PROPOSAL FOR AN R2P MEETING OF CONSTRUCTION ERGONOMICS

Considerable research has been done over the past 25 years on construction ergonomics. Numerous scientific papers have been published. International symposia have been held. Simple solutions publications have been published. Solutions have populated the Construction Solutions Database. The question confronting us is, given all the research and communications efforts, why are so few contractors implementing comprehensive ergonomics programs? Why do most contractors focus solely on stretching programs and functional capacity evaluation (pre-employment screening) as the solution to their musculoskeletal problems?

We propose a working meeting in St. Louis, MO at Washington University in October/November 2015 to gather a small group of about 30 researchers and practitioners to discuss this and identify various approaches to motivate contractors to implement more comprehensive programs. The wealth of experience gained by 25 years of research will inform the meeting as well as the real world experiences of the practitioners. The theme of the meeting will be “Take off your hardhat, Put on your thinking cap.” Topics will include:

* Creating demand for ergonomic interventions
  + Could we, for example, create videos of injured workers and use them to highlight contractor concerns about the shortage of skilled workers?
* How can we Make Ergo Easy?
  + Can we make information about interventions more accessible, easily searchable, perhaps through a mobile app?
* What are the best implementation strategies?
  + Should we promote cheaper solutions first? Those with the most evidence of advantages?
* What is the best dissemination strategy?
  + Should we target opinion leaders, early adopters? Should we focus on Gcs and get their help to flow down interventions to subs?
* How should we be evaluating ergonomic interventions?
  + Should we focus on production effects? ROI? How much evidence is needed to convince contractors to adopt interventions?
* Where should we do outreach?
  + Through trade journals? Webinars? Social media? Owners? Ergo intervention of the week email list?
* Is trialability a key factor in adoption?
  + Should we hire a mobile van to take ergonomic equipment to job sites for trials?

A few suggested projects:

* Buy Better Project (similar to Buy Quiet)
* Construction Ergonomics Adoption Agency (for orphan interventions)
* Ergo lapel pins for finding and fixing- one for each posture
* Sample contract language
* Get It Off The Floor Campaign (Turner already does this)
* Campaign to reduce manual materials handling (some companies have a 50 lb. limit)
* Integration of ergonomics into the planning process, particularly for materials delivery

Potential Attendee List

Eileen Betit, Charlotte Chang- CPWR

Brad Evanoff, Ann Marie Dale, Vicki Kaskutas- Wash U

Natalie Schwatka- Colorado

Steve Hecker, Jennifer Hess, Laurel Kincl- Oregon

Dan Anton- Spokane

Dave Rempel- UCSF

Tony Barsotti, Amme Standring- SafeBuild Alliance

Jack Dennerlein, Emily Speiler- Northeastern

Alberto Caban-Martinez- Miami

Brian Kleiner or TBN- VA Tech

Sang Choi- U Wisc.- Whitewater, Jim Borchert

Ben Amick, Dwayne Van Erd- IWH- Toronto

Peter Vi- Infrastructure S&H Ontario

Scott Schneider- LHSFNA

Steve Hudock- NIOSH

Other Union representatives, Industry reps, Insurance reps, Manufacturers