

Occupational Health in Dental Practice

Authors : Nino Chomakhashvili, Nino Chikhladze, Nato Pitskhelauri, Maia Bitskhinashvili

Abstract : The dental practice is associated with occupational health challenges. Ergonomic risks in the workplace can significantly impair a dentist's work capacity and may even result in the premature end of their career. Implementing ergonomic principles in dental practice aims to prevent work-related musculoskeletal disorders. Many studies have been conducted in various countries such as Sweden, Denmark, Germany, Poland, and Australia to examine the prevalence of musculoskeletal disorders among dentists. However, to the best of authors knowledge there have been no studies on the application of ergonomic principles in dental practice in Georgia. This study focused on evaluating the ergonomic conditions of dental practice in Georgia and determining how common musculoskeletal disorders are among them. The survey was conducted using a random sampling method in selected dental clinics. A tailored questionnaire consisting of 40 questions, created using insights from international practices, was utilized for the study. Two hundred ninety-one filled questionnaires were used for the analysis. Most respondents reported that their workplaces adhered to ergonomic standards. However, 53.6% experienced frequent back pain, with 50.9% suffering from neck pain, 47.9% from shoulder pain, and 47.1% from lower back pain. Many noted that pain had caused them to reduce their working hours. Nearly all respondents expressed a desire to enhance their knowledge about ergonomics and the prevention of occupational diseases. They indicated a preference for participating in continuous professional development programs (61.5%), receiving information through leaflets (12.0%), and attending online webinars (26.6%). Integrating ergonomic principles into the dental practice is crucial for preventing work-related musculoskeletal disorders. It is essential to offer continuous professional development programs and provide information to dentists, via leaflets, thematic online or hybrid webinars.

Keywords : dental practice, ergonomic risks, musculoskeletal disorders, occupational health

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