

Other Occupational Health Hazards in Home Health Care

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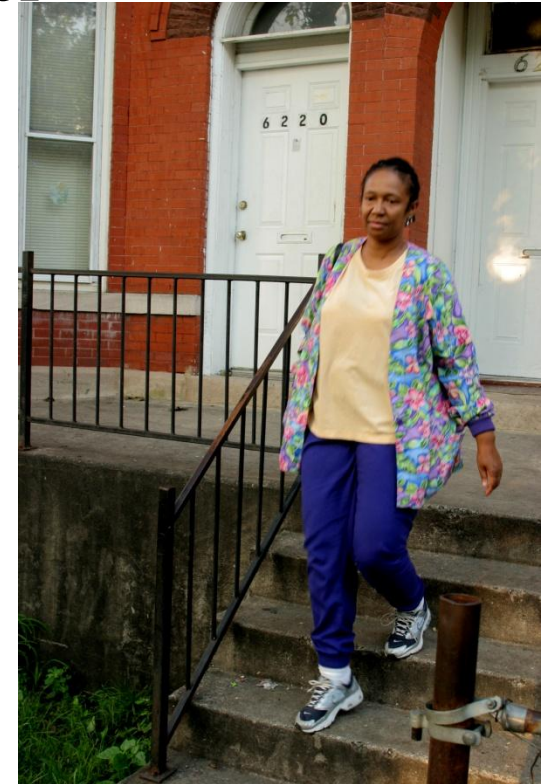
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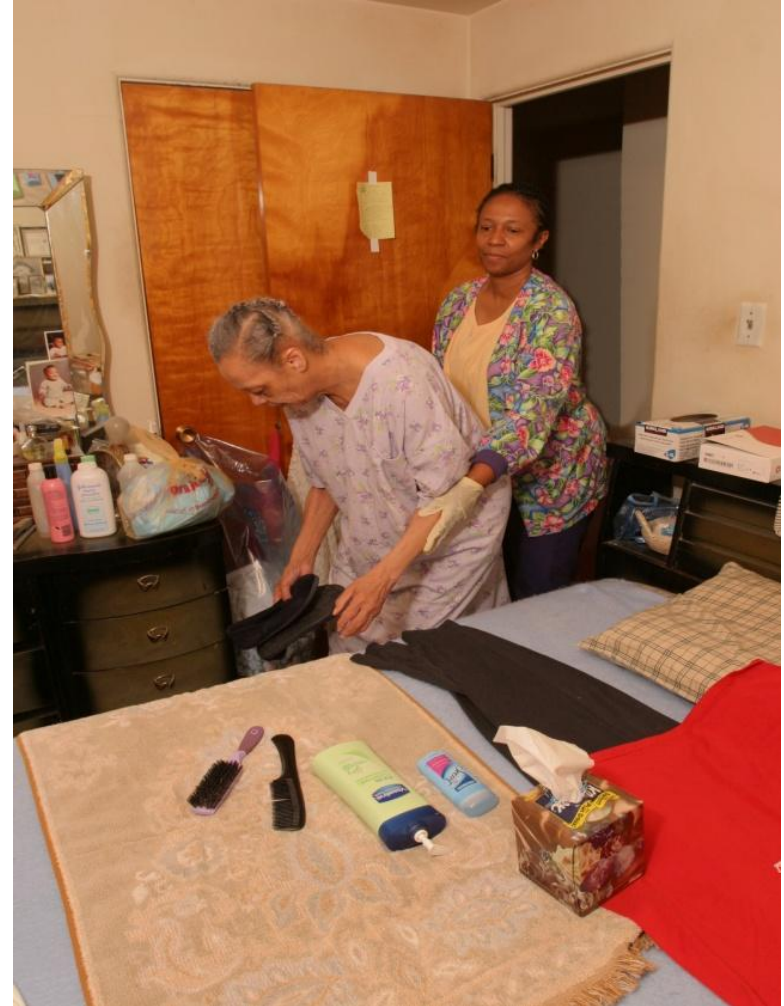
DCWs: Political & Economic Context

- “The linchpin of the formal health care delivery system for older adults” (IOM 2008).
 - 30% of care recipients live alone
 - 20% have no other primary caregiver
- They often need to work when ill because of no paid sick leave.
 - 1614 CA DCWs reported working 2.2 days/ mo. sick (Delp 2009)
- 30% have no health insurance coverage (IOM , 2008).



