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8 Attorneys for Plaintiff
MAYRA NAVA-MORALES
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10 **SUPERIOR COURT FOR THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

11 **COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES**

12 MAYRA NAVA-MORALES, on behalf of
herself, all others similarly situated, and the
13 State of California,

14 Plaintiff,

15 vs.

16 WALGREEN CO.; and DOES 1 through 10,

17 Defendants.
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Unlimited Jurisdiction

Case No.: **22STCV13376**

**COMPLAINT FOR CIVIL PENALTIES
UNDER PAGA FOR FAILURE TO
PROVIDE SUITABLE SEATING**

1 Plaintiff MAYRA NAVA-MORALES (“Plaintiff”), on behalf of herself, all current and
2 former pharmacy department employees of WALGREEN CO. in California (“Walgreens” or
3 “Defendant”), and the State of California, complains and alleges as follows:

4 **INTRODUCTION**

5 1. Plaintiff, as a proxy for the State of California, brings a representative law
6 enforcement action under the Private Attorneys General Act (“PAGA”), Labor Code Section 2698
7 et seq., to recover civil penalties against Walgreens. On behalf of herself and other aggrieved
8 employees and the State of California, Plaintiff seeks to recover civil penalties (75% payable to
9 the Labor Workforce Development Agency and 25% payable to aggrieved employees) owed by
10 Defendant under Labor Code Section 2699 for failure to provide suitable seating for employees
11 who work in the pharmacy departments of Walgreens’ stores in California, such as pharmacists,
12 pharmacist interns, technicians, assistants and the like.

13 **JURISDICTION AND VENUE**

14 2. Venue is proper in the County of Los Angeles because work was performed by
15 aggrieved employees for Defendant in the County of Los Angeles and the legal obligations of
16 Defendant to Plaintiff and other aggrieved employees were breached throughout California,
17 including in Los Angeles County.

18 3. The California Superior Court has jurisdiction in this matter because Plaintiff is a
19 resident of California, Defendant is qualified to do business in California and Defendant regularly
20 conducts business in California. Further, there is no federal question at issue as the claims herein
21 are based solely on California law.

22 **THE PARTIES**

23 **Plaintiff**

24 4. Plaintiff has worked for Defendant in the Pharmacy Departments in Defendant’s
25 Walgreens stores in California as a pharmacy technician since August 2020. Although Plaintiff
26 could reasonably have performed her duties while sitting in a seat, at no time during her
27 employment did Defendant provide sufficient seating in the pharmacy where she worked for the
28 pharmacy staff. Plaintiff, and others, were only provided a seat as a reasonable accommodation

1 for a disability under Walgreens accommodation policies which required the employee to provide
2 medical documentation requiring a seat as an accommodation for a disability.

3 5. Plaintiff seeks to represent similarly situated persons who are Aggrieved
4 Employees. Aggrieved Employees are persons who, during the relevant PAGA period, worked at
5 the pharmacy department customer windows for drop-off and pick-up at the front counter, the
6 drive-thru window, the consultation window, the pharmacists' computer station, the filling station,
7 and at other work locations in Walgreens pharmacy departments in the State of California where
8 employees' work duties reasonably permitted the use of seats.

9 **Defendants**

10 6. Defendant WALGREENS CO. is a corporation organized under the laws of the
11 State of Illinois and is engaged in the business of operating retail stores that provide pharmacy
12 services throughout the State of California. At all times relevant to this action, Walgreens was the
13 employer of Plaintiff and other Aggrieved Employees.

14 7. Plaintiff is ignorant of the true names, capacities, relationships and extent of
15 participation in the conduct herein alleged, of the Defendants sued herein as Does 1 through 10,
16 but is informed and believes and thereon alleges that said Defendants are legally responsible for
17 the wrongful conduct alleged herein and therefore sues Defendants by such fictitious names.
18 Plaintiff will amend this complaint to allege their true names and capacities when ascertained.

19 8. Plaintiff is informed and believes and thereon alleges that each Defendant acted in
20 all respects pertinent to this action as the agent of other Defendants, carried out a joint scheme,
21 business plan or policy in all respects pertinent hereto, and/or the acts of each Defendant are legally
22 attributable to the other Defendants.

