



# Athletic Trainers in Occupational Health

## Improving Safety and the Bottom Line

Athletic trainers (ATs), often affiliated with sports, are health care professionals who also work in manufacturing, warehouse and industrial settings. Industrial athletes perform many physically demanding tasks that make them prone to injuries such as overuse, sprain and strains, acute injuries and concussion. AT's unique skillset and education that combines injury prevention and rehabilitation with emergency care makes the AT an ideal candidate to provide health care to industrial employees. Within the occupational health setting, ATs help prevent injuries, reduce workers compensation claims, improve general wellness, increase productivity and positively impact the bottom line. ATs provide a safer approach to work, life and sport.

## About Athletic Trainers

- ✓ ATs in the occupational health setting work in manufacturing plants, automotive and airplane assembly plants, distribution centers and warehouses, tire manufacturing plants, processing facilities and oil rigs.
- ✓ Must graduate from an accredited educational program and pass a comprehensive certification exam.
- ✓ Are licensed and otherwise regulated in 49 states and the District of Columbia. Efforts continue to gain regulation in California.
- ✓ Must keep their knowledge and skills current by participating in continuing education.
- ✓ The AT's scope of practice varies state-by-state and should be referenced during the hiring process.

*"Everyone benefits when a company employs athletic trainers as part of an injury prevention program: the company saves money and employee time while the employees see improvements to their health and wellness." - Jose Morales, MA, ATC, CEAS, Safety Specialist at Toyota*

# HEALTH CARE WITH IMPACT



## Injury Prevention

- Approximately 60% of AT services in occupational health are preventative in nature.
- Health and wellness education on weight loss, promoting healthy lifestyles, education on injury prevention, proper ergonomic lifting techniques, common illnesses, and prevention.
- Ergonomic evaluations and recommendations and assistance in the biomechanical restructuring of the manufacturing process.
- ATs design or promote injury prevention programs that may include stretching programs, early symptoms integration and wellness checks. ATs also leverage injury trend data to develop injury prevention programs specific to common injuries on a particular line or area – such as shoulder, ankle or hand injury prevention. These could also include fall and lock-out prevention programming.

## Rehabilitation

- Approximately 32% of athletic training services in occupational health are related to rehabilitation.
- Rehabilitation could include the return to work implementation, non-work related treatments, healthy posture education, and minor injuries that do not require lost days or off-site treatments.
- ATs understanding of OSHA standards helps to prevent recordable injury treatments and safely and decisively maintain the order and rules set for each industry.

## Emergency Care

- Approximately 3% of athletic training services in occupational health are emergency related.
- While life-threatening emergencies are rare, ATs are trained to provide emergency health care for workers.
- The majority of all emergencies within the occupational setting are sprains, strains, contusion, lacerations, amputations, fractures. Additionally, while rare, concussions in the occupational setting can be traumatic and life-threatening.

### By the Numbers

Companies such as Amazon, Boeing, Ford and Exxon employ ATs to be an integral part of the health and safety team and keep workers healthy, safe and on the job.

# 85%

OSHA estimates that 85% of work-place injuries are chronic or overuse in nature. ATs are skilled to treat and prevent injuries from occurring.

# 3:1

80% of companies that employ ATs see at least a \$3 return on every \$1 invested in athletic trainers. These returns were up to \$7 for some organizations.

# 50%

In one survey, companies that employ ATs reported a decrease in costs associated with workplace injuries by more than 50%.