

# Injured Worker Survey Project: An Introduction to Using Surveys to Measure Outcomes and Impacts

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# Why do a survey?



How can we measure workers' compensation systems?

- For employers: Employer Premiums
- For insurers: Medical and Indemnity Benefits Paid Out
- Injured Workers?

Current data reporting requirements do not fully capture the injured worker experience.

- With a survey targeted at injured workers, we can systematically and quantitatively measure outcomes and impacts of a work related injury.

# Questions we want to answer:

- 1. For a given outcome or a given predictor: what is the average response or the proportion of respondents that answered a particular way?**
  - What is the level of precision and associated confidence interval?
- 2. For a given outcome: which predictors are associated with better or worse outcomes?**
  - What are the statistically significant predictors that impact a given outcome?
  - *Is there a relationship? Does [predictor] impact [outcome]?*
- 3. What is the relationship between [outcome] and [predictor]?**
  - Positive/Negative? Large/Small?
  - What is the level of precision and associated confidence interval?
  - How do outcomes differ between different groups?
- 4. What are the implications of our findings?**

# Example Questions

- What proportion of injured workers achieve substantial return to work?
- For those injured workers that achieve substantial return to work, what is their average disability duration?
- How satisfied are injured workers with their medical services?
- Is there a difference in satisfaction with medical provider for those that did and did not choose their treating provider? Satisfaction with medical services?
- How do outcomes differ between individuals that did and did not have health insurance pre-injury?
- What is the effect of pre-injury job satisfaction on return to work?
- How does vocational rehabilitation impact earnings recovery?
- How does a worker's concern for being fired affect disability duration?
- How does firm size impact disability duration?

# Outcomes of Interest

| Recovery of Physical Health and Return to Work Variables | Financial Impact and Earnings Recovery           | Access to Care and Satisfaction with Care | Other                                  |
|--|--|---|--|
| Self-Reported Recovery of Physical Health                | Change in ability to afford essentials           | Issues with finding a provider            | Satisfaction with claims adjustor      |
| Substantial Return to Work                               | Change in ability to afford nonessentials        | Issues with getting medical services      | Satisfaction with DLI customer service |
| No Substantial RTW: Due to injury?                       | Yes Substantial RTW: Time to recover financially | Satisfaction with Medical Care            | Satisfaction with workplace safety     |
| Yes Substantial RTW: Duration Disability                 | Worker suffered earnings losses due to injury    | Satisfaction with Provider                |  |

\*Outcomes in red are variables included on WCRI Injured Worker Surveys (but may be measured differently).

\*Outcomes in blue are additional outcomes of interest.

# Predictors of Interest

| Worker Characteristics |                   | Job Characteristics                  |   | Medical Care & Injury Characteristics       |   | Other Characteristics     |              |
|------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------|---|---|---|---------------------------|--------------|
| Age                    | Disability status | Part-time/Full-time                  | Hourly/Salaried                               | Injury severity                             | Choice of treating physician                  | County unemployment rate  | Urbanization |
| Gender                 | Prior injury      | Industry                             | Occupation                                    | Nature of injury                            | Received vocational rehabilitation            | Injury Year               | Claim status |
| Marital status         | Prior WC claims   | Length of time with that employer    | Length of time in that industry               | Involvement in decisions about medical care | Work plan discussed with provider post-injury | Attorney involvement      | Settlement   |
| Education level        | Job history       | Pre-injury job satisfaction          | Contact with employer post-injury             |   |   | Returned to work too soon |              |
| Health insurance       | Wage level        | Concern with being fired post-injury | Relationship with employer                    |   |   |                           |              |
| Household size         | Household earners | RTW with same employer               | Work plan discussed with employer post-injury |   |   |                           |              |
| Comorbidities          |                   | Firm size                            |   |   |   |                           |              |

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# Population Description

Who is our population of interest?

- All workers with injuries that occurred between January 1, 2012 and December 31, 2015 *that received wage-loss benefits*
  - Why this time period?
    - Long-term impacts, accurate responses, correct addresses
  - Why only claims that received wage-loss benefits?
    - Expect medical-only claims to be systematically different
- Current total population size: 14,430 workers



# Current Status and Timeline

- Determine research questions and variables of interest
- Determine population
- Determine sample size and estimate cost
- ~~Draft survey~~, review, make necessary corrections
- Randomly sample
- Distribute surveys (Target date: 3/30/2018)
- Compile data (Target date: 9/30/2018)
- Analyze data (Target date: 11/31/2018)
- Research paper/Presentation of findings (Target date: 12/31/2018)



# Future: Injured Worker Survey – Part 2

- Annual injured worker surveys
- Track how injured worker outcomes change over time
- Measure before and after impacts of new laws and reforms



# Questions?/Thank you!

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