

Editorial

Occupational safety and health of flexible work style

In the COVID-19 pandemic era, the trend for flexible working style is accelerating. A flexible working style can be defined as a work with a high degree of freedom in working hours and work locations such as remote or gig work. This trend is expected to spread in the post-pandemic world based on the internet technology progress and globalization, and more companies are giving workers more control over their daily work based on self-management and self-discipline. Several studies are performed on the association between flexible working styles and workers' health outcome^{1–4}), however, the resulting demand for increased autonomy and self-management may put an undue burden on workers. This special issue deals with the impact of flexible working styles on workers' health and safety and social life.

In this Volume 60: Issue 4 (2022) of *Industrial Health*, six studies of original articles have been accepted for publication, viz (1) Yokoyama *et al.*, Burnout and poor perceived health in flexible working time in Japanese employees: the role of self-endangering behavior in relation to workaholism, work engagement, and job stressors, (2) Du *et al.*, Relationship between using tables, chairs and computers, and improper postures when doing VDT work in work from home, (3) Oakman *et al.*, Strategies to manage working from home during the pandemic; the employee experience, (4) Matthews *et al.*, Gender difference in working from home and psychological distress – A national survey of U.S. employees during the COVID-19 Pandemic, (5) Wielgoszewska *et al.*, Association between home working and mental health by key worker status during the Covid-19 pandemic. Evidence from four British longitudinal studies, (6) Morita *et al.*, Relationship between occupational injury and gig work experience in Japanese workers during the COVID-19 pandemic: A cross-sectional internet survey. These intriguing articles are listed not on the date of acceptance but on the categories of the theme. Other articles submitted to this Special Issue are now under review and we editors expect publications in the following regular issues of *Industrial Health*.

From the viewpoints of flexible working patterns, Yokoyama *et al.* analyzed the associations between these

working styles and poor perceived health in relation to work-related behavioral factors among 600 Japanese full-time employees. The following category of working from home consists of four original articles. Du *et al.* focused on ergonomics and work environment in working from home, and they analyzed musculoskeletal disorders under improper postures of workers in everyday furniture and computers at home. Regarding optimal work from home management strategies, Oakman *et al.* analyzed the experience of Australian employees working from home during the COVID-19 pandemic using a qualitative approach. Matthews *et al.* focused on the gender differences in working from home and psychological distress based on the dataset of the U.S. employees working from home in this pandemic time. As for the association between working from home and mental health, Wielgoszewska *et al.* used four British longitudinal cohort studies, and clarified the mental health outcomes of the key workers working from home, which will definitely shed light on the current occupational problems globally. On the other hand, Morita *et al.* focused on a new theme of working style as gig work, and evaluated the relationship between occupational injury risk and gig work experiences based on the internet Japanese workers survey during this pandemic time.

References

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