

Total Worker Health: Innovative Approaches to Promoting & Protecting Worker Health

Glorian Sorensen, PhD, MPH
Harvard School of Public Health
Center for Work, Health and Wellbeing

What Is Total Worker Health™?

- NIOSH: “Total Worker Health™ is a strategy for integrating occupational safety and health protection with health promotion to prevent worker injury and illness and to advance health and well-being.”
- Four Centers for Excellence funded as part of this initiative.
- <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/twh/centers.html>

Presentation Overview

- What do we mean by an *integrated approach* to worker health?
- Why do it? How?
- How will we know it when we see it?
- Performance indicators – putting it into place

Work-based Strategies to Improve Health

Work-based Health Protection and Promotion Strategies

Supporting healthier behaviors through workplace environments and services offered at work

- Health screening & services
- Promoting healthy behaviors
- Creating a health-promoting environment

Preventing work-related illness and injury

- Workplace safety measures
- Control of workplace hazards
- Improved ergonomics
- Health and safety training

Reducing work-related stress

- Decreasing job strain
- Fostering social support among workers
- Stress management
- Supporting work-family balance (e.g., through flexible schedules)

Expanding work-related resources and opportunities

- Medical care benefits
- Paid sick and personal leave
- Child and elder care services
- Job training & education
- Adequate wages and salaries

Comparison of worksite intervention models

	Traditional Health Promotion Programs	Health Protection Programs	Integrated Approaches
Intervention Target	Individual Behaviors	Work Environment	Individual Behaviors and the Work Environment
Assumptions about Responsibility for Worker Health	Individual Worker	Organization	Shared Between Worker and Management
Audience	Workers	Management and Occupational Safety and Health Professionals	Workers, Union, Management
Program Planning	Outside Experts	Managers and Occupational Safety and Health Professionals	Collaboration among Different Committees and Programs

What is an integrated intervention?

- Coordination and linkage of separate organizational/environmental health and safety policies, practices and programs
- Continuum of approaches that prevents work-related injuries and illnesses and enhances the overall health and well-being of the workforce