23 **FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION**
24 **CIVIL PENALTIES UNDER PAGA**
25 **(By Plaintiff and Aggrieved Employees against Defendants)**

26 9. Plaintiff re-alleges and incorporates by reference the foregoing allegations as
27 though set forth herein.

28 10. At all times relevant to this action, Plaintiff and other Aggrieved Employees were

1 employees of Defendants entitled to the benefits of Wage Order 7.

2 11. Section 14 of Wage Order 7 provides that “All working employees shall be
3 provided with suitable seats when the nature of the work reasonably permits the use of seats.”

4 12. At all times relevant to this action, Defendants did not comply with the
5 requirements of Section 14 of Wage Order 7. Plaintiff is informed and believes and thereon alleges
6 that, while the nature of the work performed by Plaintiff and other Aggrieved Employees in
7 Defendants’ pharmacies reasonably permitted the use of seats, Defendants did not provide Plaintiff
8 or other Aggrieved Employees with suitable seating for use during the performance of their work
9 within Defendants’ pharmacy departments without an approved accommodation for a medical
10 condition.

11 13. Defendants’ violations of Wage Order 7 constitute a violation of Labor Code
12 Section 1198, which prohibits employment under conditions of labor that violate Wage Order 7.

13 14. At all times relevant to this action, Plaintiff and other Aggrieved Employees were
14 “aggrieved employees” within the meaning of Labor Code Section 2699.

15 15. Labor Code Sections 2699(a) and (g) authorize an aggrieved employee, on behalf
16 of herself and other current or former employees, to bring a civil action to recover civil penalties
17 pursuant to the procedures specified in Labor Code Section 2699.3.

18 16. Plaintiff has complied with the procedures for bringing suit specified in Labor Code
19 Section 2699.3. By letter dated February 14, 2022, Plaintiff gave written notice to the Labor
20 and Workforce Development Agency (“LWDA”) via its online filing system and by certified
21 mail to Defendant Walgreen Co. of the specific provisions of the Labor Code alleged to
22 have been violated, including the facts and theories to support the alleged violations. A true and
23 correct copy of the February 14, 2022 letter is attached hereto as **Exhibit 1**. To date, more than 65
24 days after the postmark date of February 14, 2022, the LWDA has not advised Plaintiff
25 that it intends to investigate Plaintiff’s allegations.

26 17. Pursuant to Labor Code Sections 2699(a) and (f), Plaintiff and other Aggrieved
27 Employees are entitled to civil penalties for Defendant’s violations of Wage Order 7 and Labor
28 Code Section 1198 in the amount of one hundred dollars (\$100) for each aggrieved employee per

1 pay period for the initial violation, and two hundred dollars (\$200) for each aggrieved employee
2 per pay period for each subsequent violation. Pursuant to Labor Code Section 2699(i), 75% of the
3 civil penalties recovered shall be distributed to the LWDA, and 25% shall be distributed to the
4 aggrieved employees.

5 18. Pursuant to Labor Code Section 2699(g), Plaintiff is entitled to an award of
6 reasonable attorney's fees and costs in connection with her claims for civil penalties.

7 **PRAYER FOR RELIEF**

8 WHEREFORE, on behalf of herself and all other aggrieved employees, Plaintiff prays for
9 relief and judgment against Defendants as follows:

- 10 1. Civil penalties under Labor Code Section 2699 (75% payable to the LWDA and
11 25% payable to aggrieved employees);
12 2. Costs;
13 3. Reasonable attorney's fees; and
14 4. Such other and further relief as this Court may deem just and proper.
15

16 DATED: April 21, 2022

MOSS BOLLINGER, LLP

17 

18 By:

19 _____
20 Jeremy F. Bollinger
21 Attorneys for Plaintiff Mayra Nava-Morales
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EXHIBIT 1

To Complaint

Nava-Morales v. Wagreen Co.



Moss Bollinger
LLP

JEREMY F. BOLLINGER
310.982.2984/fax: 818.963.5954
jeremy@mossbollinger.com

February 14, 2022

VIA PAGA ONLINE FILING

Secretary Natalie Palugyai
Labor & Workforce Development Agency
PAGA ADMINISTRATOR
1515 Clay Street, Ste. 801
Oakland, California 94612

**VIA U.S. CERTIFIED MAIL
RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED**

Walgreen Co.
c/o CSC – Lawyers Incorporating Service
2710 Gateway Oaks Drive, Suite 150N
Sacramento, California 95833

Re: Notice pursuant to Labor Code Section 2699.3
Labor Code Private Attorneys General Act (“PAGA”)

Employer: Walgreen Co.

