

Social Services: Musculoskeletal Disorders are preventable and manageable

Musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) are prevalent in the social services sector and are likely to become more pressing among a predominantly female and ageing workforce, due to demographic trends, the shift towards home care and an increase of care needs.

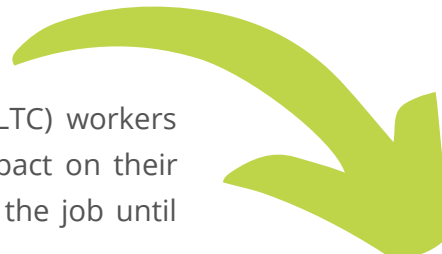


State of play:

- Almost 40% of Long Term Care (LTC) workers feel their work has a negative impact on their health and also feel unable to do the job until their 60;
- Prevalence of risks factors increase: ie +15 % in 5 years for repetitive hand and arm movements;
- Awkward postures (such as trunk flexion) are very prevalent;
- LTC workers less often feel very well informed about OSH than healthcare workers;
- Main Difficulties for addressing health and safety in the sector: Complexity of legal obligations (46%) and Lack of time or staff (41%).

Resources:

- Details and sources on the above information, are available in the presentations from our webinar, [here](#).
- [EU OSHA website](#), [dedicated campaign webpage](#) and [OIRA interactive risk assessment tool](#).
- [Framework Directive on safety and health of workers at work - ISO standard on manual handling of people](#) – [EU Directive on manual handling](#).
- New [EU strategic framework 2021-2027](#) and forthcoming research on OSH in health and social work activities and OSH overview of the health and care sector



How to prevent:

- Assess the risks regularly;
- Acknowledge existing resources and put in place actions based on general principles of prevention;
- Involve all actors and their representatives from top management to frontline carers and from all kinds of job positions, including through social dialogue;
- Raise awareness and train on MSD prevention
- Anticipate and manage change.