



**Institute
for Work &
Health**

Research Excellence
Safe Work
Healthy Workers

Institute for Work & Health Activity Plan 2024/25



2024/25 Activity Plan

**Research
Knowledge Transfer & Exchange and Communications
Corporate Services**

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The 2024/25 Activity Plan represents the second year in the Institute's Strategic Plan and Scientific Research Plan for the period 2023 to 2027. The activities outlined within this current plan take place within the context of the Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development (MLITSD)'s 2021-26 Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Strategy, Prevention Works. This strategy provides a framework for Ontario's OHS system partners that aims to keep Ontario one of the healthiest and safest jurisdictions to work, in Canada and across the world. IWH's activities remain well aligned to support the objectives of the Prevention Works strategy. Specifically, our research activities will contribute to building the best evidence to target OHS initiatives and measure the performance of the OHS system, support efforts to strengthen OHS practices in Ontario workplaces, and include greater investment in efforts to understand the needs of Ontario's small businesses. The Institute is committed to continuing to support the strategic priorities identified by the MLITSD. The 33 research projects outlined in the Institute's 2024/25 Activity Plan, supported by our integrated and active knowledge transfer exchange and communication activities, will focus on the following key areas, as outlined in our current strategic plan:

- The Institute has a longstanding commitment to describe the sectors, occupations and workers who are employed in contexts that have the potential for the greatest harm. Over the next year, IWH projects will identify the hazards and other workplace characteristics associated with the highest risk of work injury and illness, in particular those that lead to critical or fatal injuries. In doing so we will inform prevention activities to mitigate or intervene on these work contexts. We will do this, in part, through building data capacity to both identify these sub-groups of the labour market, and also to understand changes in risk over time in response to system activities.
- Work is changing in important ways, with various technologies changing how, where and what types of work in which people engage. IWH projects will better understand the nature and extent of these changes and whether they contribute to, or reinforce, inequalities in labour market participation, working conditions or health conditions in the labour market.
- Canada and Ontario have an increasingly diverse workforce, both culturally and linguistically. IWH will conduct research to better understand how this affects health and safety awareness, training, and health outcomes.
- We will work collaboratively with our system partners to identify ways to make OHS easier for small businesses. We will conduct a range of research to further understand the role that workplace size plays in employer responses to OHS, and how small businesses develop and implement OHS policies in the workplace to mitigate workplace hazards.
- Employers and regulatory authorities are increasingly recognizing the importance of the psychosocial work environment and the impact of certain work dimensions on the mental health of workers. We will conduct work to better address psychosocial factors in the workplace and to provide evidence on what works and does not work in enabling

workers with work-related mental health conditions to return to work, especially those with post-traumatic stress disorders.

- We will contribute to high-quality research evidence to support workplace practices in the prevention of work disability, in particular for injuries that are invisible and episodic (conditions that cause disability in the personal or work lives of 6.2 million people over the age of 15 in Canada).
- We will continue to build collaborative research and knowledge exchange partnerships with our partners in the Ontario prevention system. This includes forums such as the IWH-chaired Prevention Knowledge Exchange Group but will expand to include opportunities to bring together stakeholders around important OHS topics. We will also continue our commitment to involve workplace parties directly in many of our research projects.

Dr. Peter Smith
President & Senior Scientist

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Introduction

The Institute for Work & Health's mission is to conduct and mobilize research that supports policy-makers, employers and workers in creating healthy, safe and inclusive work environments. We do this by contributing high-quality and relevant research in two broad areas: (1) understanding how the conditions and organization of work impact the health, safety and wellbeing of workers, and identifying and evaluating programs and practices that prevent work-related injury and disease, and (2) identifying ways to improve the management, support and work participation of people who are injured, facing health challenges, living with a disability or otherwise experiencing exclusion from work.

The Institute's work is achieved through three programs. The Research Program focuses on the prevention of work-related injury and illness and the prevention and management of work disability. The Knowledge Transfer & Exchange (KTE) and Communications Program builds and maintains relationships with stakeholders to enable the ongoing exchange of information and research evidence, and produces and disseminates a wide range of lay-friendly products (tools, guides, policy briefings, newsletter articles, videos, infographics) to ensure research findings are known, taken up and applied. The Corporate Services Program supports human resources, financial and facility management at the Institute, and also provides support to the Institute's Board of Directors.

The 2024/25 Activity Plan describes individual research projects to be conducted over the course of the next year. Each description outlines the project objectives, staffing complement, stakeholder involvement, and alignment to the objectives of the Ontario Prevention Office's Occupational Health and Safety Strategy, Prevention Works, and to its Research Roadmap. The work of the KTE and Communications Program and the organizational support role played by the Corporate Services Program are also described in the plan.

Research

Research projects for 2024/25 fall into two broad areas outlined on the previous page, which can be summarised as ‘work as a determinant of health’ and ‘health as a determinant of work.’ The two exceptions for this are projects 3435 and 0951, which do not fall under either of the two broad categories and instead have themes with cross-cutting applications. Each research project is also aligned with one or more of the six priority research areas outlined in the IWH Research Plan, 2023-2027. These priority areas are: the changing nature of work and the future of work; longstanding work and health issues; mental health and work; organizational context, including small business; worker diversity and inclusion; and work and health within the broader societal context. In addition to these two broad themes and six priority areas, IWH also has a dedicated focus to building data and researcher capacity within the area of work and health. As part of our research efforts, we will identify and access important data sources that are required to understand and evaluate occupational health and safety system partner activities; determine existing information gaps in the data landscape; and pursue novel data linkages and identify and address information gaps in the data landscape. In all our work, we will utilize the most appropriate and rigorous research methods, taking a multidisciplinary approach.

Knowledge Transfer & Exchange and Communications

KTE and Communications at the Institute aims to put research findings into the hands of key decision-makers and other research users in a timely, accessible, and useful manner. Decision-makers include workers, employers, OHS professionals, policy-makers, clinicians, other researchers and more. Additionally, KTE and Communications aim to strengthen stakeholder relationships and to make research evidence available, understandable, and useable. The work of KTE and Communications directly advances the objectives of the Ontario Prevention Office’s Research Roadmap, by supporting the development of research partnerships and by producing and disseminating evidence-based information products.

Corporate Services

Corporate Services provides facilities support, human resources management, and finance and accounting capacity for the Institute. It also oversees the purchase and maintenance of equipment and supplies. The administrative infrastructure and human resources functions support the diversity and complexity of work at the Institute. It also provides liaison and support to the Institute’s Board of Directors.

Guide to acronyms, affiliations and standard sentences

In the following project pages, IWH uses two standard sentences in the Knowledge Translation Strategies fields to refer to a host of activities.

The sentence that reads “This project uses an integrated KTE approach” encompasses the following:

The Institute’s integrated knowledge transfer and exchange (KTE) approach involves stakeholders throughout the research process. Often acting through a stakeholder advisory committee, they help tailor the study question, interpret findings using language and contexts relevant to other stakeholders, and disseminate research results to their networks.

The sentence that reads “Research findings will be tailored for lay audiences and disseminated through established IWH communication vehicles” encompasses the following:

Using the format best suited to the findings, IWH shares plain-language findings through newsletter articles, research summaries, infographics, videos, policy briefings, media releases and/or articles tailored for external stakeholder publications. Dissemination vehicles include the Institute’s monthly e-newsletter IWH News and its social media channels, which include X (formerly Twitter), LinkedIn and YouTube. Findings are also shared via the Institute’s IWH Speakers Series webinars and at relevant stakeholder (non-academic) events. Finally, findings are shared in peer-review journals and at academic conferences. Through these dissemination vehicles, IWH reaches a wide range of audiences, including policy-makers (especially in employment, labour, disability and workers’ compensation), employers, workers, health and safety professionals, disability management professionals, public health practitioners, clinicians, academics, research funders and more.

Throughout the following pages, **acronyms** are used to refer to organizations with which most readers in Ontario’s Prevention System are likely familiar. The acronyms are spelled out below for reference, in alphabetical order.

Please note that the indicated project end date refers to the end of the funding period, not necessarily the end of project publication and dissemination activities. This is due to the time it takes to write journal articles and get them through the peer-review process, as well as the time it takes to create lay-friendly products communicating research findings.

Please note that project costs are those estimated for the year and are subject to change year over year. However, total project costs will align with total project funding by the end of a project.

CCOHS – Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety
CCRW – Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work
CIHR – Canadian Institutes of Health Research
DLSPH – Dalla Lana School of Public Health
ESDC – Employment Standards Development Canada (Government of Canada)
HSAs – Ontario’s health and safety associations
IWH – Institute for Work & Health
IRCC – Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada
KTE – knowledge transfer and exchange
MLITSD – Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development
OCRC – Occupational Cancer Research Centre (Ontario Health)
OHCOW – Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers
OHS – occupational health and safety
PSHSA – Public Services Health & Safety Association
RTW – return to work
SSHRC – Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council
WSIB – Workplace Safety and Insurance Board
WSN – Workplace Safety North
WSPS – Workplace Safety & Prevention Services

Note: All research team members are **affiliated** with the Institute for Work & Health unless otherwise indicated (i.e., Name (Organization)).