Employee: Mayra Nava-Morales, on behalf of herself and all current and former pharmacy department employees of Walgreen Co. in California

Dear Secretary Palugyai:

Pursuant to the Private Attorneys General Act of 2004, California Labor Code § 2698 *et seq.* (“PAGA”), representative employee, Mayra Nava-Morales (“Plaintiff”), on behalf of herself and all other similarly situated California employees who worked as a pharmacy assistant, intern, technician, pharmacist, or other similarly employed employee of Walgreen Co. (“Walgreens” or “Defendant”) in its pharmacy department in California, violated the California Labor Code throughout Plaintiff’s employment and within the one year prior to the mailing of this letter.

General Facts

Defendant Walgreen Co. (“Walgreens” or “Defendant”) is a nationwide drug store chain that

15300 Ventura Boulevard, Suite 207, Sherman Oaks, California 91403

operates hundreds of pharmacies in California. Plaintiff is a current pharmacy tech of Walgreens and has worked in pharmacies operated by Defendant in California since August 2020.

In each pay period during the year preceding the date of this letter, Plaintiff and other aggrieved employees have worked at various locations throughout Walgreens' pharmacies where, given the nature of their work, the work could readily be performed while seated. Plaintiff and many other aggrieved employees have suffered from the ill-effects of standing for long periods of time. There are stools for use in pharmacies that are designed to minimize the ill-effects of standing, namely sit/stand stools. In a 2002 Ergonomic Risk Assessment for Pharmacy conducted by the Naval Facilities Engineering Command, "sit/stand chairs" were recommended to "reduce fatigue and improve blood flow" for pharmacy workers who have prolonged periods of standing. (See Exh. A at p.6.) These stools provide "the support of a chair while giving the user the mobility and reach associated with standing." (Exh. A at p.6). Indeed, when Plaintiff suffered an injury to her leg in 2021, Walgreens provided her with a seat to perform her duties as a pharmacy technician. In addition, the pharmacy managers in the two Walgreens pharmacies where Plaintiff has worked have had access to a seat while they performed their pharmacist tasks; however, none of the other pharmacists, technicians or other pharmacy workers were allowed to use the seat or were provided other seats to use while performing their duties.

Violation of the IWC Wage Order's Suitable Seating Requirement

Plaintiff contends that, although the nature of her work and the work of other Walgreens employees assigned to Walgreens' pharmacies reasonably permit the use of seats, neither she nor other pharmacy employees of Walgreens in California, other than the pharmacy managers, were provided seats except as an accommodation for a disability.

Section 14 of the applicable Industrial Welfare Commission's Wage Orders, including Wage Orders 4 and 7, provides that:

All working employees shall be provided with suitable seats when the nature of the work reasonably permits the use of seats.

During the one-year period preceding this letter, Walgreens did not comply with the requirements of Section 14 of the applicable Wage Orders. Plaintiff is informed and believes and thereon alleges that, while the nature of the work performed by her and other aggrieved employees in Walgreens' pharmacies, where pharmacy associates' work duties reasonably permitted the use of seats, Walgreens did not provide Plaintiff or other aggrieved employees with suitable seating for use during the performance of their work. On information and belief, all Walgreens pharmacy employees at times work at or rotate through locations that reasonably permit the use of seats during each pay period.

Legislation requiring the provision of suitable seats to employees in California has existed since

1911. The current iteration of these requirements has been in place since 1980. In 2010, the California Court of Appeal in *Bright v. 99 Cents Only Stores*, 189 Cal. App. 4th 1472 (2011), authorized suitable seating lawsuits under the PAGA. And, in 2016, the California Supreme Court clarified the seating requirements in the case entitled *Kilby v. CVS Pharmacy, Inc.*, 63 Cal.4th 1 (2016). Despite being on notice of these potential violations, Walgreens still has not complied with the seating requirements of Section 14 of the applicable Wage Orders, including Wage Order 4. Moreover, other retail pharmacy chains in California have implemented policies that provide seating options to employees in their pharmacy departments, demonstrating that Walgreens' longstanding and continued failure to provide similar seating options to its pharmacy employees is unreasonable and in conscious disregard of the law.

