

# MUSCULOSKELETAL INJURY PREVENTION (MSIP) WEEK

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**CAPSC**  
Safety  
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strength in  
**numbers**



## Fact Sheet #5 – Working Together

The theme of this year's musculoskeletal injury prevention (MSIP) week is “**Strength in Numbers**”

Some of you who have read each of the fact sheets this week may have thought that the previous sheet on “Strength of Mind” had elements about “Working Together”. You are correct, there are similarities. But for this edition we also draw your attention to the topic of ergonomics itself, and how when it is practiced effectively in the workplace, it requires that people work together.

The term “Participatory Ergonomics” conjures up images of participation and working together, for good reason. When ergonomics is effectively implemented in a workplace and ergonomics principles are understood and practiced, there is a great deal of participation at all levels. For example, when a company decides to implement a new work procedure, using ergonomics principles to do so will involve participation from a number of workers. It will also result in a work procedure that is designed to effectively fit the abilities and resources available to workers who do the job. The employer communicates to workers what is planned. The employer also consults workers who are affected by the changes for their input on how it might work best. Some workers might not be directly involved in the

changed procedure, however when they are involved in the planned change, they can provide feedback on how their area of work will be affected. Workers would also be involved in the implementation phase of the changes, in order to get their feedback on how effective the changes have been.

An example of a prevented MSI in this context is a personal care home that is expanding its capacity. Involving the staff through consultation might reveal what aspects of the design of current resident rooms are difficult to work in. It may become clear that employees have been having difficulty with the existing workplace setup but until now there were few changes that could be made. The design of the new wing could be more effectively improved by engineering out existing issues and reducing the potential for future injury.

Regardless of where you work, the process of dealing with MSI prevention is universal: identify unsafe acts / conditions (hazards), determine the level of risk and take action to make the work safer (identify, assess, control).

Ergonomics is a broad topic covering a lot of information but one thing is certain; working together certainly makes for a healthier, safer and more efficient workplace when it comes to MSI prevention.