Prevention of work-related injury and illness

In this section, we provide an overview of the Institute's research plans for 2024/25 focused on the prevention of work-related injury and illness, and the promotion of health and wellbeing. Together these projects address each of our six research priority areas. For many projects we have engaged with different stakeholder groups, including employers, organized labour, health and safety associations, OHS professionals, and other partners to act as advisers on the research and to support the transfer of research evidence to policy and practice when the research is completed.

Alignment to the Prevention Works strategy

For each project we have also indicated alignment with the objectives of the 2021-26 Occupational Health and Safety Strategy, *Prevention Works*.

In the year ahead, we will engage in a strong and diverse portfolio of research to strengthen information on the causes of occupational injury in Ontario and the targets for prevention initiatives. This aligns with the 2021-26 strategy of building and using the best evidence to target initiatives and measure performance.

In alignment with the Prevention Works strategy, the Institute's research program has a strengthened focus on supporting the needs of small business. This portfolio of work includes better using existing data resources to understand the incidence of work-related injury and illness in small businesses in Ontario.

The Institute's research program will also continue to focus on understanding the experiences of recent immigrants in the Ontario labour market, understanding how work and home environments interact and impact worker health and wellbeing, and better understanding leading indicators of work and their association with mental health conditions.

Taken together, the following research projects not only help build the best evidence but will facilitate the process through which this knowledge can be used to improve occupational health and safety knowledge and practices, and support workplace parties to fulfil their OHS roles and responsibilities.

Understanding occupational injury risks in Ontario (1175)

URL: <https://www.iwh.on.ca/projects/occupational-injury-risks-in-ontario>

Reasons for the project: The Expert Advisory Panel on Occupational Health & Safety reported to the Minister of Labour in December 2010. Legislation was passed in June 2011 to implement a range of recommendations from the panel, including the establishment of a Prevention Office within the Ministry with responsibility for developing and executing an integrated occupational health and safety (OHS) strategy for the province.

The Expert Advisory Panel included a recommendation to improve the indicators of OHS performance at both workplace and systems levels. In 2019, the Ontario Auditor-General recommended strengthening investments in research to better understand the effectiveness of measures to deter OHS violations. In responding to these recommendations, the MLITSD, as it is now called, made “to build and use the best evidence” a priority objective in its 2021-2026 OHS strategy, *Prevention Works*.

This project supports the implementation of this objective through concerted efforts to build data capacity in Ontario that can support and evaluate prevention activities. These activities will involve both primary data collection, identification of new secondary data sources, and data linkage. The activities undertaken as part of this project are closely related to those undertaken as part of project 1176.

Objectives of the project:

- Build data capacity in Ontario through the identification of relevant sources of OHS information and labour market participation relevant to better understanding the distribution of occupational exposures leading to work-related injuries and illnesses.
- Develop strategies to combine resources through novel data linkages and other approaches to create a more complete picture of OHS risks at the population level.
- Initiate and complete a range of epidemiologic studies to better understand the impacts of system level interventions to prevent injury and illness in Ontario.

Methods: Quantitative and data linkage

Project status: Ongoing project, initiated in April 2020, supported through the MLITSD.

Research Team and Roles: Peter Smith (Principal Investigator ex officio), Aviroop Biswas, Victoria Landsman, Lynda Robson, Faraz Vahid Shahidi (Research Team), Qing Lao (Analyst)

Collaborators and Partners: The objectives and outputs from this project will be constantly communicated with the MLITSD’s Prevention Office.

Knowledge Transfer Strategies: Research findings will be tailored for lay audiences and disseminated through established IWH communication vehicles.

Target Audience: MLITSD, OHS policy-makers and decision-makers in Ontario, Workplace Safety and Insurance Board, employers, workers, labour, OHS professionals

Linkage to MLITSD’s *Prevention Works* Strategy: Objective 1: Build and use the best evidence, Objective 2: Improve OHS knowledge and practices

Funded by: MLITSD

Project findings available in Open Access journals, platforms, or repositories (If not, please indicate if a preprint will be posted publicly):

Smith P, Oudyk J, Potter G, Mustard CA. The association between the perceived adequacy of workplace infection control procedures and personal protective equipment with mental health symptoms: a cross-sectional survey of Canadian health-care workers during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Canadian Journal of Psychiatry*. 2021;66(1):17-24.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0706743720961729>

Smith P, Oudyk J, Potter G, Mustard C. Labour market attachment, workplace infection control procedures and mental health: a cross-sectional survey of Canadian non-healthcare workers during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Annals of Work Exposures and Health*. 2021;65(3):266-276.

<https://doi.org/10.1093/annweh/wxaa119>

Smith P, Smith BT, Warren C, Shahidi FV, Buchan S, Mustard CA. The prevalence and correlates of workplace infection control practices in Canada between July and September 2020. *Health Reports*. 2021;32(11):16-27. <https://doi.org/10.25318/82-003-x202101000002-eng>

Smith P, Oudyk J, Cedillo L, Inouye K, Potter G, Mustard C. Perceived adequacy of infection control practices and symptoms of anxiety among in-person elementary school educators in Ontario. *Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine*. 2022;64(11):e763-e768.

<https://doi.org/10.1097/JOM.0000000000002693>

Smith P, Oudyk J, Cedillo L, Inouye K, Potter G, Mustard C. The psychosocial work environment among educators during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Occupational Medicine*. 2022;72(7):439-445.

<https://doi.org/10.1093/occmed/kqac050>

Related research summaries: Not applicable

Related interviews and articles:

Smith P, Curran A, Davis L. Lessons from COVID-19 for the next pandemic: we need better data on workplace transmission [Internet]. *The Conversation*; 2021 Nov 9 [cited 2024 Feb 5].

Available from: <https://theconversation.com/lessons-from-covid-19-for-the-next-pandemic-we-need-better-data-on-workplace-transmission-170023>

IWH Speaker Series presentations:

Smith P. Workplace COVID-19 protections and transmission: findings from population-level data in Canada [Webinar]. IWH Speaker Series. Institute for Work & Health; 2021 Oct 19 [cited 2024 Feb 5]. Available from: <https://www.iwh.on.ca/events/speaker-series/2021-oct-19>

Enhancing information on labour market participation and labour market trajectories in Ontario (1176)

URL: <https://www.iwh.on.ca/projects/enhancing-information-on-labour-market-participation-and-labour-market-trajectories-in-ontario>

Reasons for the project: To help the MLITSD fulfill its objective to “build and use the best evidence” as outlined in *Prevention Works*, it is important that IWH invest in the development of data and other information sources to better understand labour market participation and labour market trajectories in among workers in Ontario. Having accurate estimates of labour market participation, across different industry and occupational groups, is important for a variety of reasons. This information is pivotal to understand rates of injury or illness in different subgroups in the Ontario labour market (e.g., across age, sex, industry, occupation or workplace size), and to compare injury rates over time. IWH has developed methods to adjust information from Statistics Canada’s Labour Force Survey to account for differential WSIB coverage across the Ontario labour market, which allows workers’ compensation claims to be used to understand rates of injury. More recently, work at IWH has imputed occupational exposure information to the Labour Force Survey and to compensation claims to better understand how exposures are related to compensation claims, and the relative impacts of reducing exposures on the number of workers’ compensation claims in Ontario. One challenge of the Labour Force Survey is that respondents only remain in the sample for six months, not allowing researchers to understand labour market trajectories. As such, this project will also explore the feasibility of other data sets that might supplement the information available in the Labour Force Survey to understand labour market participation and labour market trajectories in Ontario.

Objectives of the project:

- Estimate labour market participation rates across relevant demographic, occupation, and industry groups in Ontario.
- Explore the feasibility of new data sources to better understand the labour market trajectories of different sociodemographic groups over time in Ontario.

Methods: Quantitative

Project status: Ongoing project, initiated in April 2020, supported through the MLITSD

Research Team and Roles: Peter Smith (Principal Investigator), Qing Liao (Analyst)

Collaborators and Partners: MLITSD (Prevention Division and Data Analytics and Research Branch), WSIB (Advanced Analytics)

Knowledge Transfer Strategies: Research findings will be tailored for lay audiences and disseminated through established IWH communication vehicles.

Target Audience: MLITSD, OHS policy-makers and decision-makers in Ontario, employers, workers, labour, OHS professionals

Linkage to MLITSD’s *Prevention Works* Strategy: Objective 1: Build and use the best evidence, Objective 2: Improve OHS knowledge and practices

Funded by: MLITSD

Project findings available in Open Access journals, platforms, or repositories (If not, please indicate if a preprint will be posted publicly):

Buchan SA, Smith PM, Warren C, Murti M, Mustard C, Kim JH, et al. Incidence of outbreak-associated

COVID-19 cases by industry in Ontario, Canada, 1 April 2020-31 March 2021. Occupational and Environmental Medicine. 2022;79(6):403-411. <https://doi.org/10.1136/oemed-2021-107879>

Related research summaries: Not applicable

Related interviews and articles: Not applicable

IWH Speaker Series presentations: Not applicable

Understanding the injury experience of Ontario small businesses through workers' compensation claims data (1179)

URL: <https://www.iwh.on.ca/projects/understanding-injury-experience-of-ontario-small-businesses-through-workers-compensation-claims-data>

Reasons for the project: This project aims to help fulfil the MLITSD's objective to 'build and use the best evidence' as outlined in *Prevention Works*. The project will provide a description of the injury claim experience of Ontario small businesses, by sector and enterprise size. It will seek to understand this experience, as well as identify indicators of higher risk for use in targeting initiatives. This will support the targeting of prevention initiatives by identifying sectors in which small businesses are especially at higher risk.

