A Detailed Analysis of RSIGuard's Health Status Reports Functionality

About Remedy Interactive
Remedy Interactive is the leading provider of software that streamlines ergonomic programs in large organizations, globally. The Company's flagship product, the *Office Ergonomics Suite* (OES), assesses risk, trains employees, optimizes work patterns, and collects data to enable organizations to focus their resources, automate their ergonomics programs, and ultimately reduce costs. The OES's management features are designed to allow companies to do more with less by harnessing the potential of automation.

Remedy Interactive's *Office Ergonomic Suite* is the winner of the 2002 National Ergonomics Conference Attendees' Choice Award for Product Most Likely to Improve Profitability and Productivity.

Remedy Interactive works with Fortune 1000 clients including Hewlett-Packard Company (NYSE: HPQ), ChevronTexaco (NYSE: CVX), and VISA.

For more information, please visit www.rsiguard.com or call (800) 776-5545 or (415) 332-6433.

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Introduction

Remedy Interactive's RSIGuard software is the leading desktop injury prevention application for the office environment. RSIGuard includes many components, including BreakTimer, ForgetMeNots, KeyControl and AutoClick functions.

This document provides RSIGuard administrators detail about the principles behind RSIGuard's Health Status Reports feature. End-user documentation for Health Status Reports is available at http://www.rsiguard.com/help/helphsr.htm.

What is a Health Status Report (HSR)?

A Health Status Report (or HSR as we refer to it within this document) is primarily a discomfort survey for employees. Discomfort surveys can serve various roles in an organization, and RSIGuard's HSR feature is customizable to meet various possible utilizations.

RSIGuard HSRs provide a user the ability to describe discomfort and other issues they are experiencing at the computer. The survey can be presented periodically, on user-demand, or a combination of both. The user interface for the survey differs based on your organization's particular needs, as demonstrated in the following example screens:

Example 1: Users are provided with free text comment fields (lower right) and Privacy Information button.

Example 2: Free text fields are replaced with the reminder to "Report Discomfort Early" and no privacy button is shown. The user is given the option to request that s/he be contacted for assistance.

Options for gathering information via HSRs

To meet the needs of your organization and respect the resources available to deal with survey information, HSRs can be configured to collect and provide different information.

The user can provide the following information:
- Name (login ID is also automatically part of the report to insure unique identification of the sender of the HSR).
- Current and typical discomfort levels (to help see current status as well as whether symptoms are improving, worsening, or staying the same).
- Frequency of discomfort (to help assess severity).
- A report reason (set automatically to "scheduled report" for scheduled reports, and user-specifiable for HSRs initiated by the user).
- Medical status, if applicable.
- Contact information and a "Please Contact Me" request box (if this option is enabled). This option should only be enabled if contact requests will be closely monitored and acted upon.
- Three true/false questions may be included. By default these are:
  - "I believe my discomfort is work-related" *(gives an employee the option of clarifying that their discomfort may be non-work-related)*
  - "My workstation setup is causing me discomfort" *(to indicate that improvements to physical environment issue may address issues)*
  - "Work-related stress is causing me discomfort" *(to indicate that psycho-social factors may be causing discomfort)*
- Additional comments about the discomfort or other issues (if this option is enabled). This option should only be enabled if these comments will be closely monitored.
- An upper-body discomfort grid that allows a user to specify precisely where they are having symptoms (to help document current discomfort and progression, as well as, within GroupInsight, to track associations between work-patterns and particular types of discomfort).

So, for example, if your organization wishes to use HSRs as an incident analysis tool or a method of tracking organizational issues, you would want to disable features like contact requests and free-text comments (which require that someone be monitoring the information provided). However, if you wish to use HSRs as a tool for tracking individual issues and as a mechanism for employees to report discomfort to your team, you'd want to enable these options.

Options for providing information via HSRs

If your organization chooses to include the privacy button in HSR surveys, clicking on this button will send the user either to your organization's custom privacy page (provided by your organization), or RSIGuard's default privacy policy description (in which case your organization must agree to abide by this policy). The default privacy policy page looks like this (and can be viewed online at http://www.rsiguard.com/help/Discomfort/privacy.php):

Privacy Information about Health Status Reports

This document addresses some important privacy-related questions about discomfort survey information at your organization.

- Who will have access to my survey information?

- Why should I answer this survey honestly?

- How will my information be used?

Who will have access to my survey information?

Your organization limits access to information you provide via *Health Status Report discomfort surveys* to use by personnel who manage safety. The data is not available to other managers within the organization.

Why should I answer this survey honestly?

There are 2 reasons an organization collects discomfort data.

The first is to measure how well its safety program is doing at keeping people working comfortably. Answering honestly helps your organization understand if measures it takes to improve the work environment are actually working. Providing accurate information is key to helping the organization succeed in this effort.

The second reason is to help an ergonomist, medical practitioner, or safety manager understand the pattern of *your* discomfort as it relates to workload, break-taking patterns, exposure to repetition, etc. These stakeholders really want to help you work more comfortably, but they can only help if they have accurate information.

