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# Strengthening the Occupational Health Expertise and Scientific Performance of Public Health Institution of Turkey



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# Occupational Health Surveillance and Workplace health Surveillance: Two Sides of a Coin.

B 1.3 ppt Workplace Surveillance





# Learning Objectives

1. have basic knowledge of Surveillance of the Workplace
2. have basic knowledge of the disciplines involved in Workplace Surveillance

# Workers' health surveillance

**Workers' health surveillance** is a generic term which covers procedures and investigations to assess workers' health in order to detect and identify (early) signs of abnormality.

The **main aim** is the prevention of occupational and work-related diseases and injuries.

The results of surveillance should be used to protect and promote the health of the individual, collective health at the workplace, and the health of the exposed working population.

Health assessment procedures **may include**, but are not limited to, medical examinations, biological monitoring, radiological examinations, questionnaires or a review of health records.

Preferably **the starting point** is a risk assessment at the workplace to identify a health hazard or risk.



# Workplace surveillance

## Surveillance of the working environment

Surveillance of the working environment is a generic term which includes the identification and evaluation of environmental factors which may affect workers' health.

It covers assessments of sanitary and occupational hygiene conditions, factors in the organization of work which may pose risks to the health of workers, collective and personal protective equipment, exposure of workers to hazardous agents and control systems designed to eliminate and reduce them.

From the standpoint of workers' health, the surveillance of the working environment may focus on, but not be limited to, ergonomics, accident and disease prevention, occupational hygiene in the workplace, work organization, and psychosocial factors in the workplace.



# Occupational hygiene

The definition used by IOHA is:

‘Occupational Hygiene is the discipline of anticipating, **recognizing, evaluating and controlling health hazards** in the working environment with the objective of protecting worker health and well-being and safeguarding the community at large.’

Occupational Hygiene has also been defined as the practice of identifying of hazardous agents; **chemical, physical and biological**. In the workplace that could cause disease or discomfort, evaluating the extent of the risk due to exposure to these hazardous agents, and the control of those risks to prevent ill-health in the long or short term.

# Occupational ergonomics

An applied science that studies the interaction between people and the work environment. It focuses on **matching the job to the worker** to ensure a healthy and productive worker.

## The **ergonomic principle**

A concept whereby the work to be carried out is organized and specified – and tools and equipment designed and used – in such a way as to be matched with the physical and mental characteristics and capacity of the worker.

## **Topics** covered:

- Musculoskeletal strain
- Physiological strain
- Information processing
- Nuisance through environmental factors





# Psychosocial work environment

The **content** of work and work demands, the **social relationships** at work, the **organization** of work and the work culture, which each can affect the mental and physical well-being of workers.

All these work aspects are sometimes referred to as workplace **stressors**, which may have cognitive, emotional or motivational effects on workers.

## **Stress** at work

Subjective feelings and physiological responses that result from the psychosocial work environment and put an individual in a position of being unable to cope or respond appropriately to demands being made upon him or her.

## **Stressor** at work

A condition or circumstance in a workplace (or other setting) that elicits a stress response from workers.



# Occupational safety

## Occupational safety

The maintenance of a work environment that is relatively free from actual or potential hazards that can injure employees.

## Accident

An unplanned event that results in harm to people, damage to property or loss to process.

Occupational accident

An accident related to work.

## Occupational injury

Death, any personal injury or disease resulting from an occupational accident.

# Multidisciplinarity

- A **discipline** is a domain of knowledge that stands alone (distinguishable from other domains) with its own community of experts and its own characteristics such as same goals, same concepts and same working methods.
- A **multidisciplinary approach** consists of actions jointly taken by several specialists from different disciplines for the same purpose.
- In the juxtadisciplinarity approach specialists work in parallel, without meeting each other.

# **Goal of workplace surveillance**

The main aim is the prevention of occupational and work-related diseases and injuries through control of the exposure to risks on the workplace.

The goal is not carrying out measurements and writing reports. These are only means to achieve the target.