

Overview

The opioid crisis has had a substantial impact on the U.S. workforce, particularly construction workers. Studies have found that both the prevalence of opioid use and death rate due to opioid overdoses were significantly higher among construction workers than for workers in other industries. Previous CPWR research suggests that work-related injuries were strongly associated with higher prescription opioid use among construction workers, and approximately one-fourth of the industry's nonfatal injuries are musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs). Most studies on construction workers evaluated MSDs and opioid use separately; others were either clinical research or estimates based on workers' compensation data in non-construction settings, which cannot meet the needs

Key Findings

- About 34.2% of construction workers reported at least one type of musculoskeletal disorder (MSD).
- MSDs were more prevalent among construction workers who were older, self-employed, or in poorer physical or mental health; but MSDs were less likely to be reported by workers who were racial/ethnic minorities or lacked health insurance.
- Compared to workers without MSDs, prescription opioid use tripled among management methods.