

## **'Disability' and Suffering: The Case of Workers Affected by Repetitive Strain Injury/Work Related Musculoskeletal Disorder in a Removal from Work Situation in Santos, São Paulo, Brazil**

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**Abstract :** The subjects affected by Repetitive Strain Injury/Work Related Musculoskeletal Disorder (RSI/WRMSD) face an everyday life marked by pain, feelings of worthlessness and incapacity caused by the disease, and aggravated often because of discrimination society. Aim: To investigate the experiences and feelings of workers affected by RSI/WRMSD in removal from work situations and to understand the repercussions on mental health. Methods: Clinical records of workers were consulted, opened from July 1, 2014, to July 1, 2015, at the Reference Center for Worker's Health, in Santos city-SP. Selection of workers affected by RSI /WRMSD and who had experienced the removal from work situation due to the disease, and invitation to participate in the study. Semi-structured and individual interviews were carried out based on a pre-elaborated script, and for thematic content analysis. Results: Of a total of 502 medical records, 157 were selected, and of these, 18 workers participated in the interviews, both gender, most of them with low education level, aged between 35 and 56 years, and from different professions. Diseases affected several physical body regions and some workers had more than one body region affected by chronic pain. In the testimonies emerged the psychic suffering by the process of illness at work, fear of dismissal, invisibility of pain, in medical expertise attendance, by the incapacity to perform tasks that were easily achievable, with feelings of uselessness, revolt, and injustice, among others. Conclusion: The workers need to be readapted to new life situations, and the study promotes reflections on the need for more interdisciplinary actions and of the Psychology to the workers affected by RSI/WRMSD.

**Keywords :** repetitive strain injury, cumulative trauma disorder, absence from work, mental health, occupational health

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