National Youth Safety Essay Scholarship Contest Winner

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The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) was developed to provide guidelines for safe working conditions. The 10-hour training provided by CareerSafe helps workers to know their limits and what they should and shouldn’t do while on the job in order to stay safe. Some things that are learned in the OSHA training is to use protective gloves for appropriate situations because we never know if a person might be infectious or not. Another useful tip we learned was to use proper technique to perform safe lifts with wheelchairs and transferring patients. This long training also informs us about HIPAA and that patients have a right to keep their information confidential. The purpose of this essay is to show how OSHA has helped many people stay safe in the workplace so that they can continue to work and be successful in our society.

Throughout the OSHA training program workers learn that blood borne pathogens (BBP) are extremely dangerous. The key component to keeping yourself safe around possible bloodborne pathogens is the theme: “If it is wet and not yours, don’t touch it.” Workers learn how to properly protect themselves in certain situations. For example, OSHA helped me stay safe when I volunteered to work cross country races. As I assisted the staff at the finish line, I noticed that some runners would finish the race with cuts and blood; others would finish the race spitting or vomiting. I would help the runners get up and keep walking without risk of infection to myself because OSHA training required me to wear protective gloves and be aware of any risks that include any type of bodily fluid.

Using the correct technique for lifting heavy objects or assisting patients is also taught in OSHA training. When I worked at a senior living center, I learned the steps for helping patients out of their wheelchairs and transferring them to their chair or bed. Learning safe lifts and transfers through the OSHA training kept me injury free while in the workplace. I also know my limits and that there is no need to risk my health by lifting something that is too heavy.

One of the most important topics discussed in the OSHA training was HIPAA. The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) protects an individual’s private information from being shared with those not involved in the care of the individual. Used in many hospitals, clinics, and other health related locations, HIPAA protects every patient’s information and allows patients to feel comfortable with health care professionals. Throughout the year, I have experienced many situations where I have been reminded of the HIPAA practices and the need to keep information confidential. When I worked at a senior living facility, residents would tell me personal information and I knew that I was not allowed to share that information with family, friends, or others. I must always handle myself professionally when on the job site. Professionalism requires me to follow the HIPAA guidelines. While working at another job site this year, I recognized a patient that walked through the door. Throughout the appointment, the patient noticed my ID card and began to understand the connection between us. She was confident that I understood the HIPAA guidelines and that I would not be allowed to share any information regarding her appointment outside of my job site office. The training that CareerSafe provided to me has trained me to keep patient information confidential and to not violate HIPAA practices.

Going through the long OSHA training program has helped me be informed on how to stay safe when on the job. Learning about many different topics in the training has already had an effect on me while at my job shadow sites. Using the correct technique for assisting patients from wheelchairs to their beds or chairs kept me injury-free. This training emphasized the use of protective gloves to reduce the chance of accidental infection from blood borne pathogens when helping others because you never know if someone is infectious. After going through the 10-hour training, provided by CareerSafe, I know that I will be a better candidate for job opportunities and employers won’t have to train me. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration develops guidelines and practices so that all employees can stay safe and free from injuries and illnesses on the job. I am proud to say that I am OSHA certified.

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