

## CONTACT POINT

# Worker feedback on occupational skin disease awareness posters

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Posters are commonly used in the workplace to increase awareness of workplace hazards and improve prevention. We developed a series of workplace posters to address occupational skin disease (OSD) by using feedback obtained from attendees at 2 occupational health and safety conferences, frontline workers from the automotive sector, and employers from the food service sector. Three sets of customized posters for the automotive sector, food services and hairdressing were created (Figure 1).

## METHODS

Following research ethics approval, 60 patients with possible work-related contact dermatitis in the Occupational Health Clinic at St Michael's Hospital were invited to complete a survey on the use of workplace posters and evaluate 1 poster set (Figure 1); each set was evaluated by 20 participants.

## RESULTS

Participants were predominantly female (63%), aged ≤50 years (66%), and from the service (25%), manufacturing (24%) and government (18%) sectors. Nearly everybody (91%) endorsed the usefulness of workplace posters in general; 80% supported poster use in their own workplace. Eighty-five per cent favoured customization by industry or workplace. Whereas 65% of participants reported having health and safety posters at work, only 12% of these addressed work-related skin conditions. The lunch area (74%) and washrooms (72%) were

identified as optimal display locations. One-at-a-time rotation was also favoured (67%).

Poster 1, featuring diseased hands, was the favourite poster, and poster 4, featuring personal protective equipment, was the least favoured poster. All 60 respondents rated each poster on a 7-point scale (not clear to very clear). Poster 1 scored the highest, and poster 7, a summary image, scored the lowest. The number of favourable scores (5, 6, or 7) for posters 1 and 7, respectively were: message clarity (80% and 42%), image relatability/understandability of message (83% and 40%), and effectiveness in communicating OSD importance (77% and 35%).

## DISCUSSION

Earlier studies found that gain-framed messages had the greatest influence on the promotion of health behaviours.<sup>1,2</sup> Participants with hand dermatitis found the negatively framed poster 1 to be most relatable to the appearance of their hands. This difference lends support to the importance of involving a prospective audience in poster development, as personal experience influences preference. The large majority favouring customization reinforces the value of posters customized to the particular industry. The customizable posters are available online at <http://app.wsps.ca/Poster/PosterDesigner.php>.

## Conflict of interest

The authors declare no potential conflict of interests.



**FIGURE 1** Sample custom poster set for the food service sector. Each poster is numbered, and these numbers are referred to in the text

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