

Regional WPS APR Role description

The Work Place Safety Alliance Partnership Representative is a safety leader who represents labor in the region.

Their goal is to ensure working conditions are safe and healthful for every worker in every aspect of their job. They participate in regional WPS planning and assist with overseeing the quality of the regional workplace safety and health program. They model the preventive approach to safety in their activities. They are a resource for labor in the region to understand the regions' proactive safety program (elements such as including hazard identification, incident analysis, who to notify about safety concerns and hazards, and ways to ensure solutions are identified and put in place in a timely manner).

The WPS-APR is accountable to the Alliance and management designee. The WPS-APR also works with the Alliance of Health Care Unions APRs across the program, regional workplace safety staff, and national office staff engaged in the region regarding workplace safety.

1. Take an active role as the labor co-lead of the regional WPS committee:
 - Represent to the committee issues and concerns of workers in the region.
 - With others on the committee, evaluate and guide the occupational safety and health program for the region.
 - Participate in the region's assessment of how well the safety program is being implemented, to include developing the quarterly "Comprehensive Integrated Approach" dashboard report submitted to the national WPS office.
 - Be familiar with regional WPS programs and policies.
2. Be the face and voice of labor on WPS:
 - Report to and consult with workers across the region about your work as a labor co-lead on workplace safety and health issues.
 - Report to and collaborate with union leaders about your work, including shop stewards and others union officials.
 - Ensure workers feel completely free to voice concerns, report problems, and to report injuries, without fear of retaliation or negative consequences.
 - Conduct worksite walk-throughs to talk with workers about issues and concerns related to workplace safety and health.
3. Work with regional WPS and operation leaders to ensure the regional WPS program is comprehensive and that it includes at least the following principles:
 - Promote a safe workplace through preventing and addressing unsafe working conditions and work processes.
 - Ensure work processes support and enable workers to use the safest practices – and are designed to make the 'safest' work practice is the easiest one to do.

- Ensure performance improvement efforts (undertaken by UBTs or facilities) consider how a new work processes or workflow will impact worker safety.
 - Ensure hazardous working conditions and high-risk tasks are identified and addressed in an effective and timely manner to minimize the risk posed by these conditions. Hazardous conditions should be addressed by applying the hierarchy of controls, which prefers eliminating a hazard as the most effective way to reduce the risk, followed by substitution of safer methods, engineering controls, administrative or work practice controls (including policies, training, warning signs), followed by personal protective equipment as the least effective method of control.
 - Engage appropriate subject-matter experts (SMEs) such as Facilities services, Security, Infection Prevention, Employee Health, EH&S, etc.
 - Use a unified system to track action plans to ensure each plan is carried through to completion and that problem-solves are in place if action plans are not completed, including escalation where inaction remains a problem.
4. Participate in orientation training required to carry out the role, and other regional and national skill-building opportunities, with a goal to increase understanding of:
- occupational safety and health issues and solutions within the healthcare workplace
 - the regulatory requirements around hazardous work conditions commonly found in the healthcare industry.
 - the elements of a comprehensive, prevention-oriented safety and health program, and how to implement these elements (such as incident investigation, cause mapping (to identify root causes), effective preventive actions, etc.)
 - how to work with a UBT or Performance Improvement project to ensure occupational safety and health impact is considered for each test of change.
 - how to be an effective problem-solver and to work with teams to follow through and achieve improved working conditions.

Within KP this skill development opportunities include participating in WPS, ergonomics and other Community of Practice calls; WPS Peer group calls; the NEHS Safety Institute; and union safety and health caucuses, conferences, and workshops. Outside sources could include training by University labor education programs, by OSHA, Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI), and others.

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