

# NIH Pathways to Prevention Workshop yields 8 recommendations for advancing NIOSH Total Worker Health program

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A small body of evidence suggests that integrated Total Worker Health interventions may help employees improve some health behaviors, but more research is necessary to determine whether these interventions decrease injuries or improve overall quality of life. The evidence review, along with expert presentations and public comment, helped to inform a report identifying research gaps and future research priorities for advancing the science of integrated interventions to improve the total health of workers. The evidence review and report summarizing 8 specific research recommendations are published in *Annals of Internal Medicine*, along with a response from the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH).

More than 151 million people work in the United States. Work provides not only income, but ideally, social connection, meaningful activity, and benefits to pay for healthcare. However, workplace factors may also contribute to adverse health outcomes traditionally considered to be unrelated to work, such as cardiovascular disease and depression. NIOSH, a part of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), began focusing on integrated approaches to worker health and safety in 2011 by creating the Total Worker Health program. Total Worker health is defined as policies, programs, and practices that integrate protection from work-related safety and health hazards with promotion of injury and illness prevention efforts to advance worker well-being. The goal of the program is to advance worker well-being by

integrating injury and illness prevention efforts with work-related safety and health hazard efforts.

Researchers for the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) reviewed published [evidence](#) on Total Worker Health Interventions to evaluate their benefits and harms. While evidence was slim in most areas of interest, the researchers did find limited evidence that integrated Total Worker Health interventions can improve [health behaviors](#), such as reducing tobacco use and sedentary behavior and improving diet. This review helped to inform recommendations that NIOSH has committed to implementing as soon as possible with the goal of setting a research agenda and filling evidence gaps.

**More information:** Abstract:

<http://www.annals.org/article.aspx?doi=10.7326/M16-0740>

Abstract (Review):

<http://www.annals.org/article.aspx?doi=10.7326/M16-0626>

Editorial: <http://www.annals.org/article.aspx?doi=10.7326/M16-0904>

Editorial: <http://www.annals.org/article.aspx?doi=10.7326/M16-0965>

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