

Indicator #22: Work-Related Severe Traumatic Injury Hospitalizations

Background and Public Health Significance

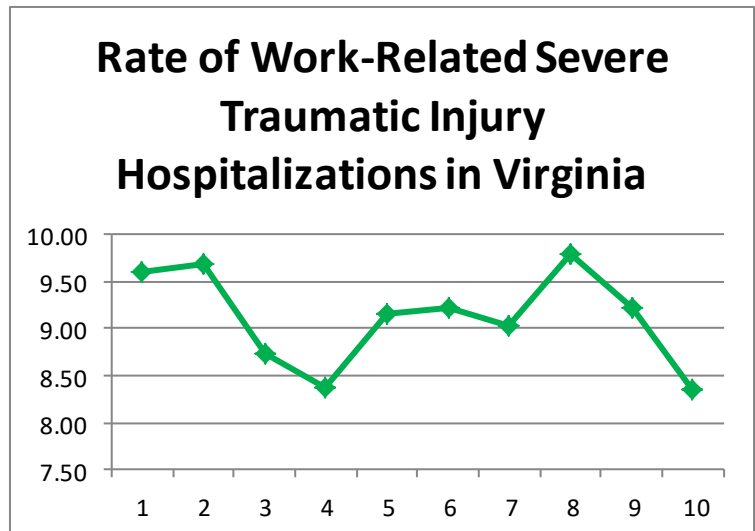
Acute work-related trauma is a leading cause of death and disability for U.S. workers. In 2010, more than 4,500 U.S. workers died from occupational injuries (NIOSH, 2012). Severe traumatic injury can lead to long-term pain and disability and is very costly for workers' compensation systems and society as a whole.

Data source: Inpatient Hospital Discharge Data & BLS Current Population Survey Data

Rationale:

Changes in hospitalization practices and workers' compensation coverage/reporting may reduce the capture of minor injuries but have little effect on severe injuries. Use of a severity threshold can decrease the impact of changing utilization and service delivery patterns on observed injury trends (Cryer and Langley, 2008; NCHS, 2004). When hospitalization data are used to calculate occupational injury trends in the absence of severity restriction, observed trends are biased downward (Sears, et al.). Accurate characterization of injury trends is critical to understanding how we are doing as a nation with regard to occupational injury prevention.

22.1 Work-Related Severe Traumatic Injury Hospitalizations		
	Annual Number	Annual Crude Rate
2005	363	9.60*
2006	373	9.69*
2007	342	8.74*
2008	334	8.38*
2009	353	9.15*
2010	350	9.21*
2011	357	9.03*
2012	387	9.80*
2013	368	9.22*
2014	339	8.36*



* Rate per 100,000 employees

Limitations

Hospital discharge records are only available for non-federal, acute care hospitals. Many individuals with work-related injuries do not file for workers' compensation or fail to recognize work as the cause of their injury. Additionally, self-employed individuals such as farmers and independent contractors, federal employees, railroad or longshore and maritime workers are not covered by state workers' compensation systems. The expected payer on hospital discharge records may not be accurate and reflect the actual payer. Data between states may not be comparable due to differences in benefit adequacy in states' workers' compensation programs. Severe traumatic injury hospitalizations are based only on first listed ICD-9-CM diagnoses that have been estimated to have an Abbreviated Injury Scale (AIS) severity of 3 or above. As a result, some severe traumatic injuries will not be counted.