A descriptive analysis of work related accident data reported to the THOR-GP reporting scheme between 2006-09 and a comparison with RIDDOR

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ABSTRACT

Background: Accidents and injuries at work are commonplace. In order to prevent injuries and/or recurrences of accidents in the workplace, it is important to develop accurate reporting schemes to analyse the aetiology and factors that predispose them. Changes can then be implemented to help promote a safer working environment.

Methods: A descriptive analysis was carried out on work-related injury data collected by general practitioners (GPs) reporting to The Health and Occupational Research Network of General Practitioners (THOR-GP) between 1st April 2006 and 31st March 2010. The data was categorised into age, gender, industry, occupation, site of injury, kind of accident, nature of injury and onward referral. These cases were also subdivided into severity of injury and hence cases that should be reported under the Reporting of Injuries Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR). Proportional analysis was used in the analysis of the THOR-GP data and in the comparison between the THOR-GP and RIDDOR data collecting schemes.

Results: The majority of injuries reported to THOR-GP were musculoskeletal in nature (81%), and the most common site of injury was the torso (32%). Injuries occurred most commonly in males (74%), and the most frequent age range was 35-44 years (25.2%). The most frequent occupations of individuals reporting injuries were the elementary and skilled trade occupations (25.7% and 25.1% respectively). The industrial classifications with the greatest proportions of reported cases were manufacturing (20%) and then construction (15%). The most common kind of accident occurred while handling, lifting or carrying (28.9%) and the nature of injury was most likely to be sprains or strains (47%). The majority of cases reported to THOR-GP were in the ‘over 3 day injury’ category (56%). When using proportional analysis to compare THOR-GP and RIDDOR injury statistics, areas of under-reporting to RIDDOR emerged.

Conclusion: THOR-GP is a useful GP reporting scheme for work-related injuries and should be regarded as an important adjunct to work-related injury data already collected under the THOR network.