Walgreens' violations of Section 14 of the applicable Wage Orders constitute a violation of Labor Code Section 1198, which prohibits employment under conditions of labor that violate the IWC Wage Orders. At all times relevant to this action, Plaintiff and other employees in Walgreens' pharmacies were "aggrieved employees" within the meaning of Labor Code Section 2699. Labor Code Sections 2699(a) and (g) authorize an aggrieved employee, on behalf of herself and other current or former employees, to bring a civil action to recover civil penalties pursuant to the procedures specified in Labor Code Section 2699.3.

Civil Penalties

As a result of the foregoing, Walgreens is liable for civil penalties as provided for by California law. Consequently, Plaintiff and all other aggrieved pharmacy employees of Walgreens, as described herein, are entitled to recover all penalties permitted by the Labor Code and penalties provided for under California law, including but not limited to Labor Code § 2698 *et seq.*

Conclusion

Walgreens violated and continues to violate the California law as described above. Plaintiff requests the agency to investigate the above allegations and provide notice of the investigation and findings pursuant to PAGA's provisions. Alternatively, Plaintiff requests that the agency inform her if it does not intend to investigate these violations so that she may file a lawsuit with respect to the allegations discussed in this letter. Thank you for your immediate attention to this matter. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at (310) 982-2984.

Sincerely,

MOSS BOLLINGER, LLP



Jeremy F. Bollinger

Enclosure (Exhibit A)

EXHIBIT A

Naval Facilities Engineering Command Ergonomic Risk Assessment for Pharmacy

INTRODUCTION

This report summarizes the ergonomic risk assessment conducted in April of 2002. This assessment is based upon interviews with supervisors, safety specialist, occupational physician, and employees as well as an evaluation by the Navy Ergonomics Program occupational Ergonomist.

The Job Requirements Physical Demands Survey (JR/PD) was administered to the employees. The JR/PD is an ergonomic survey designed to assess ergonomic risk in the workplace. The results of the JR/PD indicate that the pharmacy is an Ergonomic Problem Area (EPRA) with an overall priority score of 5, on a scale of 1-9, where 9 has the greatest priority. The shoulder/neck and leg/foot regions were found to contain significant ergonomic risk. Ergonomic risk is based upon task-related risk factors and employee discomfort. Prolonged and repeated exposure to ergonomic risk factors places employees at risk of developing musculoskeletal disorders.

Musculoskeletal Disorders (MSDs) are injuries and illnesses that affect muscles, nerves, tendons, ligaments, joints, spinal discs, skin, subcutaneous tissues, blood vessels, and bones. Work-related Musculoskeletal Disorders (WMSDs) are:

- Musculoskeletal disorders to which the work environment and the performance of work contribute significantly, or
- Musculoskeletal disorders that are aggravated or prolonged by work conditions.

The pharmacy presents opportunities to reduce the risk of WMSDs. Recommendations to the command to reduce the probability of injury include considering equipment purchase,¹ redesigning processes, and implementing administrative controls.²

Representative vendor information³ is included in the recommendations to assist in the evaluation of products and services. Recommendations to the command include gathering input from the workers, safety specialists, occupational health professionals, and other personnel to evaluate equipment before purchasing. This process will increase product acceptance, test product usability and durability, and take advantage of worker experience.

PHARMACY DEPARTMENT

Purpose of the Operation

Processing medication requests, batching medications, mixing chemotherapy, and performing quality control for completed products.

Population

The pharmacy department employs 85 personnel, of which 56 are active duty. The pharmacy consists of one primary location with 3 satellite facilities. The main pharmacy is open from 0800 to 2000 Monday through Friday and 0800 to 1200 on Saturday.

Injury Data

One wrist injury and multiple complaints of fatigue have been reported.

Description of the Operation--Processing Medication Requests

The pharmacy department processes approximately 2,000 to 3,000 prescriptions per day through the walk-up windows shown in Photo 1. Customers approach the window after their number is shown and wait until their prescription is filled. The client flow is constant throughout the workday. The procedure and time required to process prescriptions varies with the type and quantity of medication. The recent improvement of stocking commonly requested drugs near the windows in typical quantities has decreased prescription fill times.

