Mapping the evidence on occupational health and safety regulatory interventions reveals that more research is needed

Evidence for the effects of occupational health and safety regulatory interventions is unevenly distributed across intervention domains, pointing to both evidence clusters suited for further systematic review activity and evidence gaps where more primary research is needed.

What is this evidence and gap map (EGM) about?
Across the globe, unsafe and unhealthy working conditions constitute a serious public health risk. It is therefore imperative that research about effective occupational health and safety regulatory interventions be made available to decisionmakers.

This map displays existing systematic reviews and primary studies investigating the effects of interventions aimed at introducing, monitoring, and ensuring compliance with occupational health and safety regulations.

What studies are included?
The EGM includes six systematic reviews, 28 effect studies, and three on-going studies. Included studies had to be either randomised controlled trials, non-randomised studies with a comparison of two or more groups of participants, or systematic reviews of effects.

Furthermore, the population of interest was restricted to workers above the age of 15 employed at workplaces within the OECD.

What are the main findings of this EGM?
Evidence for the effects of health and safety regulatory interventions is unevenly distributed across intervention domains. The largest cluster of studies is found in the intervention domain covering inspection activity (21 studies).

There are a number of studies investigating information, guidance and consulting activities (12 studies), incentives for compliance (seven studies), and regulatory enforcement in the form of sanctions (five studies).

There are very few studies investigating the effects of training initiatives (two studies) and formulating regulatory standards (one study).

There is a lack of rigorous systematic reviews exploring the effects of occupational health and safety regulatory interventions.

What is the aim of this EGM?
The aim of this EGM is to present available evidence from systematic reviews and primary studies examining the effects of occupational health and safety regulatory interventions on a set of outcomes encompassing both organisational/workplace level domains (e.g. compliance with regulatory standards) and individual/worker level domains (e.g. work-related injuries).
Included systematic reviews were critically appraised. This appraisal led to the conclusion that there is a lack of rigorously-performed systematic reviews exploring the effects of occupational health and safety regulatory interventions.

In terms of the geographical spread of studies across the OECD area, North America (USA and Canada) is the most densely populated, followed by Europe (represented by countries located in both the Northern and Southern parts of the continent), and finally Eastern Asia (represented by South Korea).

**What do the findings of this EGM mean?**

This EGM provides an opportunity for stakeholders from the research, policy and practice communities to gain an overview of the available evidence on the effects of occupational health and safety regulatory interventions.

By pointing to both evidence clusters and gaps in the current evidence base, the EGM can inspire future research projects and intervention activities.

**How up-to-date is this EGM?**

The authors carried out literature searches up to January 2023.

**What is the Campbell Collaboration?**

Campbell is an international, voluntary, non-profit research network that publishes systematic reviews. We summarise and evaluate the quality of evidence about programmes in the social and behavioural sciences. Our aim is to help people make better choices and better policy decisions.

**About this summary**


Access the interactive EGM here: [link will be added when the file is published].

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