

# Fit for Duty: Maximizing Employee Safety

## Background/Significance

According to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) reports, hospitals are one of the most hazardous workplace environments in terms of work related injuries and illnesses. With employee safety being of the utmost importance to our organization, we recently concluded a study to determine if utilizing our own Fit For Duty (FFD) program could help lessen the likelihood and occurrence of such events.

The FFD program is one of Sanford Health's multi-pronged approaches towards injury management prevention. The components of the FFD program include:

- **Job Function Analysis** - identifies essential functions, functional requirements, ergonomic needs, education, training & equipment
- **Job Function Descriptions (JFD)** - the physical requirements needed to perform the essential functions safely to be included in a job description
- **Job Function Tests (JFT)** - physical test to replicate the physical requirements for new hires, transfer employees & return to work post-injury
- **Ergonomics** - identify changes in employee techniques or the work area to mitigate ongoing risks
- **Education & Training** - employee education to ensure employees have skills/knowledge to perform work tasks safely

Our proactive program is designed to help stop work-related injuries before they happen, while also simplifying the return-to-work process after an injury has occurred.

## Study

Data analysis revealed:

- Total number of claims decreased 21.5%
- Total number of lost days decreased 65.6%
- Total indemnity paid decreased 86%
- Total medical paid decreased 25.2%
- Total Cost Avoidance: \$392,778

Other benefits included:

- Ergonomic solutions to identified risks
- PT and OT gear therapy toward job function demands

Unexpected benefits included:

- Staff engagement-the organization cares about me and the work that I do