Objectives of the project:

- Provide a better understanding, by sector, of the performance of smaller businesses in OHS relative to larger businesses, using both workers' compensation data and vulnerability index survey data.
- Provide an understanding of how the risk profile of businesses changes over its life cycle.
- Develop indicators of higher risk in small businesses, by sector, derived from workers' compensation data.

Methods: Quantitative

Project status: Ongoing project, initiated in April 2020, supported through the MLITSD

Research Team and Roles: Lynda Robson (Principal Investigator), Cameron Mustard, Peter Smith (Research Team), Qing Liao, Victoria Nadalin (Analysts)

Collaborators and Partners: MLITSD's Prevention Office

Knowledge Transfer Strategies: Research findings will be tailored for lay audiences and disseminated through established IWH communication vehicles.

Target Audience: MLITSD, WSIB, HSAs, small businesses in Ontario

Linkage to MLITSD's *Prevention Works* Strategy: Objective 1: Build and use the best evidence, Objective 4: Make OHS easier for small businesses

Funded by: MLITSD

Project findings available in Open Access journals, platforms, or repositories (If not, please indicate if a preprint will be posted publicly): Not applicable.

Related research summaries: Not applicable

Related interviews and articles: Not applicable

IWH Speaker Series presentations: Not applicable

Toking 9 to 5? Examining the impact of cannabis legalization on workplace cannabis use and perceptions among Canadian workers (1376)

URL: <https://www.iwh.on.ca/projects/workplace-cannabis-use-and-perceptions-among-canadian-workers>

Reasons for the project: On October 17, 2018, cannabis use for non-medical purposes was legalized in Canada. There is the potential for cannabis use to spill over to the workplace, which could have OHS consequences. We conducted a survey of 2,014 workers across Canada from a wide range of industries and occupations to better understand pre-legalization workplace use patterns and perceptions. Findings suggest some workers engage in potentially risky workplace use and demonstrate problematic perceptions of the risks of using cannabis in the workplace. Through this study, we will continue to collect information from this group and expand the sample of workers to determine whether legalization is associated with changes in workplace use and related perceptions and norms.

Objectives of the project:

- Estimate the magnitude of workplace cannabis consumption and impairment in Canada.
- Evaluate the impact of cannabis legalization in Canada on cross-sectional and longitudinal patterns of workplace cannabis consumption, perceptions of risk and impact, workplace cannabis norms, and perceived availability in the workplace.
- Examine whether trends in these patterns, perceptions and norms differ according to age, sex, labour market gender roles, occupational groups, and geographic location.
- Examine the reciprocal relationship between potentially modifiable factors (perceptions of risk, workplace cannabis norms, perceived cannabis availability in the workplace) and workplace cannabis use over time.
- Understand the short-term effects of legalization on workplaces, thus informing the development of policies, practices, and prevention initiatives to ensure lower risk use among Canadian workers.

Methods: Quantitative

Project status: April 2019 – March 2025

Research Team and Roles: Nancy Carnide, Peter Smith (Principal Investigators), Andrea Furlan, Victoria Landsman, Michael Frone (University at Buffalo), Shawna Meister, Amy Porath (Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction) (Research Team), Hyunmi Lee (Analyst), Sara Macdonald (KTE Lead)

Collaborators and Partners: Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction, CCOHS, ESDC, Health Canada, MLITSD, Nova Scotia Trucking Safety Association, and Federally Regulated Employers – Transportation and Communications, Ontario Building Trades, PSHSA, Unifor, WSN, WSPS, WorkSafeBC

Knowledge Transfer Strategies: This project uses an integrated KTE approach. Research findings will be tailored for lay audiences and disseminated through established IWH communication vehicles.

Target Audience Employers, worker representatives, HSAs, OHS professionals and policy-makers

Linkage to MLITSD's *Prevention Works Strategy*: Objective 1: Build and use the best evidence, Objective 2: Improve OHS knowledge and practices.

Funded by: MLITSD, CIHR

Project findings available in Open Access journals, platforms, or repositories (If not, please indicate if a preprint will be posted publicly):

Carnide N, Lee H, Landsman V, Frone MR, Furlan AD, Smith PM. Cannabis use and workplace cannabis availability, perceptions and policies among Canadian workers: a comparison before and after the legalisation of non-medical cannabis. *Occupational and Environmental Medicine*. 2022;79(12):824-830. <https://doi.org/10.1136/oemed-2022-108316>

Carnide N, Landsman V, Lee H, Frone MR, Furlan AD, Smith PM. Workplace and non-workplace cannabis use and the risk of workplace injury: findings from a longitudinal study of Canadian workers. *Canadian Journal of Public Health*. 2023;114(6):947-955. <https://doi.org/10.17269/s41997-023-00795-0>

Related research summaries:

Institute for Work & Health. Cannabis use and the Canadian workplace (2019) [Internet]. 2019 Oct [cited 2024 Feb 5]. Available from: <https://www.iwh.on.ca/publications/cannabis-use-and-canadian-workplace-2019>

Institute for Work & Health. Cannabis use and the Canadian workplace (2020) [Internet]. 2020 Oct [cited 2024 Feb 5]. Available from: <https://www.iwh.on.ca/publications/cannabis-use-and-canadian-workplace-2020>

Related interviews and articles:

Alberta College of Pharmacy. Cannabis in the workplace [Internet]. (Full scale, a tri-annual publication focusing on issues affecting pharmacy practice). Alberta College of Pharmacy; 2019 Mar 11 [cited 2024 Feb 5]. Available from: <https://abpharmacy.ca/full-scale/cannabis-workplace>

Cameron G. IWH takes deep dive into the marijuana Pandora's box [Internet]. Cincinnati, OH: Daily Commercial News by ConstructConnect; 2020 Jan 31 [cited 2024 Feb 5]. Available from: <https://canada.constructconnect.com/dcn/news/ohs/2020/01/iwh-takes-deep-dive-into-the-marijuana-pandoras-box>

Carnide N. NZ Cannabis referendum 2020: how has cannabis use at work changed, if at all, since legalisation in Canada? [Podcast]. Business Leaders' Health and Safety Forum; 2020 June [cited 2024 Feb 5]. Available from: <https://ivy.fm/podcast/business-leaders-health-and-safety-forum-637105>

DCN-JOC News Services. Study says workers who use cannabis after work at no greater risk of injury [Internet]. Daily Commercial News by ConstructConnect; 2023 Aug 2 [cited 2024 Feb 5]. Available from: <https://canada.constructconnect.com/dcn/news/ohs/2023/08/study-says-workers-who-use-cannabis-after-work-at-no-greater-risk-of-injury>

Dujay J. Is cannabis use on the rise? Conflicting numbers suggest overall consumption is up but at-work use is down [Internet]. Canadian HR Reporter; 2020 Jun 3 [cited 2024 Feb 5]. Available from: <https://www.hrreporter.com/focus-areas/safety/is-cannabis-use-on-the-rise/330199>

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Gismondi A. Where does the use of cannabis now stand in the eyes of the workplace? [Internet]. Cincinnati, OH : Daily Commercial News by ConstructConnect; 2020 Mar 18 [cited 2024 Feb 5]. Available from: <https://canada.constructconnect.com/dcn/news/ohs/2020/03/where-does-the-use-of-cannabis-now-stand-in-the-eyes-of-the-workplace>

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Creating safe workplaces for newcomers (1386)

URL: <https://www.iwh.on.ca/projects/creating-safe-workplaces-for-newcomers>

Reasons for the project: Supporting newcomers' safety at work requires employers to respond to diverse needs of newcomers related to occupational health and safety (OHS) and develop inclusive safety practices. Although there are resources developed for employers in managing diversity within their workplaces, there is a gap in understanding diversity within context of OHS. We know relatively little about whether, and how, employers manage OHS in linguistically and culturally diverse work environments. This project will expand our understanding on linguistic and cultural diversity and implications for safety, and opportunities and challenges for supporting newcomers stay safe at work.

Objectives of the project:

- Understand the experiences and needs of the employers, newcomer workers, and service providers related to OHS in linguistically and culturally diverse workplaces.
- Understand feasible and effective approaches to engage employers to the unique OHS needs of newcomers and help employers create safe workplaces for newcomers.

