Workplace Health and Safety Regulations: Impact of Enforcement and Consultation on Workers Compensation

Claims Rates in Washington State with Two Years of Follow-up

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Summary

Methods: This study replicates the 2001 SHARP study (Technical Report 70-1-2001) of the impact of enforcement and consultation on workers compensation claims rates in Washington State for an additional year (2001). The initial study design was divided into three periods: pre-study period (SFY1997 and SFY 1998), baseline period (SFY 1999), and measurement period (SFY 2000). This study extends the measurement period to SFY 2001. Multivariate modeling using a Poisson approach with Generalized Estimating Equations (GEE) was used to examine the effect of pre-intervention claims rate, size, fixed-non-fixed worksites, consultation and enforcement activity, programmed versus nonprogrammed inspections had on subsequent State Fund workers compensation claims rates.

Results: After two years, accounts with enforcement activities in fixed worksites had a statistically significant decrease in compensable claims rates, 22.7% greater decrease than those with no WISHA activity. Although there was a 10.7% decrease with consultation, it was not statistically significant. Results were similar for programmed and unprogrammed inspections. There were no statistically significant findings for the smaller non-fixed accounts.