methods: Data was collected from 219 workstation evaluations from the years 2010 and 2011. These evaluations were completed by an Ergonomics specialist at the institution upon the request of an employee who reports pain or discomfort in their workstation. Occupation title, physical work requirements, time at current workstation, height, handedness, and gender were entered into an Excel sheet and analyzed.

Results: One hundred percent of employees spent the majority of their time interacting with devices such as a computer, phone, or writing device. Ninety-seven percent or 214/219 of the employees evaluated had MSD.

Conclusion: We recommend ergonomic intervention education programs for employees who hold secretarial jobs at this institution and elsewhere to potentially decrease the number of work-related injuries and to increase work efficiency.

Biography
Peter Soliman earned his Bachelor’s degree in Molecular and Cell Biology and Religious Studies at the University of California, Berkeley. He is currently a research assistant at the Loma Linda University School of Public Health.

pssoliman@gmail.com