

Attachment H:

Letter of Support from OHBWC



**Bureau of Workers'
Compensation**

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Governor John R. Kasich
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October 3, 2012

Steve Wurzelbacher, Ph.D.
NIOSH
4676 Columbia Parkway
Cincinnati, OH 45226

Dear Dr. Wurzelbacher,

This letter confirms the Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation (OBWC) support of the NIOSH proposed project entitled "Effect of a Wellness Grant on Worker Health and Safety". Ohio is one of four states in the nation that manages a single-payer workers' compensation (WC) system and has a strong desire to work with NIOSH on this project.

The objectives of this project are to:

- (1) Investigate the costs/benefits associated with comprehensive, coordinated, work-based health protection/health promotion interventions in a variety of industries;
- (2) better understand how the work environment and safety culture influence the effectiveness of employee health promotion programs; and
- (3) identify opportunities for workplace interventions to prevent, control, recognize and manage common chronic conditions.

OBWC recently established a Workplace Wellness Grant Program that requires an assessment of each employer's safety and health management systems and annual reporting of aggregated employee health data. This data will be shared with NIOSH researchers to help determine how employee wellness programs can be successfully integrated with safety and health management systems to reduce workers' compensation claims frequency and severity and positively impact employee health outcomes within various industries.

The OBWC understands that these objectives will be pursued by conducting scientific research using data from the BWC Workplace Wellness Grant Program to holistically investigate organizational and worker health and safety outcomes associated with emerging employee health issues (i.e. trends related to aging workforce, obesity, diabetes, respiratory health, depression and stress) and identifying gaps in knowledge in the health protection/health promotion field.

OBWC is very supportive of the project and looks forward to collaborating with NIOSH on this important research.

Sincerely,

Ibraheem (Abe) Al-Tarawneh
Superintendent of OBWC Division of Safety & Hygiene