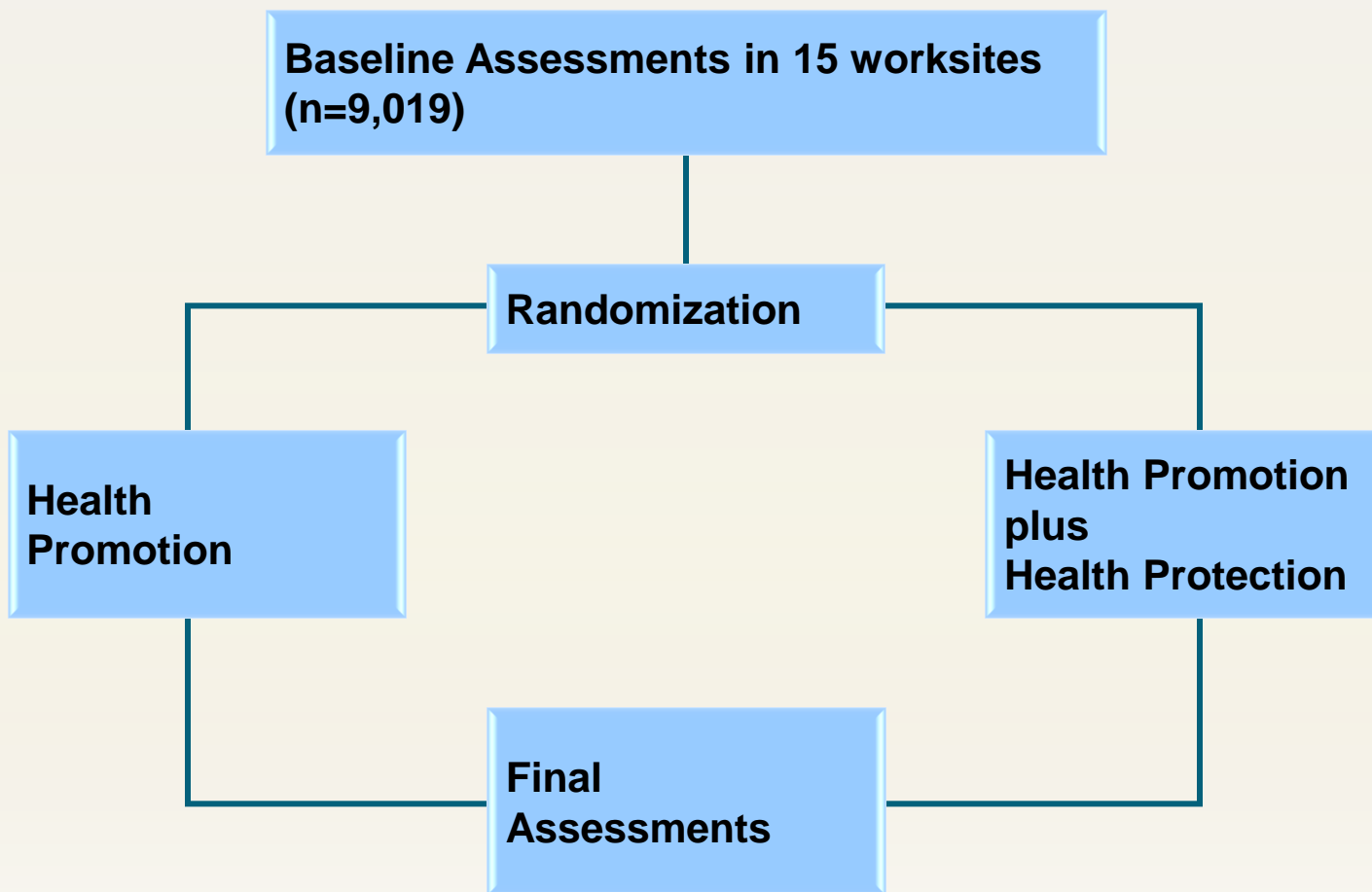
Why do it? Joint effects

- Worksite environment (2011)
 - 4609 fatalities
 - 3.8 million non-fatal injuries & illnesses
- Health behaviors
 - 20% of working adults smoke
 - 1 in 3 are obese – linked to absence and productivity
- Employers also benefit
 - For every \$1 invested, ↓ ~\$3.20 in medical costs

