Factors affecting the ability of hospital managers in the Pennine Acute Trust carrying out risk assessments on employees

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ABSTRACT

Risk assessment is enshrined in UK legislation and is mandatory in certain areas of work. There are studies that examine whether risk assessments are being performed but little information is captured on the barriers that the person doing the risk assessment faces. Risk assessments are often recommended in occupational health reports and the author has had informal feedback suggesting difficulties being experienced by those conducting these on employees.

This study looks at the opinions of a stratified sample of managers in the Pennine Acute Trust and seeks to clarify their perceptions of the barriers they face and how difficult they have found a particular type of risk assessment. In particular the study focuses on risk assessments performed on employees.

A representative sample of 200 individuals was chosen with 57 respondents completing an online survey reporting their perceptions of barriers they face when doing risk assessments on employees. Less than half (23/57) respondents claimed to be performing risk assessments on employees.

The results show that undertaking this study is difficult due to problems of accurate targeting of a representative sample, but nevertheless gives an indication of potential barriers and areas of the risk assessment process which might be proving to be difficult for managers. The study points towards lack of time, training and role awareness as being the main perceived barriers.

The study could be used to target risk assessment training in terms of the content and staff group. The study lends itself as a platform for more focused research into the perceived risk assessment barriers, when such an activity is performed on employees.