

Nippon Steel & Sumikin Stainless Steel Corporation (NSSC)

Award: Safety
Category: Safety training

Safety and Health Education for Veteran Employees

Challenge

At NSSC, there are 158 veteran employees aged 55 and older. They account for approximately 18% of all employees who get involved in works in factories.

Not only do many of these veterans have long years of experience, knowledge and skills developed through their work, they also have high moral standards and play important roles as “a mental supporter” in each work place.

On the other hand, the result of the in-house medical check-up shows that incident rate increases with age (Figure 1). Specifically, employees in a senior age group tend to have a higher risk of personal injury (e.g. bone fracture caused by a stumble) and illness.

To minimise this risk related to aging, it is important to implement countermeasures such as improving work environment. However, it is more significant that veteran employees become aware of their own health and safety risks and improve their living environment for themselves.

In order that veteran employees can keep working, there has been an increased need for the company to encourage them to pay attention to their own living environment so they come to improve their own physical and mental motivation.

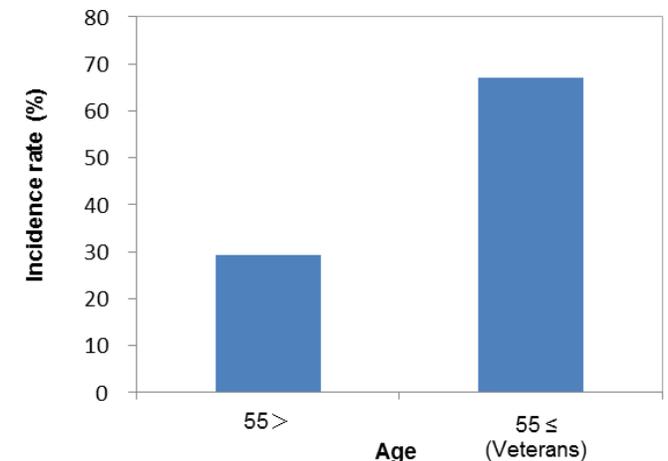


Figure 1: Relation between age and incidence rate

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Action

First of all, the company implemented bone density test of all employees and disclosed the result to them. It showed that veteran employees tend to have a high risk of fracture (Figure 2). Based on the result, the company raised awareness of those who had low bone density, and recommended regular exercise, dietary modification and outpatient care.

As a result, the company also started a new training course in 2013 which was intended for veteran employees aged 55 and older with the goal of generating their self-awareness of deteriorated physical (e.g. strength and a sense of balance) and mental (e.g. motivation) capabilities.

The details of the training are:

1. To strengthen their mind
 - Lecture by General Superintendent of the Works (“Expectation for Veteran Employees”)
 - Lecture and discussion with external instructors (“The Role of the Veteran to Activate a Workplace”)

2. Activities and precautions for veteran employees
 - Lecture on examples of activities and accidents in which veteran employees may get involved
 - Discussion among participants on preventive measures against accidents
3. Objective evaluation of your own strength
 - Lecture on physical changes and increased risks of lifestyle diseases caused by aging
 - Raising awareness of deteriorated strength and a sense of balance through self-mobility test

At the end of the training course, there was an active exchange of opinions among participants, General Superintendent and lecturers to encourage mutual cultivation.

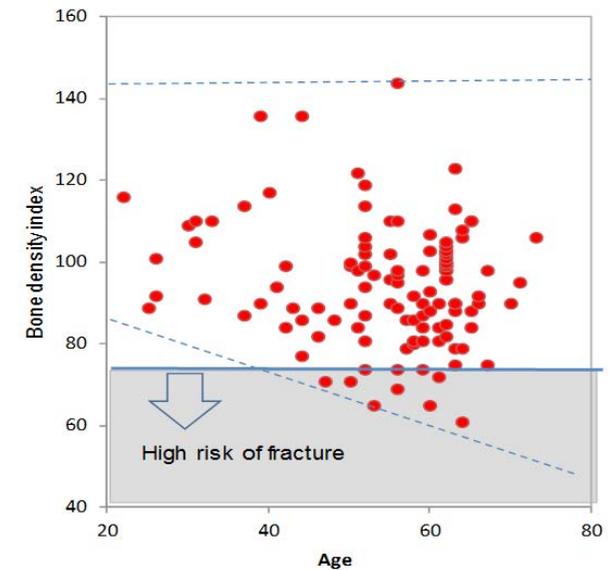


Figure 2: Bone density test result

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Outcome

Nearly every employee aged 55 and older (except for part-time employees) finished the training course in the past three years. Almost all of them answered the questionnaire that the training was effective in improving their awareness of the importance of health, safety and motivation to work.

The effect of the training can be seen in the result of a medical interview during the latest health checkup (Figure 3). Awareness of veteran employees in regards to health (e.g. smoking, dietary and exercise) has obviously improved. It was also confirmed that they had voluntarily started working on health improvement.

Since lifestyle habits from one's youth have great impacts on your health, the company is now working on a new training course for younger workers to help them better understand the importance of exercising and lifestyle habits. Furthermore, the company has also implemented hardware countermeasures such as eliminating small level differences on the floor and improving visibility by classifying dangerous places by colour.

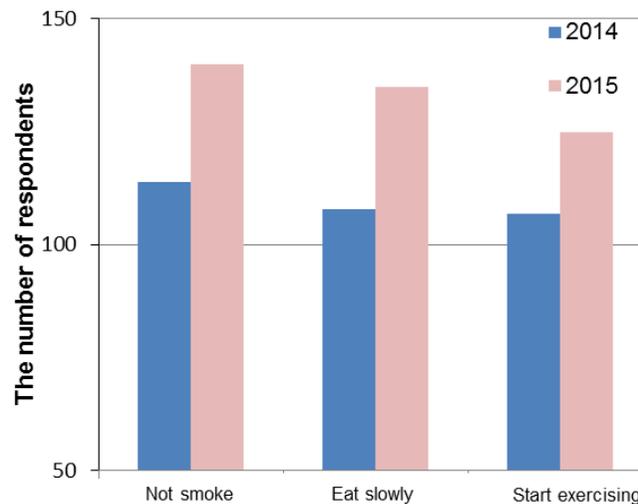


Figure 3: Improvement of health awareness after the training (aged 55 and older)