

## **Risk Assessments for Pregnant Workers in a Workplace : A Taiwan Experience**

Dr. Yu-Cheng Lin (Taiwan)

E-mail: [dr.shiftwork@yahoo.com](mailto:dr.shiftwork@yahoo.com)

Director, Department of Occupational Medicine, Fu Jen Catholic University Hospital

Assistant Professor, Fu Jen Catholic University School of Medicine

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### **Introduction**

The **ILO** advocates maternity protections from the hazards within workplaces. In Taiwan, under **Labor Safety and Health Act** and **Regulations for Implementing Maternal Health Protection of Female Workers**, employers have to ensure that the pregnant and lactating women are not exposed to any work-related risks at work, and that the maternity employees' fitness-for-work must be evaluated on the basis of a health assessment.

According to the laws and regulations of Taiwan, the institution managers employing more than 300 workers must provide maternal health protections for all pregnant or breastfeeding mothers during the legislative period, at least one year. All the jobs that may affect the mother's and baby's health during pregnancy or breastfeeding ought to be carefully monitored. In terms of fitness-for-work for the pregnant and breastfeeding mothers, there are three (1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup>; from lower to higher for safe to dangerous) levels of managements which determined by factory physicians, based on the official exposure standards of hazards and the personal health conditions.

### **Materials and Methods**

The present data were collected from Occupational Health Service (OHS) records (2012.5.1~ 2018.2.8). Every pregnant-employees-related OHS consultation meeting was held to invite a pregnant mother, an occupational physician, an occupational nurse and a hygienist. The **Guidance for Implementing Maternal Health Protection of Female Workers** was utilized for determining the levels of protections for maternal health factors or work-related factors.

### **Results**

Within 2925 OHS-visits, our team conducted a total of 502 person-times of pregnant employees consults. There was a 7% factor (5% 2<sup>nd</sup>-level, 2% 3<sup>rd</sup>-level) recognized as work-related.

### **Discussion**

In accordance with the **precautionary principle**, both absolute risk and relative risk should be disclosed in detail to employees and managers; and we required higher levels of action and management for unknown risk factors and incompletely reported risk factors. We suggest that the responsibility of both managers and employees in work and health maintenance be fully discussed in the consultation of OHS.