

Unsafe Actions and Unsafe Conditions in Hospital

A Description for the Cases Identification

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A. Introduction

- A hospital is a work place which actually has a lot of risks particularly for its inhabitants: patients, visitors, and workers. These risks mean any possibility in relation with current activity (process) inside, especially working activities done by the employees.
- The employees in this context are classified into two, they are: medics (doctors and paramedics) and non-medics (administration staff, technicians, maintenance staff, etc.).

B. Scope of Work Accidents

- In hospital, danger threatens the staff any time when they are using tools, machines, materials, equipment, or even when they are holding or doing nothing.
- The nothingness caused danger might be the staff when he has a personality walking activity (transporting), through hospital's corridor or ward, which usually is not in a proper distance.

- In practice, all activities done in a hospital, medics or non-medics, have dangerous risk. Accidents (due to the work) defined as something that happens unintentionally and unexpected which ruins all arranged process of a certain activity and produces losses, of human life and or materials.
- Accidents can decrease human wealthy of life (non-economic matters), in a range of injury, or highest level of physical defect; death.

- Work accidents happen because of two main precautions, they are unsafe actions and unsafe conditions. “Unsafe actions” are activities the employees are doing which intend to and cause danger.
- This notion supported with alot of factors such as: (1) the lack of the knowledge and skills, (2) subtle physical disability, (3) fatigue, (4) attitude and behavior towards the work.

- “Unsafe conditions” are situations in working environment which intend to and cause danger. These include following factors: (1) machines, equipment, materials, and tools, (2) working place, (3) working process, (4) working nature, (5) working method.
- Both unsafe actions and conditions and blame hospital management as preliminary effects. So, management review should be examined before deciding further actions.

- Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) development at a hospital work place established to lead: **(1)** hospital needs to take necessary actions, to get nilo level of work accidents and illnesses, **(2)** achievement of OSH is nil level of work accidents and illnesses, OSH implementation process, and provide the proper human resources, **(3)** priority monitoring emphasizing to reduce work accident cases, and to increase OSH level and to advise human resources in the context of checklist programmed.

C. Some Cases Work Accidents

- The discussion aims at supposing that these cases would behave as warning schemes for anyone involving in a hospital work site, in order to arrange concrete steps to avoid the high intention of the same accidents happen.
- These cases are taken while he is working as an internal auditor at the hospital for about three years.

1. First Case: head hits separating window glass at guest room

- On this case, it started when an administration staff walked in rush into exit door at front of the administration building. Because he walked without notice, had burdens in her thought and in powerless body, he could not differ which one was the door and the window carefully.
- We need to note that the design of front building window is in a gigantic model (almost looks like a door) using transparent-glass. He walked very quickly crashed the window and made his forehead blood, he broke the glass actually.

- Analysis: Potential precautions absolutely defined as “unsafe condition”, i.e. a gigantic size and door-look window. In reserve, the door, as well, made of glasses and looks like the window. There is no barriers on the windows or the door no literate warning, and the curtain is inclined.
- Supposed that it has a highly emergency situation, fire for instance, and all insiders panicky rush to leave the building away, possibly crashing glass cases will take place.

- Recommendation: It should be included on a building design a facility supporting human safety. A gigantic size of transparent-glass should be clearly shown using blatant words or warning.
- The designer convinces us that the use of big size window glasses absorbs as effective the light as we expect, however, he should consider the possible danger of losses or even causing death.

2. Second case: washing machine cuts the finger

- It happened chronologically when an employee operated a working washing machine. He saw that it had not fully worked as usual and produced squeak sounds. Spontaneously he opened it without turning off the machine first, the gear system.
- He examined and held the broken component and neglected the fact that. It is a kind of complicated gear system. When he was stirring the component, two fingers of his right hands (middle and ring fingers) were inside of stirring gear and clamped. He pulled out his hands in force and cut both of them a half in each.

- Analysis: This happened with precaution matters of “unsafe action”, that was the worker’s action to break the established work rules in fixed procedural steps intentionally.
- He thinks that he is familiar with and experience enough in it and there is no monitoring or any sanctions for breaking the fixed work procedures as well as showing that the provider does not care about operational of that work units.

- Recommendation: It is a must for employees to obey the rules, especially Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) and provider should monitor its implementation. The obedient and monitoring of SOP should be in strict to avoid any chance to accidents taking place and losses.
- Rules are not just written matters; they should be practiced consistently by means of a strict sanction against the rule breaker.

3. Third case: poisonous animal stink the workers

- The case happened when cleaning and gardening work unit at the hospital cut the branches and twigs of a big tree. A lot of caterpillars occupy it for seasons. Two workers climb it to cut those branches and twigs.
- After while, they feel hot and itchy at their hands, legs, body, and face. Then, they descended immediately. The first phenomenon on many parts of their body followed by swollen. They feel itchy so much and scratch using hand's fingers causing chafed and poignant.