Methods: Qualitative, scoping review

Project status: April 2023 – March 2025

Research Team and Roles: Basak Yanar, Peter Smith (Principal Investigators), Dwayne Van Eerd, Stephanie Premji (McMaster University) (Research Team), Edda Bild (Project Coordinator), Pam Cardwell (KTE Lead)

Collaborators and Partners: Arab Community Centre Toronto, Access Alliance, Brampton Multicultural Centre, Skills for Change

Knowledge Transfer Strategies: This project uses an integrated KTE approach. Research findings will be tailored for lay audiences and disseminated through established IWH communication vehicles.

Target Audience: This project will provide a valuable knowledge base for those working in the settlement and employment, and occupational health and safety area.

Linkage to MLITSD's *Prevention Works Strategy*: Objective 2: Improve OHS knowledge and practices, Objective 3: Support workplace parties to fulfil their OHS roles and responsibilities and achieve excellence.

Funded by: MLITSD, IRCC (Government of Canada)

Project findings available in Open Access journals, platforms, or repositories (If not, please indicate if a preprint will be posted publicly): Not applicable.

Related research summaries: Not applicable

Related interviews and articles: Not applicable

IWH Speaker Series presentations: Not applicable

Understanding cannabis use and associated long-term recovery and return-to-work outcomes among Ontario workers following a work-related injury or illness (1410)

URL: <https://www.iwh.on.ca/projects/ontario-life-after-work-injury-study-cannabis-use-and-long-term-recovery-and-return-to-work-outcomes-among-ontario-injured-workers>

Reasons for the project: Interest is growing in the role of medical cannabis for the treatment of work-related health conditions. However, little is known about how workers with work-related conditions use cannabis and how their use may relate to recovery. In this study, workers' compensation claimants who participated in the Ontario Life After Work Injury Study are being re-interviewed 18 months after their first interview (about three years after filing their workers' compensation claim). The aim is to better understand their experiences with using cannabis for their work-related condition, as well as their experiences seeking medical authorization and workers' compensation reimbursement for this use. Subsequent qualitative interviews with select workers from the survey sample will provide important context to these issues.

Objectives of the project:

- Describe condition-related cannabis use patterns, changes in use from 18 months to 36 months post-claim, and the factors considered by workers when deciding whether to use cannabis for their work-related condition.
- Describe patterns of medical authorization and workers' compensation reimbursement for condition-related use and the factors considered by workers when deciding whether to request medical authorization and reimbursement.
- Evaluate the cross-sectional and longitudinal association between condition-related use and recovery outcomes.
- Inform programs, policies and practices around cannabis use among injured workers, including identifying the worker subgroups most likely to benefit from guidance around use.

Methods: Multi-method study

Project status: October 2020 – September 2026

Research Team and Roles: Nancy Carnide, Peter Smith (Principal Investigators), Andrea Furlan, Cameron Mustard, Stephanie Premji (McMaster University) (Research Team), Sabrina Hossain (Research Associate), Sara Macdonald (KTE Lead), Victoria Nadalin (Analyst), Colette Severin (Project Coordinator)

Collaborators and Partners: Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction, Canadian Injured Workers Alliance, Gratton Consulting, Injured Workers Community Legal Clinic, Prevention Link (Ontario Federation of Labour), WSIB, WSPS

Knowledge Transfer Strategies: This project uses an integrated KTE approach. Research findings will be tailored for lay audiences and disseminated through established IWH communication vehicles.

Target Audience: Health-care providers, injured worker advocates, workers' compensation authorities.

Linkage to MLITSD's *Prevention Works Strategy*: Objective 1: Build and use the best evidence.

Funded by: MLITSD, CIHR

Project findings available in Open Access journals, platforms, or repositories (If not, please indicate if a preprint will be posted publicly):

Carnide N, Nadalin V, Mustard C, Severin C, Furlan AD, Smith PM. Cannabis use among workers with work-related injuries and illnesses: results from a cross-sectional study of workers' compensation claimants in Ontario, Canada. *BMJ Open*. 2023;13(7):e072994.

<http://doi.org/10.1136/bmjopen-2023-072994>

Related research summaries: Not applicable

Related interviews and articles:

Cannabis News. Canadian study reveals 14% of employees use cannabis for workplace injury recovery. [Internet]. Cannabis News; July 26, 2023 Jul 26 [cited 2024 Feb 5]. Available from: <https://www.cannabisnews.org/united-states-cannabis-news/canadian-study-reveals-14-of-employees-use-cannabis-for-workplace-injury-recovery/>

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IWH Speaker Series presentations: Not applicable

Artificial intelligence and occupational injury and illness in Ontario: Implications for prevention and recovery (1440)

URL: <https://www.iwh.on.ca/projects/artificial-intelligence-and-occupational-injury-and-illness-in-ontario-implications-for-prevention-and-recovery>

Reasons for the project: This research project aims to develop an applied and future-focused understanding of the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) for occupational injury or illness prevention and recovery activities in Ontario. Knowledge of how AI applications can be applied to OHS and work disability management fields is extremely limited, and we currently know little about their advantages and disadvantages. This project seeks to rectify those gaps in knowledge, while building an evidence base to understand the scope of different AI applications and how they can be used to prevent occupational injury and support recovery and return to work (RTW). To the best of our knowledge, our proposed study is one of the first of its kind to better understand the implications of AI applications for Ontario's health and safety system.

Objectives of the project:

- A broad scan of diverse sources of evidence to identify applications of AI in preventing occupational injury or supporting recovery and RTW in industrialized economies that can be applied in Ontario.
- Describe and categorize each AI application identified in the above according to its function, impact on occupational injury prevention and recovery outcomes, and evaluate its strengths and limitations.
- Understand how different health and safety system stakeholders evaluate the AI applications identified in Objective 1.
- Generate and share future-focused recommendations for different Ontario health and safety system stakeholders.

Methods: Multi-method study

Project Status: July 2022 - September 2024

Research Team and Roles: Arif Jetha (Principal Investigator), Aviroop Biswas, Cameron Mustard, Peter Smith, Victoria Arrandale (University of Toronto), Jack Dennerlein (Northeastern University), Maxwell Smith (Western University) (Research Team), Hela Bakhtari, Kay Nasir (Project Coordinators), Sabrina Tonima (KTE Lead)

Collaborators and Partners: MLITSD (Dr. Nikhil Rajaram, Provincial Physician, Occupational Medicine Unit), OHCOW (Kimberly, O'Connell, Executive Director), PSHSA (Glenn Cullen, Chief Executive Officer), Unifor (Vinay Sharma, Unifor National Representative), WSPS (Kiran Kapoor, Vice President Service Delivery)

Knowledge Transfer Strategies: This project uses an integrated KTE approach. Research findings will be tailored for lay audiences and disseminated through established IWH communication vehicles.

Target Audience: The applied insights this project will produce can be used by diverse health and safety system stakeholders to innovate their occupational injury prevention and recovery practices.

Linkage to MLITSD's *Prevention Works Strategy*: Objective 1: Build and use the best evidence, Objective 2: Improve OHS knowledge and practices, Objective 3: Support workplace parties to fulfil their OHS roles and responsibilities and achieve excellence.

Funded by: MLITSD, WSIB

Project findings available in Open Access journals, platforms, or repositories (If not, please indicate if a preprint will be posted publicly):

Jetha A, Bakhtari H, Rosella LC, Gignac MAM, Biswas A, Shahidi FV, et al. Artificial intelligence and the work-health interface: a research agenda for a technologically transforming world of work. *American Journal of Industrial Medicine*. 2023;66(10);815-830.

<https://doi.org/10.1002/ajim.23517>

Related research summaries:

Institute for Work & Health. IWH launches research program on AI and workplace safety, inequities [Internet]. Institute for Work & Health; 2022 Dec 9 [cited 2024 Feb 5]. Available from:

<https://www.iwh.on.ca/news/2022-dec-09>

Institute for Work & Health. IWH researchers create roadmap for AI research that prioritizes worker health [Internet]. *At Work*. 2023;(Summer)113. [cited 2024 Feb 5]. Available from:

<https://www.iwh.on.ca/newsletters/at-work/113/iwh-researchers-create-roadmap-for-ai-research-that-prioritizes-worker-health>

Related interviews and articles:

Jetha A. AI is reshaping the workplace but what does it mean for the health and wellbeing of workers? [Internet]. *The Conversation*; 2023 Aug 28 [cited 2024 Feb 5]. Available from:

<https://theconversation.com/ai-is-reshaping-the-workplace-but-what-does-it-mean-for-the-health-and-well-being-of-workers-209592>

IWH Speaker Series presentations: Not applicable

Champions as social agents of change: What can we learn from worker wellbeing initiatives? (1445)

URL: <https://www.iwh.on.ca/projects/champions-as-social-agents-of-change-what-can-we-learn-from-worker-well-being-initiatives>

Reasons for the project: Worker wellbeing initiatives are underutilised in Canada despite the sizeable productivity and employee wellbeing benefits. Organizations are often challenged with trying to find ways to encourage the participation of employees, particularly those who may be resistant or ambivalent to change. Increasing evidence has suggested that harnessing the enthusiasm, advocacy, and interpersonal relationships of “champions” (people who champion and act as supportive and enthusiastic voices for new corporate practices) can help build trust and gain support from their colleagues.

