

tion, a large study showed that Asian and Pacific Islanders generally had a low prevalence of back pain,⁷ which might be true for other musculoskeletal conditions as well. As we do not have data on medical costs of musculoskeletal disease among health-care workers in Taiwan, we are unable to estimate the costs associated with musculoskeletal discomforts.

A limitation of our study was that we did not validate the reported relationship between musculoskeletal discomforts and work. But, such a relationship is generally very difficult to validate. Another limitation is that, as broken down by body part, many conditions had only a few cases or no cases at all, and the estimates based on these conditions would be less reliable. Further studies focused on individual conditions are needed to confirm our findings.

Although the Taiwanese government established a reporting system of occupational disease in 1995, which included musculoskeletal disease, very few cases were actually reported. Therefore, education of all related parties is very important. We hope this study can promote awareness among health-care practitioners, administrators of hospitals, and other health-care facilities, and government agencies to musculoskeletal problems among all health-care workers, especially conditions other than pain and conditions involving the body parts other than the back. Our survey showed that musculoskeletal discomfort was prevalent among all health-care workers in this medical center, and that the distributions of body parts affected and nature of the condition greatly differed across occupations. We suggest that musculoskeletal conditions should be included in routine health examinations of health-care workers and that specific prevention strategies should be developed for each group of workers.

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