

# 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**

*Kelly Marshall, Account Risk Manager, 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 effective strategies to prevent such incidents. Marshall brings extensive occupational therapy and ergonomics expertise, 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. Virtual Safe Patient Handling/Preventing Patient Handling Injuries in Our Clinical Workforce: Whose Job Is It? An Overview From the Veterans Health Administration**

*Tony Hilton, DrPH, RN, MSN, FNP, CRRN, FARN, Safe Patient Handling and Mobility National Program Manager, and Tosha Hammer, DPT, PT, Safe Patient Handling and Mobility Program Manager, VA Central Iowa Health Care System, Des Moines*

Direct patient care staff are at high risk for musculoskeletal injuries from manually handling patients. In this session, you'll learn about the keys to practical, safe patient-handling and mobility programs that reduce employee injuries, improve patient outcomes and meet the expectations of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration and workers' compensation insurers.

Learning objectives:

- Demonstrate select safe patient-handling and mobility program technology used passively and therapeutically for rehabilitation populations
- Identify six critical elements that are the key pillars of a successful, safe patient-handling and mobility program
- List six common pitfalls in safe patient-handling and mobility programs and how to overcome them

### **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.

**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** 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](http://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](mailto:iharegistration@ihaonline.org).
- Dress for the conference is business casual. Layered clothing is recommended for your comfort.

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