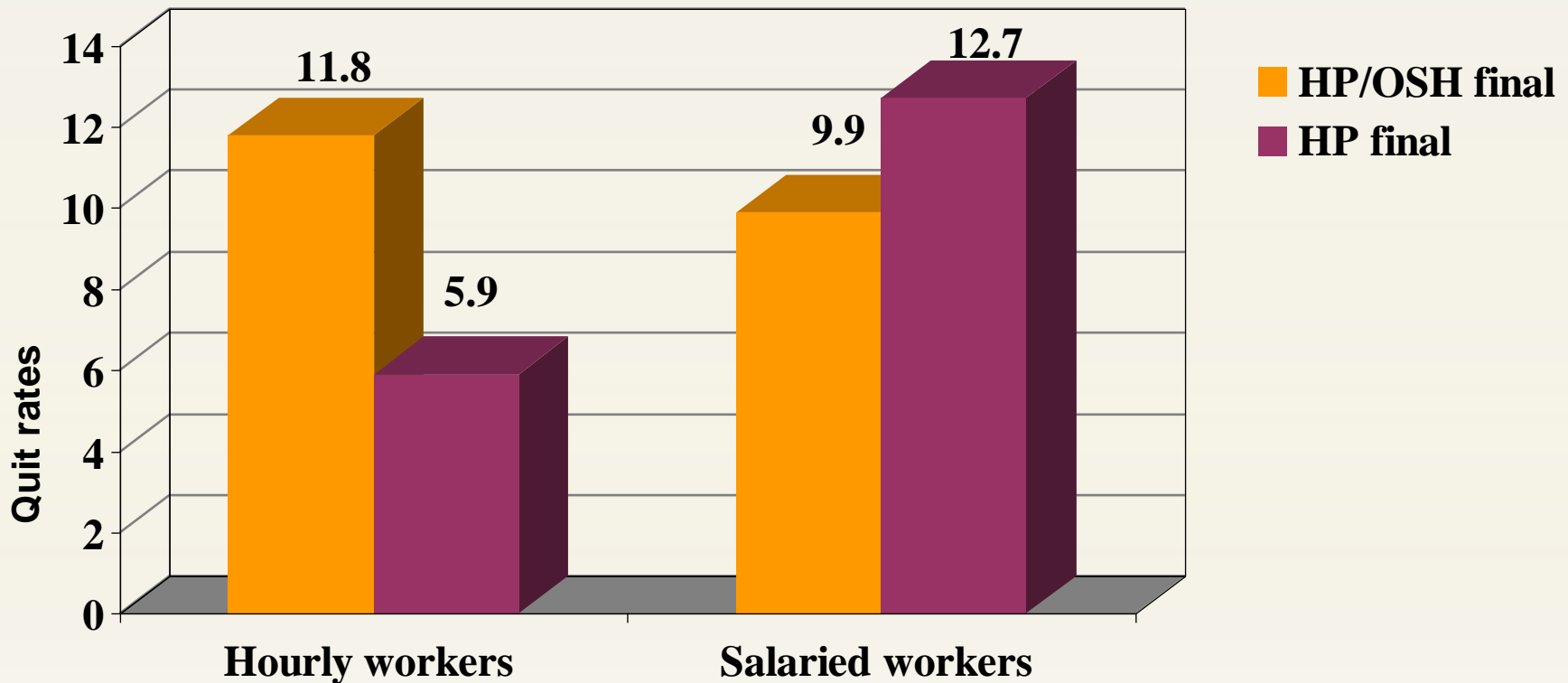
Why do it? Interdependent effects

- Workers may perceive changes in health behaviors as futile in the face of significant occupational exposures.
- Management efforts to create a healthy work environment may
 - ↑workers' motivations to modify personal health behaviors
 - Foster trust that may support workers' receptivity to messages.

WellWorks-2: Study hypothesis



Adjusted six-month quit rates at final by intervention and job type (cohort of smokers at baseline: n=880)



Integrated approaches are recommended by:

- Institute of Medicine (2005)
- National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health
- American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine (Hymel et al, *JOEM*, 2011)
- American Heart Association (Carnethon et al, *Circulation* 2009)

Why do it now?

- Affordable Health Care Act

How? SafeWell Integrated Practice Guidelines - Purpose

- To provide a model and tools for integrated and coordinated efforts that
 - promote healthy behaviors
 - ensure a safe & healthy work environment
 - provide resources for balancing work & family
- Available at:
<http://centerforworkhealth.sph.harvard.edu/>

What's in the Guidelines?

- Introduction and business case
- Providing the foundation: organizational leadership and commitment
- Program planning
- Implementing the plan
- Evaluation and continual improvement

***How will we know it when
we see it?***

Process

- Literature review
- Center-wide mini-Delphi process
- Review of existing indicators
- Plans for further testing

Essential Elements List

Guidance toward Integrated Health and Safety Programs

Organizational Culture and Leadership

1. Develop a “Human Centered Culture”
2. Demonstrate Leadership
3. Engage mid-level management

Program Design

4. Establish clear principles
5. Integrate relevant systems
6. Eliminate recognized occupational hazards
7. Be consistent
8. Promote employee participation
9. Tailor programs to the *specific* workplace
10. Consider incentives and rewards
11. Find and use the right tools
12. Adjust the program as needed
13. Make sure the program lasts
14. Ensure confidentiality

Program Implementation and Resources

15. Willing to start small and scale up
16. Provide adequate resources
17. Communicate strategically
18. Build accountability