Objectives of the project:

- Understand who identifies as someone championing worker wellbeing initiatives at their organization, why and how they adopted this role, and the perceptions of champions in attempting to effect change in existing corporate practices.
- Examine the positive and negative experiences of individuals championing worker wellbeing among their colleagues, particularly experiences with colleagues who are ambivalent or resistant to participating in these initiatives.

Methods: Qualitative study

Project status: June 2022 – June 2024

Research Team and Roles: Aviroop Biswas (Principal Investigator), Monique Gignac, Arif Jetha, Lynda Robson, Basak Yanar (Research Team), Sabrina Tonima (KTE Lead)

Collaborators and Partners: Dr. Graham Lowe (Graham Lowe Group)

Knowledge Transfer Strategies: This project uses an integrated KTE approach. Research findings will be tailored for lay audiences and disseminated through established IWH communication vehicles.

Target Audience: Organizations seeking to support worker wellbeing strategies.

Linkage to MLITSD’s *Prevention Works Strategy*: Objective 1: Build and use the best evidence; Objective 2: Improve OHS knowledge and practices.

Funded by: MLITSD, SSHRC

Project findings available in Open Access journals, platforms, or repositories (If not, please indicate if a preprint will be posted publicly): Not applicable.

Related research summaries: Not applicable

Related interviews and articles: Not applicable

IWH Speaker Series presentations: Not applicable

Exploring where Canadians work and live and their association with active transportation (1450)

URL: <https://www.iwh.on.ca/projects/exploring-where-canadians-work-and-live-and-their-association-with-active-transportation>

Reasons for the project: In Canada, 81.5 per cent of full-time working adults are insufficiently active and, therefore, at greater risk for chronic disease and premature mortality. Forms of active transportation (AT), such as walking or cycling, are important modes of physical activity in adults, accounting for 33 to 68 per cent of daily levels. The quality of built environments and social environments can support AT. Built environments refer to aspects of the physical environment such as the places and spaces where we work, live, play, and travel. Research examining the role of built environments on AT has largely focused on neighbourhood design and has highlighted the importance of walkability, accessibility of facilities and destinations, and AT infrastructure (e.g., bike and walk paths). In contrast, the role of the built environment around workplaces are not as well understood, nor is the role of the social environment and the interplay between home and work environments.

Objectives of the project:

- Describe and characterize the built and social environments where Canadians work and live.
- Describe how these environments are associated with AT and their importance for AT.
- Develop key messages that can be used to inform AT-related interventions.

Method: Quantitative

Project status: August 2022 – September 2024

Research Team and Roles: Aviroop Biswas, Peter Smith, Stephanie Prince Ware (PHAC) (Principal Investigators), Paul Villeneuve (Carleton University) (Research Team)

Collaborators and Partners: Infrastructure Canada and PHAC

Knowledge Transfer Strategies: This project uses an integrated KTE approach. Research findings will be tailored for lay audiences and disseminated through established IWH communication vehicles.

Target Audience: Urban planners, public health agencies

Linkage to MLITSD's *Prevention Works Strategy*: Objective 1: Build and use the best evidence.

Funded by: MLITSD, CIHR

Project findings available in Open Access journals, platforms, or repositories (If not, please indicate if a preprint will be posted publicly): Not applicable.

Related research summaries: Not applicable

Related interviews and articles: Not applicable

IWH Speaker Series presentations: Not applicable

Job quality and wellbeing in Canada: using national longitudinal data to generate insights on the new world of work (1455)

URL: <https://www.iwh.on.ca/projects/job-quality-and-wellbeing-in-canada-using-national-longitudinal-data-to-generate-insights-on-new-world-of-work>

Reasons for the project: Social and economic forces such as globalization, deindustrialization, deregulation, and declining union membership have contributed to a structural transformation of the labour market. Resulting changes in the nature and organization of work have prompted widespread concerns about the declining quality of jobs and the increasing prevalence of precarious employment. Often labelled the ‘new world of work’, these shifting labour market conditions have potentially vital implications for millions of workers across Canada. This study expands our understanding of the new world of work by exploring the nature of contemporary job quality and its consequences for wellbeing. Findings will inform the development of employment policies and programs with the aim of improving job quality, reducing labour market inequities, and promoting greater social and economic inclusion in Canada.

Objectives of the project:

- Present a contemporary portrait of job quality in Canada.
- Examine the relationship between job quality and wellbeing.
- Understand the contribution of job quality to social inequalities in wellbeing.

Methods: Longitudinal study

Project status: June 2023 – May 2026

Research Team and Roles: Faraz Vahid Shahidi (Principal Investigator), Monique Gignac, Arif Jetha; Ellen MacEachen (University of Waterloo) (Research Team)

Collaborators and Partners: Not applicable

Knowledge Transfer Strategies: This project uses an integrated KTE approach. Research findings will be tailored for lay audiences and disseminated through established IWH communication vehicles.

Target Audience: MLITSD, Employment and Social Development Canada, Employers, Labour, Mental Health Agencies and Organizations

Linkage to MLITSD’s *Prevention Works Strategy*: Objective 1: Build and use the best evidence.

Funded by: MLITSD, SSHRC

Project findings available in Open Access journals, platforms, or repositories (If not, please indicate if a preprint will be posted publicly): Not applicable

Related research summaries: Not applicable

Related interviews and articles: Not applicable

IWH Speaker Series presentations: Not applicable

Assessing the psychosocial work environment in British Columbia to inform prevention activities (1460)

URL: <https://www.iwh.on.ca/projects/assessing-psychosocial-work-environment-in-british-columbia-to-inform-prevention-activities>

Reasons for the project: WorkSafeBC is in the initial stages of developing and implementing an Enterprise Mental Health Strategy. As part of the development of this strategy, it is important to collect information on knowledge gaps relevant to the development of future activities set out in the strategy. One of these is the understanding of the psychosocial work environment among workers in British Columbia (BC). This project will address this gap in knowledge as well as provide an important baseline assessment of both the psychosocial work environment and awareness of the psychosocial work environment as a workplace hazard. This will be important as WorkSafeBC monitors the impact of the Mental Health Strategy activities moving forward.

Objectives of the project:

- Assess psychosocial conditions among workers in BC using the psychosocial safety climate instrument PSC-12.
- Explore the relationship between psychosocial conditions, as measured by the PSC-12, and demographic, occupational and workplace characteristics.
- Understand the relationships between the PSC-12 and the physical work environment as assessed by the OHS vulnerability index.
- Estimate how psychosocial and physical environments are associated with both awareness of the psychosocial work environment, and with both physical and psychological work-related injury outcomes.

Methods: Quantitative

Project status: November 2023 – November 2024

Research Team and Roles: Peter Smith (Principal Investigator), Kay Nasir (Project Coordinator), Analyst (TBD)

Collaborators and Partners: WorkSafeBC

Knowledge Transfer Strategies: This project uses an integrated KTE approach. Research findings will be tailored for lay audiences and disseminated through established IWH communication vehicles.

Target Audience:

Linkage to MLITSD's *Prevention Works Strategy*: Objective 1: Build and use the best evidence, Objective 2: Improve OHS knowledge and practices, Objective 3: Support workplace parties to fulfil their OHS roles and responsibilities and achieve excellence.

Funded by: MLITSD, WorkSafeBC

Project findings available in Open Access journals, platforms, or repositories (If not, please indicate if a preprint will be posted publicly): Not applicable.

Related research summaries: Not applicable

Related interviews and articles: Not applicable

IWH Speaker Series presentations: Not applicable

Validation study of Occupational Stress Injury Resiliency Tool (1465)

URL: <https://www.iwh.on.ca/projects/validation-study-of-occupational-stress-injury-resiliency-tool>

Reasons for the project: There is an increasing interest from many stakeholders across Ontario, Canada and across the globe to better understand leading indicators of work-related psychological/mental injury. Leading indicators can be defined as measures (ideally modifiable) that can be used to identify groups that are at increased risk of an injury outcome in the future. The Occupational Stress Injury Resilience (OSIR) Tool was created to assess first responders' occupational stress injury risks, with a focus on assessing risk so that targeted preventative actions at the workplace to support mental health could be undertaken. The OSIR is a 26-item measure aimed at capturing four dimensions of the work environment: support programs, supportive leadership, supportive environment, and resiliency behaviors. These dimensions in turn enable respondents to be grouped into one of three risk categories for occupational stress injuries. These are: challenge (high risk), concern (medium risk) and thriving (low risk). While preliminary work has been undertaken to assess the reliability and validity of the OSIR, additional work—on both cross-sectional validity and reliability, on comparisons between the OSIR and other leading indicators of psychological injury, and on longitudinal validity of the OSIR—still needs to be completed so that workplaces can feel confident in their use of this measure.

Objectives of the project:

- Undertake additional analysis of existing OSIR data and suggest areas where the tool may be improved.
- Compare the OSIR to other leading indicators of psychological injury.
- Examine how OSIR scores predict new psychological injuries that occur over a 12-month period.

