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FÖRSTI, SINIKKA: Occupational diseases of cleaners in Finland and in Norway in the light of statistics in year 2003

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The aim of this study was to research statistics and to find out what kind of occupational diseases cleaners have, their proportional percentage and seriousness and the exposures that cause them in Norway and in Finland concerning the year 2003.

The study was carried out as a register study by using commonly available statistics as a source. In this study were used following statistics: in Finland Labour Force Survey from Statistic Finland and Vocational Examinations from Finnish National Board of Education and Statistic of Occupational Diseases from Federation of Accident Insurance Institutions from the year 2003. From Norway it was used Statistics Norway and its Corporation, - Occupation, - Working hours - and Employment statistic, statistic from Norwegian Cleaning Council (education) and Statistic of Occupational Diseases from the Norwegian Labour Investigation Authority from the year 2003. This study was an explanatory cross sectional research.

According to statistics of Federation of Accident Insurance Institutions it was registered 138 occupational diseases for cleaners in Finland and 40 in Norway according to the Norwegian Labour Investigation Authority in year 2003. In Norway the information frequency for occupational diseases is about 25-50%. In both countries most of the occupational diseases were skin diseases, in Finland 41% and in Norway 42%, second-most common were strain diseases, in Finland 30% and in Norway 25%. The third-most common group in both countries was respiratory allergies, in Finland 20% and in Norway 15%. In both countries chemical exposures caused most of the occupational diseases for cleaners. In Finland they caused 52% of all the cases and in Norway 64%. The second largest group of causes was physical strain, in Finland 29% and in Norway 25% from all of the occupational diseases. Physical exposures caused 5% and 8 % of the total amount. Biological exposures caused 14% of all the cases in Finland, when in Norway 3% of occupational diseases were caused by psychical strain. In Finland 87% of occupational diseases caused by chemical, physical or biological exposures and physical strain caused a short 1 to 3 days sick- leave. There was no information about seriousness of occupational diseases caused by chemical and physical exposures or physical and psychical strain in Norwegian statistics.

As a summary can be stated that there are no big differences between these two countries in proportional division of occupational diseases to skin diseases, strain diseases or to respiratory allergies. There are also no big differences concerning chemical, physical and biological exposures or physical strain, which are the primary causes of occupational diseases.