Other Hazards: An Overview

- Organization of Work
- Physical demands
- Psychosocial demands
- Traumatic injuries
- Biological agents
- Chemical exposures



Physical Demands – MSDs

- Neck, shoulder, back
MSDs incident at 6 months
OR -1.14-1.17/unit
increase on a physical
demand scale (Kim, 2010).
- Overexertion injuries and
falls make up 63% of
injuries (Meyer, 1999).
- Markennan, 2007



Violence

- Perceived threat to personal safety (26%), verbal abuse (20%), physical violence (2%) among 832 HHC (Sherman, 2008).
- Abuse associated with an elevated odds for depression, with a dose effect (Geiger Brown).
- Sexual violence, harassment (Glass, 2010)
- Perceived threats/violence associated with shorter visits (Galinski 2010)

Markennan, 2007



Motor Vehicle Accidents



- Rate in home care is an order of magnitude greater than in NH and hospital workers (Meyer, 1999)

•14% of injuries a result of motor vehicle accidents.



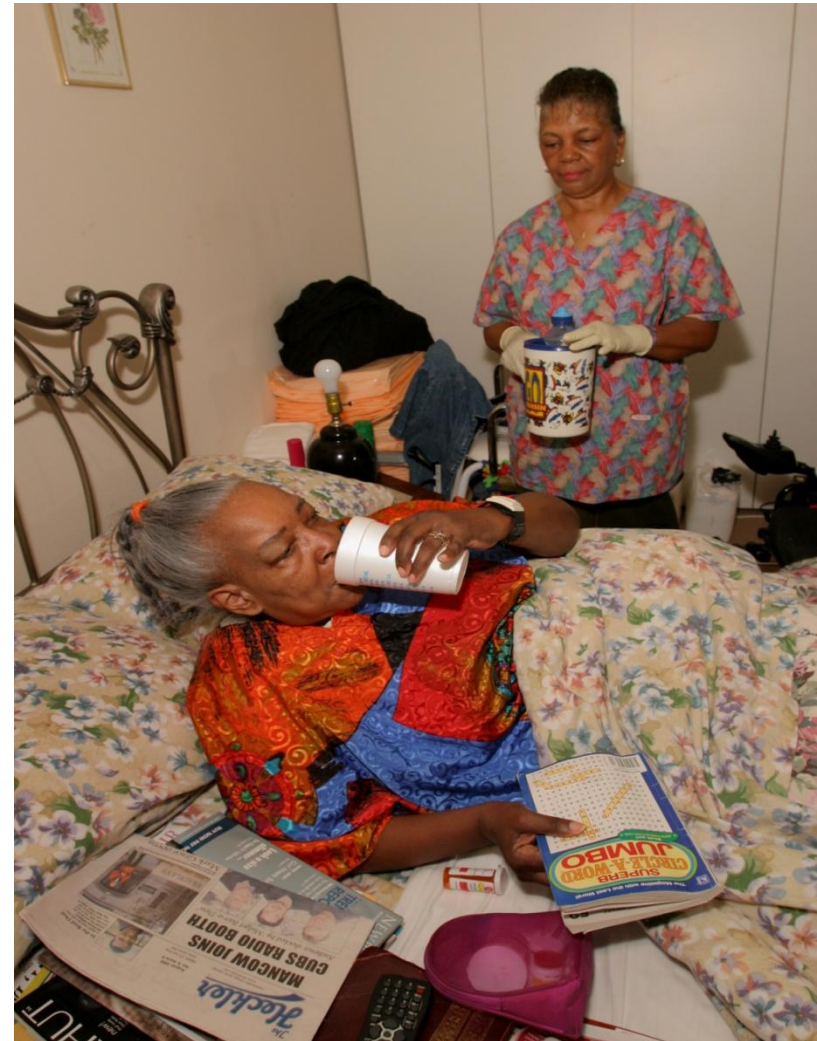
Infectious Diseases

- Among 855 IL DCWs, 27% reported having a flu shot in the previous year.
- Reasons given for not getting a flu shot (n=602):
 - Didn't know where to get it (9%)
 - Too expensive (8%)
 - Not convenient (7%)
 - Couldn't take off from work (7%)
 - Not important (28%)



Other Hazards

- Cigarette smoke (30 %)
- Irritating chemicals (17 %)
- Peeling paint (15 %)
(Gershon,2008)
- Slips, trips, falls
- Cleaning compounds
- Electrical cords/fire hazard (Zanoni, 2007)



Job Dissatisfaction & Turnover

- Abuse from consumers, unpaid overtime hours, work-health demands predict less satisfaction (Delp, 2010).
- Social support and control/job security and union involvement had a direct positive effect on satisfaction (Delp, 2010).
- Job hazards were correlated with job satisfaction and retention (Sherman, 2008).



Challenge: How to we grow/foster the political will to protect this workforce?

- Cost of DCWs injury/illness to consumers?
 - Turnover, shorter visits, depressed/burn out among providers.
- Consumers exposed to same hazards?
 - Increased risk to vulnerable consumers.
- Moral imperative to provide compassionate, quality care to aging population (includes policy makers/their families).



Cost of Inaction: Caregivers become consumers!! Who will care for us??





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