But you are the greatest beneficiary! Discomfort from computer work can affect all aspects of your life -- getting quality sleep, being able to play with your children, carrying groceries, playing sports, or even being able to hold a beverage cup. It is much easier to address discomfort in its early stages than to wait until symptoms become more serious and chronic. If you have any level of discomfort, your risk of it worsening is much greater if you don't receive help. So please answer the survey as accurately as possible.
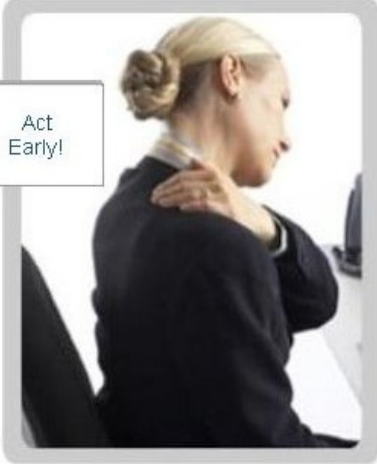
How will my information be used?

People are the most important part of any organization, so keeping people comfortable is paramount to maintaining morale, productivity, and a healthy organizational culture.

That is why your organization has pledged to use the information from this survey for one purpose only -- to help keep you and your coworkers as comfortable as possible.

When a user clicks "Submit Report" the report is sent to the appropriate network/web location or stored locally, depending on how your organization has requested this be configured (see the RSIGuard Program Administrators Guide, section 1.9c for details).

If your organization opts to do so, after a report is submitted, then if the user has indicated initial or increasing discomfort, they are referred to a website of your organization's choice (or the default page provided by RSIGuard).

This default page reminds users that they still need to report their discomfort using the appropriate mechanism for your organization. Ideally, you will provide customizations for this screen to guide the employee further.

This option is valuable if HSRs are not considered a formal mechanism for reporting discomfort in your organization and/or if HSR reports will not be closely monitored. Your custom webpage can include links that automatically connect employees with your injury reporting system, EH&S pages, or other resources you wish to provide.

Options for user access to Health Status Reports

There are 2 primary mechanisms for users to submit HSRs. Your organization can use one or both of these mechanisms.

Users can submit HSRs on demand:

If you choose this option, RSIGuard includes a "Submit Health Status Report" option in the Tools menu. Users can click on this to submit HSRs whenever they wish.

Users can be prompted to submit surveys periodically:

If you choose this option, you specify a periodic schedule to request that users submit a survey. The period can be "every N days" (e.g. every 180 days) or "weekly on day X" (e.g. weekly on Friday). You can also specify that the survey occur at the start of the day, or some number of hours of work into the day.

At the scheduled times, users are asked to submit an HSR. You can optionally give users the choice to skip a schedule report.
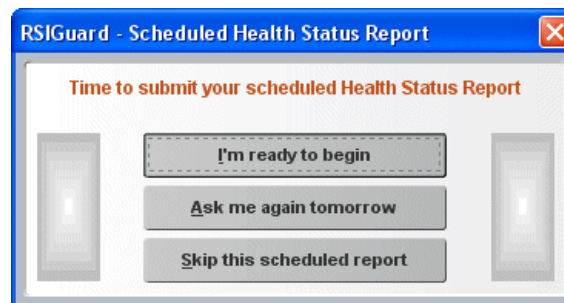
In this example, the employee has the option to start the report, wait until the next day or the next schedule submission time.

Purpose of Health Status Reports

Now that we have covered what HSRs are, let's consider the value they provide. There are 3 primary ways that HSRs provide value to an organization.

- Early Discomfort Reporting
- Finding Discomfort/Injury Causality
- Tracking Employee Issues

Early discomfort reporting: Research has shown that early detection of discomfort is associated with reduced severity and likelihood of injuries. By scheduling periodic HSRs in RSIGuard (e.g. every 90 days), you can regularly check in with employees. This allows you to prevent situations where employees are in discomfort for long periods of time without getting help – a situation that likely yields more serious discomfort or more significant injuries. An employee who might not be likely to report minor discomfort is more likely to do so if they complete an HSR that has an option to specify "minor discomfort". Your organization can then take action to correct issues that might be causing these initial discomfort reports before they become serious and require more significant interventions.

Finding discomfort/injury causality: Using GroupInsight, you can determine risk associations in your organization and within sub-populations (e.g. in a call center, or an engineering group) based on presence of particular work patterns. For example, in a call center, you can determine the relative incidence of discomfort among shift workers with differing shift lengths. In an engineering group, you can determine, e.g., which aspect of mousing (i.e. time on mouse, mouse clicks, mouse drag/drops) is most associated with discomfort, and what levels have a reasonable associated risk – and set limits based on objective, empirical data from your own population. To learn more about reporting on the information gathered with Health Status Reports, please visit http://www.rsiguard.com/reports

Tracking employee issues: HSRs allow you to document discomfort over the course of time to learn about how it progresses within your organization, within sub-populations, and for individuals (e.g. for incident analysis). Because you can also specify 3 organization-specific questions, you can track additional relevant information as well.

Conclusion

Health Status Reports offer an organization the ability to gather and provide important information from/to employees on a periodic basis. It can be an important tool in your overall injury prevention program for computer users.

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