- Analysis: This accident happened because potential precaution of “unsafe action” and “unsafe condition”, or “combination” of both. Unsafe action show that two workers who climb a tree which already known about its poisonous endemic place.
- Unsafe condition show that work place conditions potentially causing danger, in this case biological danger. They have mean through about apply Personal Protecting Devices (PPD).

- Recommendation: **(1)** safety and health manager should respond all problem concerning with risky work immediately and provide proper protection to the worker, **(2)** give a proper explanation about any chance of risky work and provide PPD for the workers, **(3)** monitoring of all project board on written rules containing implementation guidelines and SOP, **(4)** cleaning and gardening service workers usually abandon their rights of proper protection.

4. Fourth case: slip away in front of the bathroom

- When the patient or his companion who has finished using the toilet, slipped and fell down in front of it, because its floor is wet and slippery (the classic problem). The floor is white in color, its door mat is wet and watery and water drops in a certain area. Slipped case without falling down is very often to take place.

- Analysis: This accident potentially occurred because of “unsafe condition”. The floor is white, containing water spread in a large area, the door mat does not function as it should be, there is no warning at all, and there is no concrete action periodically controlled and dried the floor, these are kinds of complex precautions.

- Recommendation: The cleanliness and readiness of service (even for Class III/economic class) should be as a main and planned program. All staff must aware of their rights and responsibility.
- The chief of work unit is responsible for field problem to maintain supervision mechanism in regular and coordinated circumstances. He should have a checklist of room's condition and its contents and use it in proper.

The followings are some example of potential work accidents on the units in hospital:

1. Research Unit and Laboratory

Unsafe actions: (a) position and motion of analyst, (b) laboratory work procedures, (c) personal protection devices.

Unsafe conditions: (a) laboratory facilities mainly glasses, (b) dangerous essence usage, (c) chemical usage, (d) the noise.

2. Washing and Ironing

Unsafe actions: (a) washing and ironing activitiy, (b) washing and ironing procedures, particularly material transferring.

Unsafe conditions: (a) electrical wash and iron machine, (b) temperature and humidity of the room.

3. Pantry and Kitchen

Unsafe actions: (a) activity washing, sorting, compounding, cooking, dividing, and processing raw material to be a product, (b) food serving working procedures.

Unsafe conditions: (a) all physical condition involving all factors, (b) the usage of all tools and machines in processing food, (c) dangerous material usage.

4. Engineering and Technical Workshop

Unsafe actions: (a) activity of all workshop job, (b) transferring materials and products, (c) Workshop working procedures, (d) facility maintenance procedures.

Unsafe conditions: (a) the usage of any dangerous jigs and fixtures, (b) the usage of powerfull machine and chemical, (c) all physical condition.

5. Patient Care (Polyclinic and Continual Care)

Unsafe actions: (a) all of patient treatment activity, (b) distributing materials, tools and facility for the patients, (c) patient treatment work procedures.

Unsafe conditions: (a) medical aids construction, machines, tools or equipment, (b) all physical condition involving all factors.

6. Medical Record and Administration office

Unsafe actions: (a) operating office machines activity, (b) transferring material activity, (c) office working procedure.

Unsafe conditions: (a) dimension of tools and machines, (b) all physical condition involving all factors, (c) signs of activities and facilities.

D. The Substance of Management Point

- The discussion, reveals, many things concerning with a hospital work place, its accident cases and identifications of its work units. Accident takes place because of “unsafe actions”, “unsafe conditions”, or combination.
- The previous examples should be examined to find out the substance and to reassert that a hospital is a work place where we can obtain potential dangerous such as:

1. Accidents of medics or non-medics activity may happen to patients, visitors, or hospital officers, partially or together at once.
2. Unsafe actions, unsafe conditions, or combination of both cause dangerous accident. Other supporting evidences are human errors, machines, tools, equipment, and work environment.
3. The location of accidents are not only potentially at work unit, using various tools, machines, equipment, and human and its facilities.

4. Degree of damage can be shocked (not hurting), injury, physical disability, or may be the most total degree, coming death.
5. Accidents viewed from the agents are classified into four: physical, biological, chemical, and ergonomical.
6. Work accident occure, because in fact, administration system of OSH does not established or property practiced in the hospital.

7. All work accidents absolutely cause losses, economic (investment) or non-economic (life and safety). They "hit" the hospital back, and decrease productivity.
8. Work accidents are kinds of weak protection system phenomenon to realize the danger. These phenomenon were born from management system. Hospital manager is the most responsible of all cases.

E. Closing

- Cases identification above describe that work accidents have a lot of precaution matters and as causing-result rules covering 'hardware and software' (all aspects) of the institution.
- Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) management is one of the many solutions for hospital management to have work safe and healthy environment, free from work accidents and occupational disease.



“Thank you very much!”