

The social security health screening program in Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

Health screening can serve as an effective prevention against non-communicable diseases. Malaysia is facing an epidemic of non-communicable diseases, more so as the working population is aging. This is compounded by the sedentary lifestyle and poor dietary habit that accompanies the economic development of the country. In the year 2013, the Social Security Organization of Malaysia had launched a free health screening program for Malaysian employees insured by the national social security system. The program was made possible through a voucher system, offered free to all employees' insured by the organization as they reach the age of 40 years old. Four years after the program was started, the usage trend of the free health screening program was far from desirable. A total of 2.6 million employees are eligible for the program; where only about 20% of usage recorded throughout the country. Regardless, the program provided an insight on the health status of nearly 500,000 workers in the country which raises the alarm bells on the outlook of employees' health in the near future. This paper will discuss the impact of non-communicable diseases among workers in Malaysia, as seen through the lens of the Social Security Organization. It will also discuss the challenges and the expectation of a mass health screening program via a public service organization. The findings of the health screening program will also be discussed to reflect the state of health of the working population in a developing country such as Malaysia.

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Taking a holistic view of health and safety of the working population

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ABSTRACT

The belief that the health of the individual affects his work and his work affects his health seems intuitive and sensible. It is a concept readily accepted by employers and acted upon, to varying extents, through programmes that promote work place safety and health. Yet, the conventional perspective on the workplace and its relationship to the health of the worker is too narrow and simplistic. The individual's work, health, safety and well-being interact in a highly complex manner. Existing programmes are limited in their effectiveness because they are fragmented and in silos. There needs to be a paradigm shift to a holistic view of workplace safety, health and well-being, accompanied by new models for workplace safety and health management.