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BODY MAPPING

'Body Mapping' is an aid to identifying health problems being encountered in the workplace. It was first developed, and has been successfully used in Canada by the Trade Unions, Researchers and Academics, and was first used in the Casino Industry.

Workers 'map' the part of the body where they are having problems and patterns and trends in ill health can be identified

Objective

The purpose of this paper is to provide information on 'body mapping' and to encourage occupational health nurses and other professionals to support this initiative by providing guidance and advice on the interpretation of results. Body mapping may also be used as a research tool by professionals to help them identify potential workplace health problems.

Method

The paper will outline the process of body mapping and introduce 'hazard' and 'my world' mapping. It will also highlight the need for the process to be managed and the results analysed, to ensure the validity of the findings. Case studies will be used to demonstrate how it has been successfully used.

Conclusion

Body mapping is an effective way of gathering information about health problems and is a form of 'Participatory Action Research' (PAR) The primary goal of PAR is to improve working conditions and encourage workers to take part in this process.

In order for body mapping to be successful the process must be managed, and workers will need to be given guidance and support by occupational health professionals, and the results properly analysed.