



Cass County Memorial Hospital- Atlantic, Iowa

New Equipment Reduces Injury Risk

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Over 400 staff at CCHS perform a wide variety of tasks every day. For every employee who sits most of the day working on a computer, there are others whose days are filled with bending, lifting, reaching and repetitive movements. The new Physical Capacity Profile® (PCP) Testing System helps to match physical abilities with work tasks, helping to reduce work-related injuries.

“We often talk with our staff about working smart to reduce their injury risk,” explained Don Johnson, Assistant Administrator of Human Resources. “The PCP helps us accurately measure a person’s physical capability, so we don’t ask them to perform a task that isn’t safe for them.”

About the size of a physician’s exam table, the PCP is a combination of hardware and computer software that puts workers through a series of simulated squats, lifts and pulls that measure musculoskeletal imbalances. The data is then used in conjunction with other information from the employer and employee. The employer evaluates and ranks each job on the level of physical effort required, from level one (sedentary desk work) to five (plant operations), following Department of Labor guidelines.

The job evaluations also help employers to recognize tasks that will require some type of mechanical assistance, such as using a skid loader to move 100 pound loads rather than asking an employee to risk a back injury.

Another benefit of the PCP system is being able to determine an employee’s readiness to return to work after an injury. “Having the actual measurement of physical ability prior to an injury allows us to accurately measure improvement and ability to come back to work ,” Don explained. “It will help determine exactly what level of function they have recovered, reducing the risk of re-injury.”

CCHS now administers a PCP test to every new employee. The testing is available to any area business interested in enhancing workplace safety. Each screening takes about thirty minutes, and is performed in the CCMH Rehab Services Department. PCP testing is coordinated through the health system’s Business Health Department.

The testing procedure is in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and HIPAA health information regulations. The system is designed to accommodate individuals who are wheel chair bound or who have other disabilities.

For more information about PCP testing, contact the CCHS Business Health Department at 712-243-7555, ext. 263.