Employees receive customer requests and retrieve a pre-processed prescription or fill the order. Photo 2 shows the employees working at the customer windows. After the workers process the paperwork, they retrieve the various medications, count out medication quantities (if applicable), and label bottles. Retrieving medications requires bending and extreme reaching as shown in figures 3 and 4. Bending to retrieve items places stress on the back and knees while extended reaches place stress on the shoulders. Twisting caps off and on prescription containers causes repetitive awkward postures in the hands and wrist with moderate hand forces.



Photo 1: Customers waiting at the windows



Photo 2: Employees working at the customer windows



Photos 3 and 4: Employees retrieving medications to fill requests

Prescription requests also arrive by phone and fax. Employees spend a great deal of time on the phone receiving prescription requests. Photo 5 shows an employee with her neck in a bent static posture. Sustained awkward postures restrict blood flow and can cause fatigue. Fatigue can be a preliminary indicator for WMSDs.

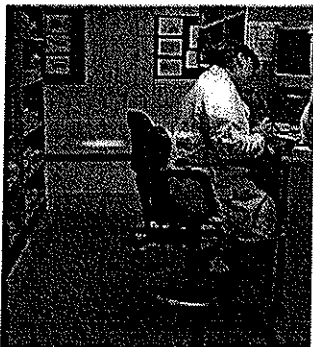


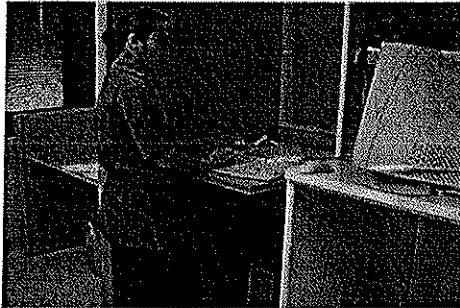
Photo 5: Employee entering prescriptions from telephone requests

The pharmacy has a linoleum floor with sparse anti-fatigue matting. Workers spend all day on their feet resulting in frequent complaints of leg/foot fatigue. Civilians are permitted to wear soft-soled shoes but active duty personnel wear uniform shoes. Employees can be seen in photo 6 trying to relieve fatigue by alternating the supporting leg and resting a foot on the ledge.



Photo 6: Employees working at the customer window

Employees enter prescriptions and client information on computers. Employees interacting with customers have computer monitors located to the side of the customer window, as shown in photos 7 and 8. When a computer monitor is located to the side of the user or below the user's line of site, he/she is required to twist or bend the neck to view the screen which can cause fatigue and discomfort.



Photos 7 and 8: Employee using computers at customer windows

Drive-through Satellite Pharmacy

The drive-through satellite pharmacy is located outside the main hospital in a parking lot. Customers drive up to a pharmacy window to pick up prescriptions, as shown in photo 9. Employees reach out of the window to take prescriptions and deliver completed orders, as shown in photo 10. Extended reaches combined with twisting and bending of the torso places employees at risk of developing WMSDs.

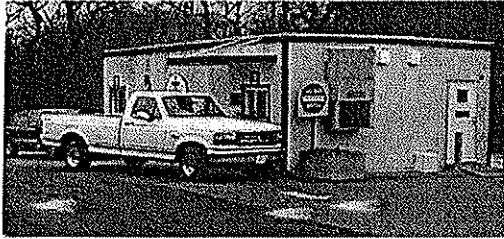


Photo 9: Drive through pharmacy



Photo 10: Employee delivering prescription

The computer workstation in the drive-through pharmacy does not encourage neutral postures while typing, as shown in photo 11. There is no legroom if the computer user is seated and the monitor and keyboard are too low for a standing workstation. Sustained awkward postures are a risk factor for WMSDs.



Photo 11: Computer workstation at drive-through window

Ergonomic Issue Description

The major ergonomic risk factors for processing medication requests are awkward postures (with excessive reaching) and prolonged standing. Stress associated with constant client flow, interacting with customers, and risk of germ exposure from sick patients compounds ergonomic risk. Stress is a contributing factor for WMSDs.

