



Direct recruitment of workers and worksites in heavy industry for occupational field studies



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Study Objectives Direct Recruitment Process Results Conclusions

- Examine efficiency of contacting workers directly for an occupational field study
- Identify and overcome challenges to direct recruitment

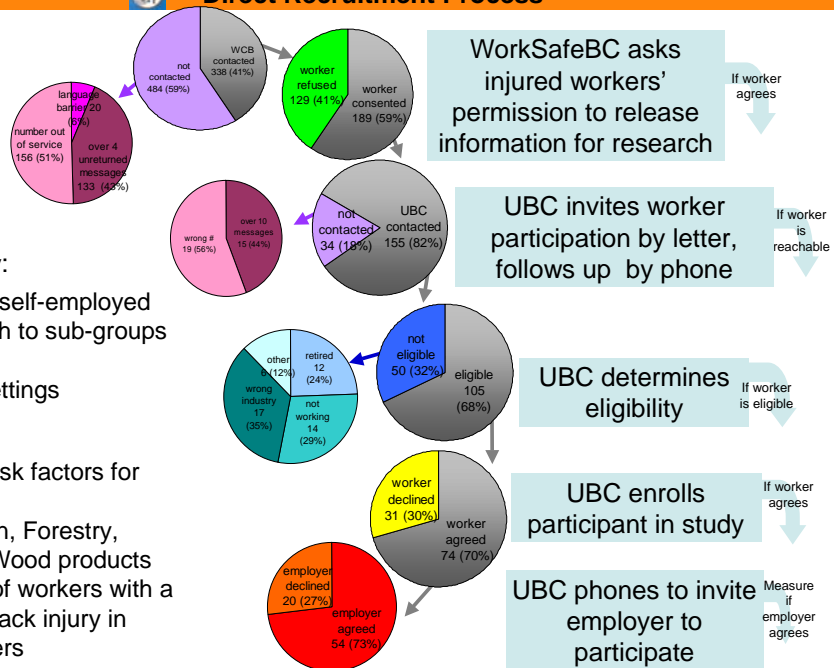
Background

Usual recruiting methods for large studies (via employer or union) may:

- Exclude small workplaces and the self-employed
- Allow employers to restrict research to sub-groups of occupations/sites
- Limit variability of jobs and work settings

Research Setting

- Large field study of occupational risk factors for low back injury
- Five heavy industries: Construction, Forestry, Transportation, Warehousing, & Wood products
- Recruitment of a random sample of workers with a workers' compensation claim for back injury in 2001, plus recruitment of co-workers



- Of the 338 workers successfully contacted by WorkSafeBC; 189 (41%) agreed to release information to researchers
- 155 of these workers were successfully contacted by UBC; 105 (68%) were eligible
- 74 (70%) of eligible workers agreed to participate, 54 (73%) were successfully measured.
- An average of 1.5 co-workers were recruited from worksites (range 1-6)
- 10 (19%) workers were self-employed
- Participation was highest for construction (54%), followed by forestry (40%), wood products (33%), transportation (31%) and warehousing (24%)

Advantages

- Tremendous variety in workplaces, jobs, and workers
- Minimize bias towards large employers and unions

Challenges

- Added step of getting workers' permission to release information via WorkSafeBC
- Developing multiple relationships with employees & employers is time-consuming
- Substantial correspondence and scheduling load

Conclusion

The results show promise for studies investigating exposure and health across a wide range of employment conditions, from the core to the margins.