Method: Quantitative

Project status: December 2023 – December 2025

Research Team and Roles: Peter Smith (Principal Investigator), Kay Nasir (Project Coordinator), Analyst (TBD).

Collaborators and Partners:

Knowledge Transfer Strategies: This project uses an integrated KTE approach. Research findings will be tailored for lay audiences and disseminated through established IWH communication vehicles.

Target Audience:

Linkage to MLITSD's *Prevention Works Strategy*: Objective 1: Build and use the best evidence, Objective 2: Improve OHS knowledge and practices, Objective 3: Support workplace parties to fulfil their OHS roles and responsibilities and achieve excellence.

Funded by: MLITSD, PSHSA

Project findings available in Open Access journals, platforms, or repositories (If not, please indicate if a preprint will be posted publicly): Not applicable

Related research summaries: Not applicable

Related interviews and articles: Not applicable

IWH Speaker Series presentations: Not applicable

Intelligent machines and human worker inequities: Examining the implications of artificial intelligence in the workplace (2415)

URL: <https://www.iwh.on.ca/projects/intelligent-machines-and-human-worker-inequities-examining-implications-of-ai-in-workplace>

Reasons for the project: There is a critical need for transdisciplinary and partnered research to unpack how workplace Artificial Intelligence (AI) applications can contribute to worker inequities and to innovate strategies that protect vulnerable workers. AI is rapidly transforming all aspects of work. However, it is unclear in what ways AI will impact existing worker inequities. It is estimated that when compared to past periods of technological change (e.g., the Industrial Revolution), advanced technologies like AI are disrupting work at a rate that's 10 times faster and at a scale that's 300 times greater. This study, which applies an equity lens to the analysis of this technological and socioeconomic development, is to the best of our knowledge the first of its kind. The study looks to examine and synthesize diverse evidence sources to build a framework of how workplace AI applications affect working conditions in ways that contribute to worker inequities. The work will also focus on developing an analytical process to estimate the proportion of Canadian occupations and industry sectors affected by AI and identify groups of vulnerable workers. Lastly, this study will review existing public policies and programs to determine the extent to which supports for workers address the growing application of AI and its impact on vulnerable workers.

Objectives of the project:

- Illuminate the impact of AI on both working conditions and workers, estimate the reach of these impacts on occupations and populations, and determine the extent to which existing workers' supports address these disparities.
- Build capacity, co-design the approach through stakeholder engagement, and develop a team who have expertise at the intersection of work, equity, and AI.

Methods: Multi-method study

Project status: May 2022 – May 2025

Research Team and Roles: Arif Jetha (Principal Investigator), Aviroop Biswas, Monique Gignac, Emma Irvin, Peter Smith, Faraz Vahid Shahidi, Silvia Bonaccio (University of Ottawa), Jack Dennerlein (Northeastern University), Marc Frenette (Statistics Canada), Marlène Koffi (University of Toronto), Peter Loewen (University of Toronto), Naimul Mefraz Khan (Toronto Metropolitan University), Laura Rosella (University of Toronto), Brendan Smith (Public Health Ontario), Maxwell Smith (Western University), , Nicole Wu (University of Toronto), Daniyal Zuberi (University of Toronto) (Research Team), Hela Bakhtari (Project Coordinator)

Collaborators and Partners: Blueprint-ADE; Brookfield Institute for Innovation + Entrepreneurship; Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters; Center for Work, Health, and Well-being at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health; Future Skills Centre; Institute for Work and Health; Labour Market Information Council; Ontario Agency for Health Protection And Promotion (Public Health Ontario); Responsible Artificial Intelligence Toronto Metropolitan University; Schwartz Reisman Institute for Technology and Society; Statistics Canada; Unifor; United Steelworkers

Knowledge Transfer Strategies: This project uses an integrated KTE approach. Partners participated in an agenda setting meeting to help generate key priority areas which will inform subsequent phases of the research. Research findings will be tailored for lay audiences and disseminated through established IWH communication vehicles.

Target Audience: This project will produce evidence relevant to diverse academic and non-academic target audiences, the latter including labour market policy-makers, employers, workers, and their representatives.

Linkage to MLITSD's *Prevention Works Strategy*: Objective 1: Build and use the best evidence, Objective 2: Improve OHS knowledge and practices, Objective 3: Support workplace parties to fulfil their OHS roles and responsibilities and achieve excellence.

Funded by: MLITSD, SSHRC, Future Skills Centre

Project findings available in Open Access journals, platforms, or repositories (If not, please indicate if a preprint will be posted publicly): Not applicable.

Related research summaries: Not applicable

Related interviews and articles: Not applicable

IWH Speaker Series presentations: Not applicable

Parental employment quality and child mental health: Triangulating evidence from general population surveys in Canada (2430)

URL: <https://www.iwh.on.ca/projects/understanding-role-of-parental-employment-quality-in-child-mental-health>

Reasons for the project: Canada is facing an urgent mental health crisis among children and youth. The causes of mental health problems in children are complex and multifactorial. However, there is evidence that socioeconomic conditions such as poverty and material hardship are powerful predictors. Socioeconomic status in childhood is shaped in large part by the quality of parental employment – referring to hours, stability, security, earnings, and other aspects of parental employment that influence family wellbeing. As the labour market in Canada and other wealthy nations has shifted towards more contingent and precarious employment, a growing number of parents are having to rely on casual, insecure, and low-paying jobs to make ends meet. These labour market trends have important and under-appreciated implications for child health and health equity. This study will use general population surveys in Canada to better understand the role of parental employment quality as a social determinant of child mental health. The study will shed light on an upstream driver of household socioeconomic disadvantage, with the goal of informing cross-sectoral policy and programmatic interventions to improve child mental health and health equity in Canada.

Objectives of the project:

- Describe the quality of parental employment in Canada.
- Examine the relationship between parental employment quality and child mental health.
- Identify policy strategies for improving parental employment quality as an upstream determinant of child mental health and health equity.

Methods: Cross-sectional study, Longitudinal study

Project status: April 2023 – September 2024

Research Team and Roles: Faraz Vahid Shahidi (Principal Investigator), Jinette Comeau (King's University College), Anne Fuller (Principal Investigator), Kathy Georgiades (McMaster University), Andrew Pinto (St. Michael's Hospital), Arjumand Siddiqi (University of Toronto), Gita Wahi (McMaster University), (Research Team)

Collaborators and Partners: Offord Centre for Child Studies

Knowledge Transfer Strategies: This project uses an integrated KTE approach. Research findings will be tailored for lay audiences and disseminated through established IWH communication vehicles.

Target Audience: MLITSD; Ministry of Children, Community, and Social Services; Employers; Labour; Mental Health Agencies and Organizations

Linkage to MLITSD's *Prevention Works Strategy*: Objective 1: Build and use the best evidence

Funded by: MLITSD, Edwin S.H. Leong Centre for Healthy Children

Project findings available in Open Access journals, platforms, or repositories (If not, please indicate if a preprint will be posted publicly): Not applicable

Related research summaries: Not applicable

Related interviews and articles: Not applicable

IWH Speaker Series presentations: Not applicable

Evidence synthesis in occupational health and safety (3420)

URL: Currently not available

Reasons for the project: The Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development (MLITSD)'s Prevention Works sets out the vision of an Ontario where workplaces regularly promote and practice health and safety and are free from occupational injuries, illnesses, and fatalities. The first objective in the strategy commits to building and using the best evidence to underpin prevention and compliance initiatives that make measurable contributions to preventing injuries, illnesses, and fatalities. Along with building research capacity in conducting primary studies in evaluating prevention activities, a key component of this objective is to collate and consolidate research findings where evidence is already available. These projects outline initiatives to synthesize research evidence on topics that have been identified as priorities through either the global Evidence for Work consortium or the MLITSD to support the implementation of the Occupational Health and Safety Strategy 2021-2026.

Objectives of the project:

- Undertake evidence syntheses to answer research questions provided by the MLITSD and refined through consultation with funders/stakeholders.
- Support evidence syntheses identified as priorities through the Global Evidence for Work consortium, where IWH has the resources and expertise.

Methods: Environmental scan, scoping review, systematic review

Project status: April 2024 – March 2025

Research Team and Roles: Emma Irvin (Principal Investigator), Dwayne Van Eerd (Research team), Morgane Le Pouésard (Research Associate), Renato Barbosa dos Santos, Ashvene Sureshkumar (Students).

Collaborators and Partners: Institut de recherche Robert-Sauvé en santé et en sécurité du travail (IRSST), Evidence for Work, MLITSD and prevention system partners (the latter to be determined based on research questions)

Knowledge Transfer Strategies: This project uses an integrated KTE approach. Research findings will be tailored for lay audiences and disseminated through established IWH communication vehicles.

Target Audience: MLITSD, TBD by research questions

Linkage to MLITSD's *Prevention Works* Strategy: Objective 1: Build and use the best evidence.

Funded by: MLITSD

Project findings available in Open Access journals, platforms, or repositories (If not, please indicate if a preprint will be posted publicly): Not applicable.