Awkward Postures. Extended reaches are examples of awkward postures that require the body to deviate from the neutral in the arms, shoulders, and back. Repeatedly performing tasks in such positions imposes increased stress on the joints and/or spinal

discs. Injuries result when stressed muscles do not have adequate time to rest and recover. The neck/shoulder discomfort found in the JR/PD may be a product of the continual reaching and awkward postures found with computer and telephone use. The configuration of most of the computer work stations result in extreme neck flexion and twisted postures

Prolonged Standing. Workers stand for the entire day. Standing for long periods can be a strenuous activity that promotes blood pooling in the legs and feet and can result in discomfort and fatigue. Leg/Foot discomfort indicated in the JR/PD may be a result of prolonged standing.

Recommendations

- Encourage workers to take stretching breaks during the day to relieve discomfort and encourage muscle movement². The following web sites include exercises that can be printed and posted. Sources should be cited when reproducing information. Additional stretching posters used successfully at Naval Shipyard Puget Sound are found in Appendix II. Web site links updated Jan 2002.

http://www.steelcase.com/servlet/ToolsInsightsServlet?ACTION=5&CONTENT_ID=202

[www.shelterpub.com/ fitness/ office fitness clinic/OFC online stretches.html](http://www.shelterpub.com/fitness/office_fitness_clinic/OFC_online_stretches.html)

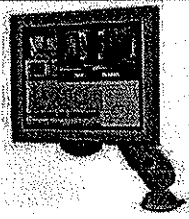
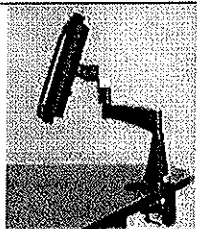
<http://www.ucsc.edu/opers/wellness/pages/officestretches.html>

[www.safety.duke.edu/Ergonomics/90 seconds.htm](http://www.safety.duke.edu/Ergonomics/90_seconds.htm)

- Encourage workers to wear soft-soled shoes to reduce fatigue and discomfort. Active duty personnel working in the pharmacy at Naval Hospital San Diego are permitted to wear personal shoes with their uniform. The Safety Office can work with the Pharmacy department to request a revised footwear policy.
- Computer workstation accessories should be provided to promote neutral postures while keying. Computer monitors should be located directly in front of the user with a monitor height equal to or slightly below the user's eye height. A monitor arm would allow the computer user to position the monitor to the correct height. A monitor on an arm can also be pulled closer to the user while still allowing them to maintain contact with customers at the window.
- Provide workers with sit/stand chairs. A sit/stand chair provides the support of a chair while giving the user the mobility and reach associated with standing. Workers could reduce fatigue and improve blood flow by using sit/stand chairs. Workers should alternate between sitting and standing during the day. Footrests or foot bars should be provided to facilitate changing of the supporting leg when standing. At customer windows, footrests should be designed to avoid interference with emergency safety devices.

- Standing workstations should have anti-fatigue matting. In areas where carts are used, anti-fatigue matting should be smooth with beveled edges. Cushioned inner soles can be provided as an alternative to anti-fatigue matting, especially for employees that walk regularly throughout the hospital making deliveries.
- Provide employees with an assistive device to reduce repetitive awkward hand motions and lower the hand force required to open prescription bottles.
- The Navy Ergonomics team is available to review equipment drawings and layout for renovation and installation for the new fill station currently proposed.
- Stock medications no higher than shoulder height and no lower than knee height (approximately 48" to 20"). If medication must be stored outside this range, provide step stools that move easily and lock into place.
- Employees who use the telephone for extended periods of time should be provided with a telephone headset to eliminate static and awkward neck postures. Contact telecommunications for a headset compatible with the current phone system.

Table 1: Representative Products for Processing Medication Requests

Description	Vendor	Product	Est Cost	Figure
Computer Workstation Accessories	Alimed 1-800-225-2610	ISE Flat Panel Monitor Arm	\$275	
		Versa Tech Monitor Arm	\$199	
	Office Organix 800-569-9236	Flat panel monitor arm	\$265	

September 5, 2002

Description	Vendor	Product	Est Cost	Figure
		Monitor arm	\$194	
		Sit/Stand monitor lift	\$273	
	Workrite 1-800-930-8989	Monitor Mover		
		Flat Panel Regular	\$278 \$278	
Sit/Stand Chairs				
	Alimed 1-800-225-2610	Portable Sit/Stand	\$300	
	Alimed 1-800-225-2610	Stand Stool RA75195	\$300	
	Global Industrial 1-800-645-1233	Lyon Sit-Stand Stool XF244849	\$223	
	C&H 1-800-336-1331	Lyon Sit-Stand Stool 41-186D	\$219	
	C&H 1-800-336-1331	Workspace Sit/Stand Stool 41-340A	\$190	
	Lab Safety and Supply 1-800-356-0783	Lyon Sit-Stand Stool OM-27282	\$221	

