Health issues prevalent among female FDWs

New report highlights problems of migrant workers in Asia

FDWs in 11 different countries between 1995 and 2010, investigated health problems related to adverse working conditions, mental health and infectious diseases. Studies on knowledge and attitudes towards health were also reviewed. According to the scientists, the results indicate that more research into the occupational health hazards and health of FDWs is needed.

“FDWs in Asia suffer from dental problems and other illnesses owing to adverse working conditions, poor working hours, inadequate housing or a lack of privacy. In addition, owing to their alien status in their host country, they lack legal protection from psychological and physical abuse, among other threats. Although their numbers are increasing, so far little has been known about their health issues, the researchers said. Their report, based on 52 studies and questionnaires conducted among FDWs in 11 different countries between 1995 and 2010, investigated health problems related to adverse working conditions, mental health and infectious diseases. Studies on knowledge and attitudes towards health were also reviewed. According to the scientists, the results indicate that more research into the occupational health hazards and health of FDWs is needed. “As the demand for domestic help rapidly increases in the developed world, migration of labour from the less developed to the more advanced economies will only grow. Given the critical economic role FDWs play by contributing vital foreign remittances to the economy, labour-sending countries have a vested interest in easing the migration process. Hence, ensuring the safety and health of FDWs should be important to both the host and labour-sending countries,” the report states.

Owing to economic development, demand for domestic workers has increased by 50 per cent over the last 15 years, according to labour organisations. Besides Singapore, Hong Kong and Taiwan are currently the countries with the largest numbers of FDWs.  

Learn more about dental problems among FDWs at the upcoming webinar: "How to understand high tech diagnostic aids and digital impression systems" on 25 September 2013.