Related research summaries: Not applicable

Related interviews and articles: Not applicable

IWH Speaker Series presentations: Not applicable

Programs of early OHS intervention with small businesses: environmental scan and feasibility assessment (3425)

URL: <https://www.iwh.on.ca/projects/programs-of-early-ohs-intervention-with-small-businesses>

Reasons for the project: Small businesses pose a challenge to occupational health and safety (OHS) authorities. They contribute disproportionately to the total burden of work-related injuries, illnesses, and fatalities. That is, their percentage contribution to all occupational injuries is greater than their percentage contribution to worked hours (Holte et al. 2015, Sørensen 2007). As well they are difficult to reach because of their large number and their informal nature. This project focuses on the needs and challenges of OHS in small businesses. The key knowledge gap, which the project aims to fill, is what OHS interventions (or potential programs) exist for small businesses that are feasible and can be implemented as the small business starts up.

Objectives of the project:

- Identify and describe interventions for small businesses that can be implemented early in their formation, found in Canada and other high-income countries.
- Explore the nature of early occupational health and safety (OHS) interventions for small businesses in Canada and other high-income countries.
- Determine the feasibility of adopting or adapting these interventions in British Columbia (BC) and Ontario (ON).

Methods: Environmental scan evidence synthesis approach using a document and website review and key informant interviews.

Project status: January 2023 – September 2024

Research Team and Roles: Dwayne Van Eerd (Principal Investigator), Emma Irvin, Lynda Robson, Basak Yanar (Research team), Morgane Le Pouésard (Project Coordinator)

Collaborators and Partners: Adina Croitoru (Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development), Lisa McGuire (Manufacturing Safety Alliance of British Columbia)

Knowledge Transfer Strategies: This project uses an integrated KTE approach. Research findings will be tailored for lay audiences and disseminated through established IWH communication vehicles. Research findings will be tailored for lay audiences and disseminated through established IWH communication vehicles.

Target Audience: Regulatory authorities and small business employer associations (e.g., Small Business BC) are primary audiences.

Linkage to MLITSD's *Prevention Works Strategy*: Objective 1: Build and use the best evidence; Objective 2: Improve OHS knowledge and practices.

Funded by: MLITSD, WorkSafeBC.

Project findings available in Open Access journals, platforms, or repositories (If not, please indicate if a preprint will be posted publicly): Not applicable.

Related research summaries: Not applicable

Related interviews and articles: Not applicable

IWH Speaker Series presentations: Not applicable

Prevention and management of work disability

The prevention of work disability, along with the creation of inclusive work environments for labour market participants with health conditions, remains a strong research focus at the Institute for Work & Health. Projects within this theme address ongoing and emerging issues, including optimal return-to-work (RTW) practices to prevent work disability and promote workplace environments that meet the needs of workers with health conditions/injuries, in order to sustain productivity and prevent future absences from work. As is the case with our injury prevention research, KTE staff will engage non-research partners—including employers, workers, clinical practitioners, ergonomists, disability managers, RTW coordinators, OHS professionals and more—in many of these research projects to ensure that research evidence is relevant and support its use to shape policy and practice.

Alignment to the Prevention Works Strategy

As with the projects listed within the Prevention of work-related injury and illness section, we have aligned the activities and future results of each project with the Prevention Works strategy, noting that workplace systems that prevent injuries and illnesses are often related to systems that prevent and manage work disability.

IWH has conducted actionable research for more than two decades to support improvements in workplace practices to create more inclusive work environments, including accommodating those living with health conditions. We will continue to focus on workplace accommodations and communications that affect workers across all ages and across a wide range of conditions, from occupational injuries and illnesses to non-occupational episodic and chronic health conditions. Our projects will increase the capacity and confidence of employers to sustainably employ persons with disabilities.

Accommodating and Communicating about Episodic Disabilities (ACED): A partnership to deliver workplace tools and resources to sustain the employment of people with chronic, episodic conditions (2271)

URL: <https://www.iwh.on.ca/projects/accommodating-and-communicating-about-episodic-disabilities-aced-partnership-to-deliver-workplace-resources-to-sustain-employment-of-people-with-chronic-episodic-conditions>

Reasons for the project: Many chronic physical and mental health diseases cause episodic disability and not continuous problems. People may have periods of well-managed health punctuated by periods of more severe symptoms that limit activities. These symptoms and limitations are often unpredictable and invisible to others. As such, they create challenges related to communication, disclosure, protection of privacy, and support and accommodations. Privacy legislation has shifted disability management away from disease diagnoses (which workers are not obligated to disclose) to a focus on activity demands and limitations to guide accommodations. The ACED partnership grant aims to enhance the work sustainability of Canadians with chronic, episodic conditions through the development of easily accessed, evidence-based tools and resources that protect privacy and facilitate communication and accommodation planning among workers, supervisors and others in the workplace.

Objectives of the project:

- Consolidate and enhance existing evidence for toolkit development.
- Develop new evidence-informed resources, including communication tools and job analysis and accommodation planning tools for supervisors, HR/disability managers and others (e.g., case managers, health-care professionals).
- Pilot test and evaluate the toolkit in diverse workplaces.
- Expand the evidence base to include greater attention to sex/gender, age/life course, diverse employment contexts and episodic conditions.
- Develop new researcher capacity in disability studies and build new workplace partnerships.

Methods: Multi-method study

Project status: April 2018 – March 2025

Research Team and Roles: Monique Gignac (Principal Investigator), Dorcas Beaton, Curtis Breslin, Emma Irvin, Arif Jetha, Ron Saunders, Emile Tompa, Dwayne Van Eerd, Joy MacDermid (University of Western Ontario), Renee-Louise Franche (WorkSafeBC), William Shaw (University of Connecticut Health Center), Peter Smith, Aaron Thompson (University of Toronto), (Research Team), Julie Bowring (Project Coordinator), Lahmea Navaratnerajah (Research Associate), Sabrina Tonima (KTE Lead)

Collaborators and Partners: Arthritis Society of Canada, Canada Life's Workplace Strategies for Mental Health, Canadian Mental Health Association, Crohn's & Colitis Canada, Mindful Employer Canada, MLITSD, Realize Canada, Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada, University of Toronto

Knowledge Transfer Strategies: This project uses an integrated KTE approach. Research findings will be tailored for lay audiences and disseminated through established IWH communication vehicles, as well as stakeholder channels and networks and newly established dissemination partners.

As part of our knowledge transfer activities, we entered our first ACED tool, the Job Demands and Accommodation Planning Tool (JDAPT) into the MaRS-CIBC Inclusive Design Challenge: Support at Work. The ACED team was the Grand Prize Winner (\$50,000), May 2022.

The Job Demands and Accommodation Planning Tool (JDAPT) was officially launched in April 2023. There are three versions of the tool (worker version; employer version thinking about a worker; employer version thinking about a job). The versions are freely available in English and French: <https://aced.iwh.on.ca/jdapt>.

Target Audience: Workers with episodic conditions, supervisors, human resources, disability managers and service providers, organizations serving people with episodic conditions, labour representatives, clinicians serving people with disabilities.

Linkage to MLITSD's Prevention Works Strategy: Objective 1. Build and use the best evidence, Objective 3: Support workplace parties to fulfil their OHS roles and responsibilities and achieve excellence.

Funded by: MLITSD, CIHR, SSHRC, ESDC. Additional funds were received from Canada Life and MaRS-CIBC.

Project findings available in Open Access journals, platforms, or repositories (If not, please indicate if a preprint will be posted publicly):

Cheng L, Jetha A, Cordeaux E, Lee K, Gignac MAM. Workplace challenges, supports, and accommodations for people with inflammatory bowel disease: a scoping review. *Disability and Rehabilitation*. 2022;44(24):7587-99. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09638288.2021.1979662>

Gignac MAM, Bowring J, Jetha A, Beaton DE, Breslin FC, Franche RL, et al. Disclosure, privacy and workplace accommodation of episodic disabilities: Organizational perspectives on disability communication-support processes to sustain employment. *Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation*. 2021;31(1):153-165. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10926-020-09901-2>

Gignac MAM, Jetha A, Martin Ginis KA, Ibrahim S. Does it matter what your reasons are when deciding to disclose (or not disclose) a disability at work? The association of workers' approach and avoidance goals with perceived positive and negative workplace outcomes. *Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation*. 2021;31(3):638-651. <https://doi.org/10.1007/a10926-020-09956-1>.

Gignac MAM, Shahidi FV, Jetha A, Kristman V, Bowring J, Cameron J, et al. Impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on health, financial worries, and perceived organizational support among people living with disabilities in Canada. *Disability and Health Journal*. 2021;14(4):101161. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dhjo.2021.101161>

Gignac MAM, Bowring J, Shahidi FV, Kristman V, Cameron JI, Jetha A. Workplace communication decisions of older workers wanting to remain employed: a qualitative study of factors considered when contemplating revealing or concealing support needs. *Work, Aging & Retirement*. 2022;[epub ahead of print]. <https://doi.org/10.1093/workar/waac029>

Gignac MAM, Bowring J, Tonima S, Franche RL, Thompson A, Jetha A, et al. A sensibility assessment of the Job Demands and Accommodation Planning Tool (JDAPT): a tool to help workers with an episodic disability plan workplace support. *Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation*. 2023;33(1):145-59. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10926-022-10057-4>.