Description	Vendor	Product	Est Cost	Figure
Anti-fatigue matting	Alimed 1-800-225-2610	Vinyl Tech 2'x3' 3'x5'	\$48 \$119	
	C&H 1-800-336-1331	Wearwell	\$23-\$91 or \$14-\$30/foot	
	Lab Safety and Supply 1-800-356-0783	Ergo-Stance	\$48-\$119 or \$17-\$33/foot	
Cushioned Insoles	Alimed 1-800-225-2610	Plastazote	\$18/pair	

Bottle Opener—manual assist	North Coast Medical 1-800-235-7054	Oxo Good Grips Opener	\$9	
Electric Bottle Opener	Independent Living Products	Open-Up	\$42.00	
Bottle Opener—manual assist	Freedom Living Devices 1 (866) 699-9300	Rubber Lid Gripper	\$3	

September 5, 2002

Bottle Opener--manual assist	Freedom Living Devices	Deluxe Jar Opener (Zim Jar Opener)	\$16.00	
Bottle Opener--manual assist	Freedom Living Devices	Multi Purpose Jar Wrench	\$9.00	

Description of the Operation--Compounding Station

Employees in the compounding station formulate lotions, creams, ointments, and oral solutions. After mixing the appropriate medications, the employee scoops the compound from the metal mixing bowl into a large graduated cylinder, as shown in photo 12. The employee then pours the liquid from the graduated cylinder into smaller prescription bottles, as shown in photo 13. While pouring the mixture into the small bottles, the worker rests his arms on the edge of the sink area. The edge of the sink creates a contact stress or compression on the soft tissues of the forearms and elbows. The employee currently has a large bursa on his elbow, which he attributes to this task. The mixing bowl has a metal tab on each side of the bowl, photo 14, which the employee uses to lift the bowl, photo 15. The small tabs are not designed to be handles and are difficult to use for lifting the heavy bowl, as shown in photo 15.



Photo 12: Pouring lotion from the mixing bowl



Photo 13: Pouring lotion into small bottles



Photo 14: Mixing Bowl

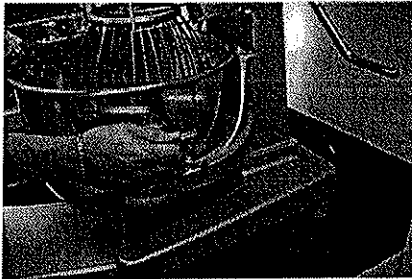


Photo 15: Lifting the mixing bowl

Ergonomic Issue Description

The employees are exposed to awkward sustained postures, occasional heavy lifting, and contact stress to the elbows and forearms. The combinations of ergonomic stressors place the employee at risk of developing a WMSDs.

Contact Stress

The forearms and elbows contain nerves that are close to the skin's surface. Compression of these nerves between a hard sharp surface, such as the edge of the sink, and the body can lead to nerve disorders.

Awkward Postures

Holding the arms in a sustained awkward posture while transferring lotion can reduce blood flow to the upper extremities and lead to fatigue. The employee also raises his shoulders to increase stability and reduce spillage, which places stress on the shoulders and neck.

Contributing Factors

The worker also experiences physical and mental tension associated with trying to achieve a high level accuracy in pouring. Sustained muscle contraction prevents muscle recovery and leads to fatigue.

Recommendations

- An arm rest or edge protector is recommended to reduce contact stress to the employee's forearm and elbow when filling individual prescription bottles. The employee could also perform the transfer of lotion in a new location with a deeper surface rather than over the sink. A pan or disposable mat could be used for possible spills.
- A new dispensing system should be investigated for feasibility. Naval Medical Center San Diego should be contacted to determine the vendor for their automated compound dispensing system.
- The current metal ladle should be replaced with a user-friendly version with a larger handle to reduce contact stress to the hand and the force required to hold the tool.

Table 2: Representative Products for Compounding Station

Description	Vendor	Product	Est Cost	Figure
Ladle	OXO (800) 545-4411	Stainless Steel Ladle	\$9	