

IMPLEMENTATION OF OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH SERVICES AMONG MANUFACTURING COMPANIES IN SELECTED PHILIPPINE ECONOMIC ZONES

Jehremias M. Florante, MD¹, Maria Revelyn B. Galura, RPh, MD¹, and Jasmin D.C. Rivera²

¹Occupational Health Officer, ²Research Analyst I
Occupational Safety and Health Center

Abstract

The OSHS, as amended, requires all workplaces in the private sector to establish OH services. The 2015/2016 ISLE revealed that there are manufacturing companies that still lack the required number of OH personnel and the conduct of OH services. Hence, it is the goal of this study to determine the level of implementation of Rule 1960 of the OSHS, and identify the factors in successfully carrying out the said Rule.

A cross-sectional study was conducted among selected manufacturing companies located in the different Philippine EZs selected through stratified sampling. Initial questionnaires were sent to the companies to be answered by their HR and OH personnel covering the company profile, number of its workers, number of OH personnel including their training, and budget of their implemented programs. Scheduled interviews were conducted to the same respondents on the implementation of OH services and on the company's perception on and management of OSH, safety culture and work environment activities, and priorities on various OSH aspects. Data gathered were analyzed using IBM-SPSS v24.0. Descriptive statistics including frequency distributions and percentages were measured.

Thirty out of 109 companies responded to participate in the study. Only 14% of the companies surveyed were found to be compliant to Rule 1960 of the OSHS. Most of their deficiencies include the conduct of TME (78%) and EME (61%), and medical surveillance (30%). There were OH programs that were not implemented particularly those belonging to the small-scale industries. All the companies that participated in this study allocated budget for their workers' health. However, it was noted that the assigned budget per worker is inversely proportional to the company size. Company's perception on and management of OSH, safety culture and work environment activities, and priorities on various OSH aspects were noted to be generally high regardless of its size and resources. Yet, companies consider profit over OSH.

There were manufacturing companies in the EZs included in this survey that have not applied the OH services as mandated by the OSHS. It was also found out that there was an incongruence between the OH concepts and implementation of necessary OH services and activities in the workplace to the priorities of the company's management.

An increase awareness and understanding on the implementation of OH services by OSH personnel and the management are necessary to fully carry out Rule 1960 of the OSHS. Increase capability building to all OSH personnel especially in the proper conduct of HIRAC.