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| **Gutpela Lek – Good Leg (making foot fungus fun)** |
| **Setting/problem**In 2014 an international gas project commenced operations in Papua New Guinea (PNG). Lost time injury was noted to be high in the national workforce, due to an unforeseen health issue – severe fungal foot infections.Analysis of the issue determined that national workers were unfamiliar with the required closed footwear. The warm wet environment in the closed footwear created maceration of the skin of the feet, resulting in severe fungal infections and inability to work. Following a series of interviews with the onsite medics, the chief medical officer, national workforce representatives, podiatrists, supervisors and subject matter experts, we determined that education and training of the national workforce on the problem and solution had unique challenges. Issues to overcome included:* Nationals typically have a broad foot, size E+.
* Many workers had never worn closed shoes or socks.
* Workers were unfamiliar with signs and symptoms of foot infections and would present late, when the condition was severe.
* Reporting of illness was avoided due to the potential loss of income.
* Culturally feet are not recognised as a separate body part. There is no term ‘foot’ in the local language. There are over 800 living languages in PNG.

**Intervention**A foot hygiene training programme was developed “Gutpela Lek” (Good Leg). **Key messages**:* how to care for socks and footwear
* prevention of foot infections: foot hygiene, personal hygiene, self-examination
* awareness of consequences of untreated foot infections
* benefits of early intervention

**Training and inspection programme**:* supervisor training
* correct fitting of footwear
* care of footwear
* weekly foot inspections

**Communication elements:*** Interactive toolbox talks delivered by trained onsite supervisors on a weekly basis, with the aid of visual flipcharts and scripts - translated and interpreted in various PNG languages
* Posters and hand outs to reinforce key actionable messages from the talks.

**Resources:** Soap, Treatment (antifungal powder, adhesive plasters), Socks and boots. **Incentives:** Signing the plaster “Big Foot”, Certificates, Stickers, stamps**Outcomes*** Positive uptake and interest. Increased knowledge. Significant decrease in foot infections and lost time injury.

**Implications**The programme’s positive results highlighted the importance of customised health promotion programmes, engagement of all stakeholders, and of cultural awareness in health and safety. **Preferred presentation format**Oral Presentation |