

Occupational Health Southern Africa

Evaluation of the current practices of noise-induced hearing loss (NIHL) awareness training in the South African mining industry

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to evaluate the current practices in relation to best practice criteria and make recommendations for improvements to noise-induced hearing loss (NIHL) awareness training in the South African mining industry. A survey tool based on findings of a literature review on best practice for NIHL awareness training was developed for use in interviews, with managers responsible for NIHL awareness training at the mines. Thirty managers were interviewed in the survey at mines representative of different sizes and different commodities. Results indicate that NIHL awareness training is not treated as a priority training area. Only 20% of NIHL awareness training programmes had a theoretical basis in health promotion or adult education. Employees received, on average, 15 minutes of training per annum. Evaluation of employee knowledge only occurred at 40% of the mines surveyed. Recommendations were made to address the factors identified in the evaluation of the current practices in the South African mining industry regarding NIHL awareness training needing to be aligned with best practice.