



Illinois Occupational Surveillance Program

University of Illinois at Chicago
School of Public Health
Environmental and Occupational Health
Sciences, SPH
2121 W Taylor, Rm 117, MC 922
www.illinoisinjuryprevention.org

CORRECTIONAL FACILITY WORKERS IN ILLINOIS

Mariana Lever

BACKGROUND

- ❖ There are over 470,000 correctional officers across the US
- ❖ Correctional officers comprise >85% of the workforce in the Federal Bureau of Prisons
- ❖ Correctional officers have among the highest rates of nonfatal on the job injuries
- ❖ In 2011, workers compensation laws in Illinois were changed and arbitrators fired because of a purported excess in claims and payouts to correctional officers from one particular facility

CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS - JOB DESCRIPTION

- ❖ Maintain order in a detention facility
- ❖ Search inmate cells for contraband, weapons, signs of security breach, drugs, or any violation of the institution rules and regulations
- ❖ Arbitrate disputes between inmates

CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS — INJURIES AND HAZARDS

❖ The scope of correctional officers' work exposes them to a range of risks:

- Violence and other injuries by person
- Fires and explosions
- Slips, trips, falls
- Contact with objects and equipment
- Overexertion and bodily reaction

METHODS

- ❖ The Illinois Workers Compensation Commission database
- ❖ CFW & stratified random sample of non-CFW claims extracted (2002-2012)
- ❖ Were workers compensation costs for correctional facility workers higher than for the comparison group?
- ❖ SAS version 9.4:
 - ❖ Regression analysis used to compare: body part injured, total monetary workers compensation (TWC), permanent partial disability (PPD) percent, and number of weeks away from work for temporary total disability (TTD) between the two groups

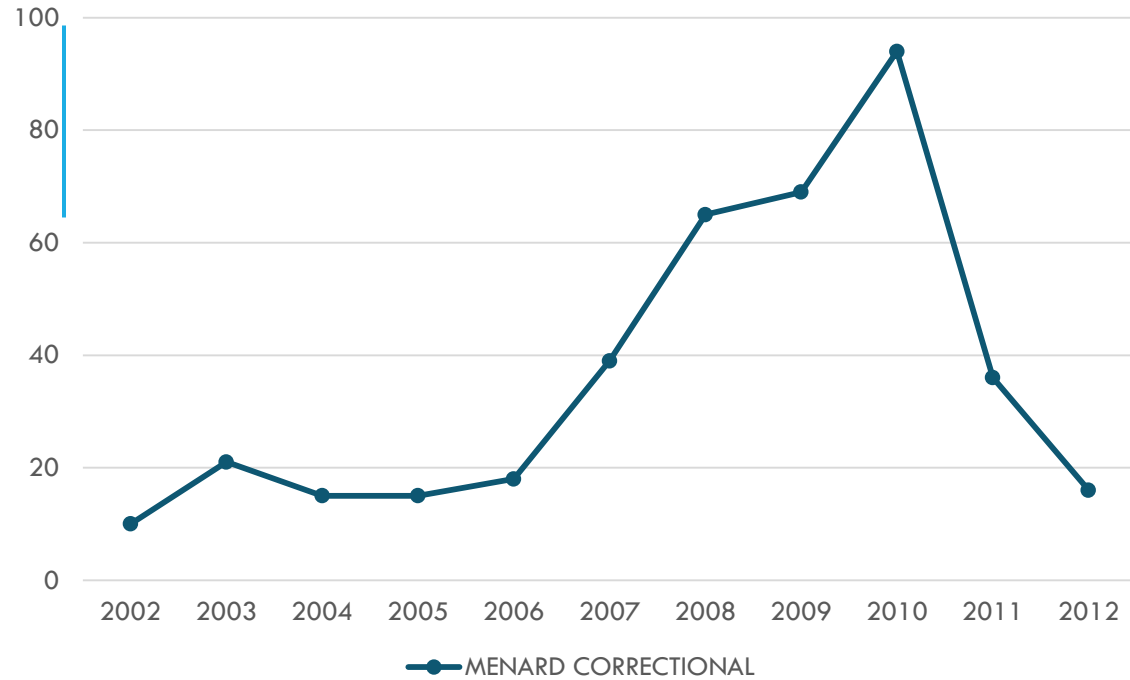
MENARD CORRECTIONAL FACILITY

- ❖ From 2007-2010, an unprecedented number of workers' compensation claims filed for carpal tunnel and cubital tunnel syndrome at the Menard Correctional Facility
- ❖ These injuries resulted in 1-4 surgical operations on over 350 COs (of ~550 employees)
- ❖ All medical care was approved and paid for by the State of Illinois, the employer of this workforce

MENARD CORRECTIONAL FACILITY

- ❖ Days away from work and periods of limited duty were approved and compensated
- ❖ In 2011, changes were made to the Illinois Workers' Compensation Act to limit compensation for carpal tunnel syndrome and require workers to be examined by doctors mandated by the employer

WCC by Filing Year



- ❖ 8 % of the claims at Menard Correctional were filed for carpal tunnel syndrome
- ❖ 23% of the total carpal tunnel syndrome claims were filed by Menard Correctional

WCC by Filing Year



Demographics	CFW (N=2,802)	Non-CFW (N=2,760)
Age (Mean)	42 (SD 9)	44 (SD 12)
Under 18 years	10 (0%)	17 (0%)
18-24 years	30 (1%)	149 (5%)
25-34 years	555 (20%)	489 (18%)
35-44 years	1079 (39%)	735 (27%)
45-54 years	860 (31%)	863 (31%)
55-64 years	253 (9%)	432 (16%)
65 years and over	15 (0%)	75 (3%)

Body Part Injured

Body Part Injured	CFW N (%)	Non-CFW N (%)
Upper Extremities	930 (33%)	995 (36%)
Lower Extremities	596 (21%)	564 (20%)
Multiple Body Parts/Unspecified	589 (21%)	480 (17%)

	CFW	Non-CFW
Median days from accident to filing	96	148
Median days from accident to decision	621	630
Median days from filing to decision	442	405

	Parameter Estimate	95% Confidence Limits
Total Monetary Compensation	-563.14	-1275.61, 135.36
Temporary Total Disability (weeks)	0.49	0.05, 0.90
Permanent Partial Disability	-0.31	-1.46, 1.38

CONCLUSION / LIMITATIONS

- ❖ Spike in claims and payouts in 2007-2010 for CFWs
- ❖ The total monetary compensation received by correctional facility workers did not differ significantly from other workers in Illinois
- ❖ Surveillance data is an important resource: IWCC databases should be improved and utilized to provide evidence for policy changes and for focusing preventive efforts