Ergonomics and Work Related Injuries in Radiology

BACKGROUND

Problem:
Radiologists develop work related repetitive stress injuries (RSIs) as their work revolves around sitting at a PACS workstation all day.

- 90% of radiologist survey respondents here (53/59) feel some “burn out” and most attribute it to:
  1) Work overload (61%)
  2) Lack of control (51%)
  23 radiologists (faculty and trainees) have an RSI

- Many radiologists feel that leadership doesn’t care about their safety and wellness
- 44% responded that administration does not care about safety of their working conditions
- 49% are somewhat or very unsatisfied with workstations

How to Improve Ergonomics and Reduce Injuries:
- Ergonomics committee of radiologists formed to work with radiology managers and IT

RESULTS

Interventions to decrease work related injuries in radiology:
- Under desk cord organization by IT
- Broken workstation tables and chairs inventoried
- 4 broken/old workstations replaced this year, 23 to go
- 16 broken chairs, 20 old chairs, 16 high “stool” chairs
- Replace 1st broken chairs with Allsteel Evo, fully adjustable

One size does not fit all
- Mouse models chosen by committee and tested by radiologists
- Mouse pad/wrist cushions tested by radiologists
- Chair samples tested by 29 radiologists at a “chair party”

CONCLUSIONS

Ergonomic improvements has potential to improve physician wellness:
- Prevent physician injuries
- Support physicians with injuries
- Increased physicians’ sense of control over their workspace

Ergonomic improvements have potential to benefit the NM hospital system:
- Cost savings from increased physician productivity and decreased faculty turnover
- Improved physician engagement
- Can attract physicians to work at NM and can serve as an example for other health systems

Other lessons learned:
- It’s difficult for physicians to navigate who owns and operates components of a large hospital
- This work can lead to larger wellness and faculty development programs