

Workers' Compensation Spring Conference

April 16, 2025



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PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The 2025 Workers' Compensation Conference brings together Iowa hospital human resources, safety and occupational professionals interested in learning more about safety in the work environment.

PROGRAM AGENDA

9 a.m. Welcome

9:10 a.m. Preventing Slip and Fall Injuries

Craig Fink, Loss Control Consultant, RAS, Sioux Falls, South Dakota

Slip and fall incidents are prevalent and a significant source of workers' compensation claims and injuries. In this session, attendees will learn practical strategies to prevent such incidents. Fink brings extensive safety expertise across a variety of industries, offering practical solutions to enhance safety measures and reduce the likelihood of slip and fall injuries.

Learning objectives:

- Discuss the 10 best practices for slips, trips and fall prevention
- Explore common causes of slips, falls and trips in the workplace
- Review slip, trip and fall trends

10 a.m. Workers' Compensation Case Studies

Jo Ellen Whitney and Joni Ploeger, Dentons Davis Brown, Des Moines

This session will focus on workers' compensation law and review health care case studies.

Learning objectives:

- Examine real-world workers' compensation case studies
- Identify recent workers' compensation legal changes
- Resolve common workers' compensation problems facing health care today

11 a.m. Break

11:15 a.m. Managing Caregiver Burnout and Compassion Fatigue in Health Care

Elizabeth Kain, Loss Control Consultant, Ergonomic Specialist, AssuredPartners, West Des Moines

With a special focus on health care providers, this program teaches about the signs and symptoms of stress, the effect stress has on organizations and how to help employees effectively manage stress.

Learning objectives:

- Identify the effects of stress
- Learn coping methods using the four A's
- Recognize workplace stressors

Noon Lunch and Spotlight Awards

1:30 p.m. **Tornado Response and Recovery: Lessons from the Greenfield EF4 Tornado**

Stephanie Claussen, Director of Public Health and Emergency Preparedness Coordinator, Adair County Health System, Greenfield

This session provides an overview of the emergency response and recovery efforts at a critical access hospital directly affected by the Greenfield EF4 tornado. Participants will learn about the challenges faced, coordination efforts, and key takeaways for improving preparedness and resilience in rural health care settings.

Learning objectives:

- Analyze lessons learned to enhance future preparedness and recovery plans
- Identify strategies for effective communication and resource management during a disaster
- Understand the role of an emergency preparedness liaison in coordinating response efforts

2:30 p.m. **I'll Handle That (Patient)! Best Practices in Patient Handling in Health Care**

Kelly Marshall, Account Risk Manager, RAS, Sioux Falls, South Dakota

Injuries among health care workers account for over 20% of workplace injuries annually. Health care employees also experience seven times the national rate of musculoskeletal injuries compared with other industries. This presentation will outline the most-significant risks for health care employees and provide easy tips to reduce strain injuries in workplaces.

Learning objectives:

- Discuss accommodations and return-to-work strategies for injured health care workers
- Explore best injury-prevention practices to reduce exposure to strain injuries related to patient-handling incidents
- Identify common causes of strain injuries among health care workers
- Review safe lifting techniques and proper body mechanics for common patient-handling scenarios

3:30 p.m. **Adjourn**

SPEAKERS

Stephanie Claussen has worked for Adair County Health System in public health for over 16 years, with over 14 years of emergency preparedness planning experience and working with local and regional preparedness coalitions, such as the Local Emergency Planning Committee. Claussen is the chair of the Central Iowa Healthcare Coalition.

Craig Fink is a loss-control consultant at RAS. Fink has over 25 years of experience as a safety professional in the transportation, agriculture and manufacturing industries. His background in compliance and safety has led Fink to focus on safety behaviors and injury prevention. Identifying goals and helping employers think strategically about safety are priorities that he's eager to bring to the forefront of the workers' compensation world.

Elizabeth Kain is a board-certified occupational therapist who majored in health sciences at the University of Nebraska. Kain received her master's in occupational therapy from the University of North Dakota. She specializes in task analysis, workplace violence prevention, safe patient handling, ergonomics and job modification and adaptation. She is a member of the Iowa Occupational Therapy Association and the American Occupational Therapy Association.

Tosha Hammer has over 16 years of experience as a physical therapist for the Veterans Association in various settings, from acute care and intensive care to outpatient and rehabilitation. Hammer has been VA Central Iowa Health Care System's safe patient-handling and mobility program manager for the last seven years. She is also the National Therapy/Mobility Technical Advisory Group co-chair. In addition, Hammer has led, planned and served as a faculty member for numerous national safe patient-handling and mobility program presentations, and therapy and program manager conferences.

Tony Hilton, DrPH, has been the safe patient handling and mobility national program manager for the Veterans Health Administration in Washington, D.C. Dr. Hilton has been a physical medicine and rehabilitation nurse leader, family practice nurse practitioner, public health consultant and program manager at several health care facilities. "The Federal Practitioner Journal" published her research findings in emergency preparedness in California's Veterans Health Administration community-based clinics. She has experience in leadership development, palliative care, end-of-life care planning and ethics, medical case management, long-term mechanical ventilation in the community care setting and home health care for high-risk and technology-dependent patients.

Kelly Marshall, M.S., OTR/L, CEES, started her career in occupational therapy in inpatient and outpatient rehabilitation. While working for large health care organizations, Marshall gained experience in inpatient and outpatient rehabilitation, home health

care, occupational medicine, pediatrics and ergonomics. She joined RAS in 2011, where she provided job analysis, ergonomics and safety services to companies to help reduce their risk of loss related to musculoskeletal injuries.

Joni Ploeger has been practicing since 2012, mainly in workers' compensation defense, employment law defense and general insurance litigation defense. Ploeger has represented and worked with employers, insurers, self-insureds and third-party administrators in their workers' compensation and employment matters. She represents clients in many industries, including health care, manufacturing, food production and construction. Ploeger is a shareholder at Dentons Davis Brown and started her career at Cutler Law Firm after graduating from Drake University.

Jo Ellen Whitney is a senior shareholder of Dentons Davis Brown and practices primarily in employment and health law. As the chair of the firm's employment and labor relations department, Whitney brings over 20 years of practical experience to business planning, discipline and termination issues for employers. She focuses on privacy and confidentiality issues in health law, including medical staffing, credentialing, privileging, consent and risk analysis for hospitals, clinics, physician practices and long-term care facilities. Whitney frequently provides clients with on-site training for all levels of employees and is a sought-after presenter about labor and health law issues.

REGISTRATION

Register online at www.ihaonline.org. This event is free and exclusive to IHA members.

PROGRAM LOCATION

IHA Conference Center, 100 E. Grand Ave., Des Moines.

- If you have dietary restrictions or allergies, email iharegistration@ihaonline.org.
- Dress for the conference is business casual. Layered clothing is recommended for your comfort.

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