Do Dutch Workers Seek and Find Information on Occupational Safety and Health?

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1 Background & Aim

- Currently, little is known on workers' occupational safety and health (OSH) information needs and information seeking behaviour.
- Seeking and finding high-quality information and answers can facilitate workers to make correct decisions on their OSH issues, and, if needed, take action on actually improving OSH practice.

Aim: assessing the OSH information needs and seeking behaviour of Dutch workers.

Methods

- Random sample of 888 workers from a large business panel were sent an online questionnaire on their OSH information seeking behaviour in the last year.
- In total, 535 workers, presumably representative of the Dutch working population, returned the questionnaire (response rate = 60%).

Results Workers' OSH questions: Most workers have one or more OSH Workers 100% question annually N = 535•Most questions are on: - OSH risks (56%) OSH related legislation (52%) - Interventions to improve OSH (49%) Workers' information seeking is Workers with 71% Yes 29% No **influenced by:** (logistic regression) **OSH questions** n=380 n=155 Cognitions about benefits/costs solving the question (OR = 2.8, 95%CI 1.8-4.5) Negative emotions that accompany the question (OR = 1.8, 95%CI 1.1–3.0) Encouragement by the social environment **Workers** 42% Yes 58% No (OR = 1.8, 95%CI 1.0-3.0)seeking for n=159 n=221 **OSH** Workers' common information sources: information Websites found via Google (51%) OSH professionals in the company (37%) Barriers mentioned by workers for not **Workers finding** 50% Yes 50% No finding information and answers: all information to n=80 n=79 Difficulties with applying information to answer questions their specific situation or question (46%) Lack of time (18%)

Conclusions and recommendations

- 1. Most workers have OSH questions, but only about 40% seek information or advice on their questions.
- Motivating the group of workers not seeking for information or advice might further contribute in improving OSH.
- 2. Up to 50% of the OSH questions from the workers who do seek for information remain unanswered.
- Workers' information seeking skills or motivation, and the OSH knowledge infrastructure need improvement.
- Workers want tailored information of high quality they can easily find and apply, for example provided by independent (online) OSH expert advice facilities.