

Wisconsin Workers' Compensation Dashboard

The Challenge

Workers' Compensation (WC) data are a vital information source for occupational health surveillance, yet these data are not always available to occupational health surveillance programs or reported in ways that fully meet programs' and partners' needs. In Wisconsin, several entities have traditionally been involved in the collection, reporting and analysis of WC data: the Department of Workforce Development (DWD) collects and owns the data, the Bureau of Labor Statistics program at the Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene (WSLH) historically summarized the data into static reports, and the Department of Health Services (DHS) Occupational Health and Safety Surveillance Program (OH program) accessed the data for in-depth analyses. While this arrangement was collegial and functional, it provided limited access to the data for other constituencies (policymakers, health and safety professionals, local public health, labor and industry). In addition, the traditional arrangement was no longer optimally meeting all partner agencies' needs or making best use of their respective skills and resources.

The Response

Wisconsin's OH program proposed to its partner agencies the creation of a public-facing Workers' Compensation Dashboard. Partners were generally enthusiastic about the idea and appreciated both the added functionality and the fact that the OH program was willing to take on some work that had previously been the responsibility of other agencies. Both DWD and DHS leadership were engaged to ensure that both agencies' data needs would be met, privacy standards secured, and that the change in reporting was consistently and adequately communicated to the public.

The Impact

The resulting dashboard allows multiple ways for users to engage the data: comparing overall claim count by year, demographics, and payment status; by body part, nature of injury and cause of injury; visualizing claim rate; trend by industry and occupation; as well as claim distribution at detail industry and occupation levels. Although the dashboard has only been online for a few months, it is our most popular page (~50% of the visitors access this page), including over a thousand unique visitors.

The process of securing inter-agency agreement for the dashboard raised the profile of the OH program within DHS and DWD and deepened ties across the partnering agencies. The dashboard has already been shown to have added utility for all three agencies, as well as others. The OH program has highlighted its utility for public health leadership, members of the media, the state's occupational health nurses association, and local and tribal health departments. It also serves as an internal reference point for the OH team to quickly access information on specific types of injury claims, such as those related to heat prostration or slips, trips and falls.

[The dashboard](#) will be updated annually in the fall. It is available under the "Dashboards" section of the Wisconsin Occupational Health [Data and Publications page](#). Questions? Contact DHSOccHealth@dhs.wi.gov.