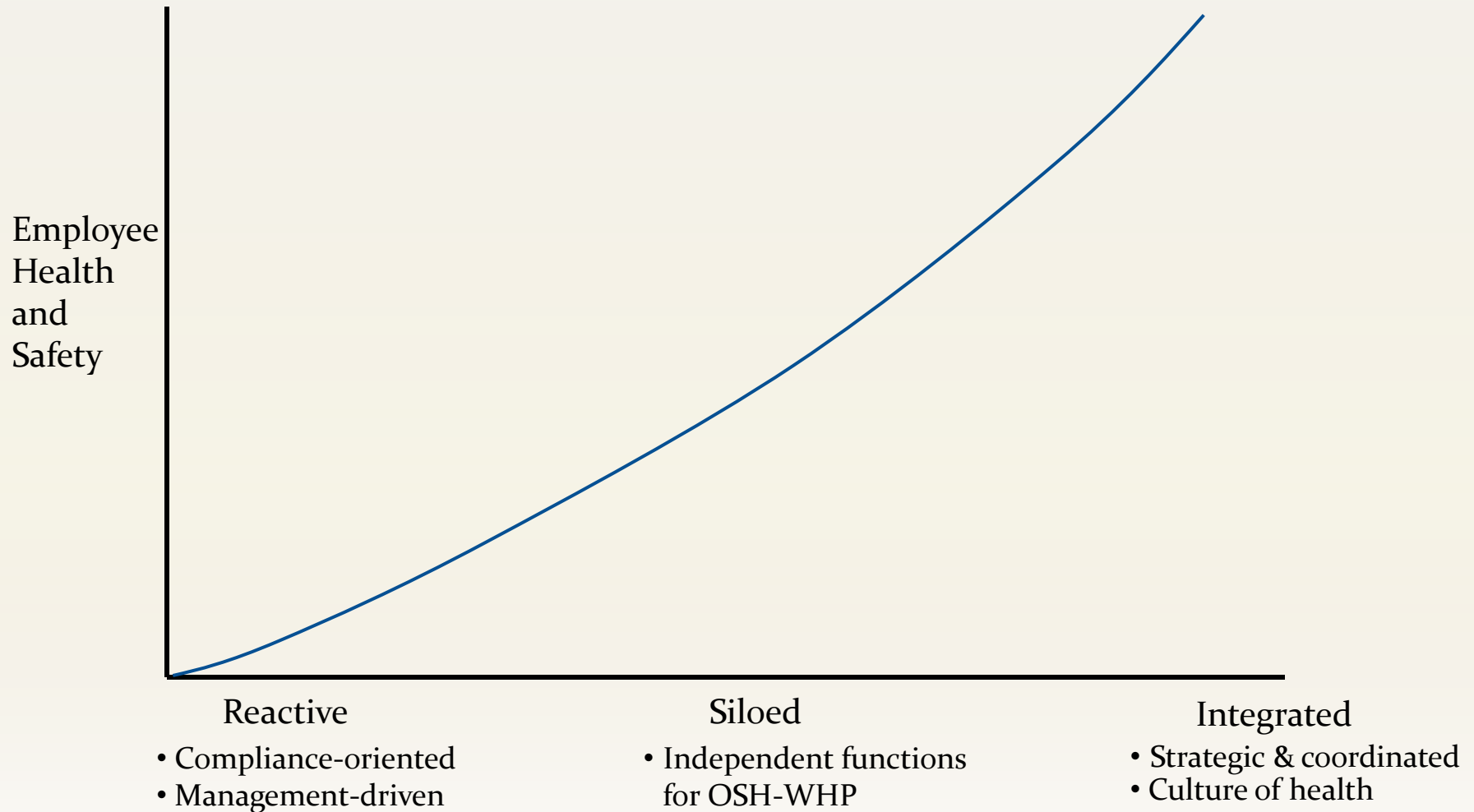
Program Evaluation

19. Measure and analyze
20. Learn from experience



TOTAL WORKER HEALTH™

HSPH Center for Work, Health and Wellbeing Integrated Health and Safety Curve



Indicators of integration

- Coordination, cooperation, collaboration between WHP and OSH and others
- Organizational leadership and commitment
- Multi-level efforts
- Linked messages
- Management and employee engagement
- Integrated health management systems
- Integrated benefits and incentives
- Integrated data and evaluation
- Encompassing additional organizational functions related to worker health

Sample performance metrics

- Assessment tool for researchers and employers:
 - Assess extent to which integrated approach being implemented
 - Provide benchmarks for comparison
 - Identify factors associated with variations across companies
 - Self-assessment tool
- Performance metrics – includes:
 - Policies
 - Programs
 - Practices

Coordination, cooperation, collaboration between OSH and WHP

- Decision making about worker health coordinated across departments, including OSH and WHP
- Policies to reduce exposures on the job are coordinated with policies to support health behaviors and worker wellness.

Multi-level Efforts

- Efforts to promote & protect worker health include:
 - Policies about the work organization & environment
 - Educational, training and incentive programs for individual workers.

Linked messages

- Messages convey:
 - Potential additive or synergistic risks posed by exposures on the job and risk-related behaviors.
- Impact of job experiences & the work environment on successful health behavior change.

Next steps

- Review indicators against our intervention planning – implications for implementation
- Further testing of the items and overall instrument
- Use of instrument to assess prevalence of integrated programs in planned survey
- Inform ongoing dissemination efforts
 - Performance indicators as steps in a transformation process

HSPH Center for Work, Health and Wellbeing Investigator Team

- Glorian Sorensen (PI)
- Jack Dennerlein (co-PI)
- Jennifer Allen
- Benjamin Amick
- Lisa Berkman
- Les Boden
- Orfeu Buxton
- Dean Hashimoto
- Deborah McLellan
- Cassandra Okechukwu
- Nico Pronk
- Anne Stoddard
- Greg Wagner
- Lorraine Wallace