Jessiman-Perreault G, Gignac MAM, Thompson A, Smith P. Understanding the unmet accommodation needs of people working with mental or cognitive conditions: the importance of gender, gendered work, and employment factors. *Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation*. 2023; [epub ahead of print]. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10926-023-10132-4>.

Martin Ginis KA, Jetha A, Gignac MAM. Experiential aspects of employment and their relationship with work outcomes: a cross-sectional study using a novel measure of participation in workers with and without physical disabilities. *Disability and Health Journal*. 2023;16(3):101448. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dhjo.2023.101448>

Shahidi FV, Jetha A, Smith PM, Gignac MAM. The employment quality of persons with disabilities: findings from a national survey in Canada. *Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation*. 2023;33(4):785-795. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10926-023-10113-7>

Van Eerd D, Bowring J, Jetha A, Breslin FC, Gignac MAM. Online resources supporting workers with chronic episodic disabilities: an environmental scan. *International Journal of Workplace Health Management*. 2021;14(2):129-148. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJWHM-08-2020-0137>

Related research summaries:

Please see <https://aced.iwh.on.ca>.

For the Job Demands and Accommodation Planning Tool (JDAPT), please see:

<https://aced.iwh.on.ca/jdapt>

Related interviews and articles:

Alberta Learning Information Service (ALIS). Doing well at work when you have a disability [Internet]. Government of Alberta; c2024 [cited 2024 Feb 5]. Available from: <https://alis.alberta.ca/tools-and-resources/resources-for-people-with-disabilities/doing-well-at-work-when-you-have-a-disability/>

Canada HR News. Canada human resources news [Podcast]. (~ 7 minutes into the show).

Canada HR News; 2023 Mar 20 [cited 2024 Feb 5]. Available from:

<https://canadahrnews.buzzsprout.com/1947025/12477150-march-20-2023>

Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS). Supporting workers with chronic conditions [Internet]. *Health and Safety Report*. 2023;21(5). Available from:

<https://www.ccohs.ca/newsletters/hsreport/issues/2023/05/ezone.html#hsreport-ontopic>

Cheng L, Gignac MAM. Accommodating and Communicating about Episodic Disabilities (ACED): a partnership to deliver workplace tools and resources to sustain the employment of people with chronic, episodic conditions. Invited presentation at: Crohn's and Colitis Canada, Lunch and Learn Seminar Series. Webinar. 2020 Oct 14.

Dujay J. Greater focus on episodic disabilities needed: study [Internet]. Canadian HR Reporter; 2020 Aug 24 [cited 2024 Feb 5]. Available from: <https://www.hrreporter.com/focus-areas/compensation-and-benefits/greater-focus-on-episodic-disabilities-needed-study/332638>

Dujay J. Lack of support at work makes COVID worse for people with disabilities [Internet]. Canadian HR Reporter; 2021 Aug 9 [cited 2024 Feb 5]. Available from: <https://www.hrreporter.com/focus-areas/compensation-and-benefits/lack-of-support-at-work-makes-covid-worse-for-people-with-disabilities/358771>

Gao R. Tech update: digital tool offers help for workers with health issues, and Canadian firms need to brush up on cybersecurity [Internet]. Toronto Star; 2023 Mar 23 [cited 2024 Feb 5]. Available from: <https://www.thestar.com/business/mars/2023/03/23/tech-update-digital-tool-offers-help-for-workers-with-health-issues-and-canadian-firms-need-to-brush-up-on-cybersecurity.html>.

Gignac MAM. Accommodating and Communicating about Episodic Disabilities (ACED): a partnership to deliver workplace tools and resources to sustain the employment of people with chronic, episodic conditions. Invited presentation: to the national Board of Directors, Arthritis Society. Toronto, ON. 2018 Sept.

Gignac MAM. Accommodating and Communicating about Episodic Disabilities (ACED): a partnership to deliver workplace tools and resources to sustain the employment of people with chronic, episodic conditions. Invited presentation: to the national partnership meeting of the Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada. Toronto, ON; 2018 Feb.

Gignac MAM. M-192, Episodic disabilities. Studies and activities for report and government response [Internet]. (Gignac witness appearing before the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities, House of Commons, Government of Canada). (Audio). 2018 Dec 6 [cited 2024 Feb 5]. Available from: <https://www.ourcommons.ca/committees/en/HUMA/StudyActivity?studyActivityId=10373348>

Gignac MAM. Challenges in accommodating mental and physical health conditions: what workplace parties are saying. Presentation at: Occupational and Environmental Health speaker series, University of Toronto. Toronto, ON; 2019 Apr 5.

Gignac MAM. Arthritis at Work: the science behind accommodations. Launch of Arthritis Society resources hosted by the TD Bank. Toronto, ON; 2019 Jun.

Gignac MAM. Panel discussion: from evidence to policy change. Invited speaker/panel presenter at: the annual end MS Conference. Calgary, AB; 2019 Dec 8-12.

Gignac MAM, Bowring J, Breslin C, Jetha A, Van Eerd D, Irvin E, et al. Challenges in accommodating mental and physical health conditions: what workplace parties are saying. Podium presentation at: the Work Disability Prevention and Integration Conference. Odense, Denmark; 2019 Jun 4-7.

Gignac MAM. Accommodating episodic disabilities: the latest law and research. Invited presentation at: Lancaster House Audio Conference. Toronto, ON; 2020 May 14.

Gignac MAM. Accommodating and Communicating about Episodic Disabilities (ACED): a partnership to deliver workplace tools and resources to sustain the employment of people with

chronic, episodic conditions. Invited presentation: to Epilepsy Toronto, Workplace Workshop Series. Webinar. 2020 Sept 24.

Gignac MAM. Accommodating and Communicating about Episodic Disabilities (ACED): a partnership to deliver workplace tools and resources to sustain the employment of people with chronic, episodic conditions. Invited presentation: to the Occupational Health Rounds at St. Michael's Hospital, Toronto. Webinar. 2020 Oct 21.

Gignac MAM. Accommodating and Communicating about Episodic Disabilities (ACED): a partnership to deliver workplace tools and resources to sustain the employment of people with chronic, episodic conditions. Invited presentation at: the Workforce Planning Board of Waterloo, Wellington, and Dufferin. Making Cent\$ of Abilities. Webinar. 2020 Nov 5. Available from: https://www.workforceplanningboard.com/pdfs/gignac_aced_workforce_planning_board_nov_2020_slides_to_postpdf

Gignac MAM. Accommodating and Communicating about Episodic Disabilities (ACED). Invited speaker at: the Virtual National Summit on Episodic Disabilities and Employment. Hosted by Realize Canada. 2021 Mar 23.

Gignac MAM. Accommodating and Communicating about Episodic Disabilities (ACED): workplace challenges and solutions. Invited speaker at: the Managing Your Duty to Accommodate Virtual Conference. Infonex Professional Development. 2021 Mar 30.

Gignac MAM. Working with an episodic disability. Invited speaker at: the MS Can Be Summit. Virtual Meeting. 2021 Oct 1. [cited 2024 Feb 5]. Available from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GnfXoepTkkQ&list=PL2rqY0xxHmw0Yj0e0FtFwbPZaqHSEPpSy&index=2>

Gignac MAM. Workplace communication decisions of older workers wanting to remain employed: a qualitative study. Presentation at: the 2nd annual Summit on Episodic Disabilities and Employment. Virtual National Summit. 2022 Mar 24.

Gignac MAM. Organizational perspectives on disclosure, privacy, and workplace accommodation of episodic disabilities. Presentation at: the 2nd annual Summit on Episodic Disabilities and Employment. Virtual National Summit. 2022 Mar 29.

Gignac MAM. Disclosure & accommodation planning. What do we need to improve job retention for people who are living with a disability? Invited presentation at: the Ontario Disability Employment Network (ODEN) Rethinking Disability at Work Conference 2022: the Future of Work. Toronto, ON; 2022 Nov 14-16.

Gignac MAM. Long COVID as an episodic disability: implications for communication, disclosure & accommodation planning. Invited presentation at: the 10th Annual Employment Accessibility Resource Network (EARN) Conference. Virtual. (The theme of the conference: long-COVID and episodic disability: insights, impacts and inclusion at work). 2022 Nov 17.

Gignac MAM. Disability, employment, and accommodations: the workplace perspective. Psynopsis. 2023;45(1):16-17. [cited 2024 Feb 5]. Available from: <https://cpa.ca/docs/File/Psynopsis/2023-Vol45-1/index.html#p=16>

Gignac MAM, Vu U. Introducing the JDAPT: a tool to help workers with chronic conditions access support. Ontario Occupational Health Nurses Association (OOHNA) Journal. 2023;42(1): 41-44.

Gignac MAM, Vu U. Disclosure decisions: for workers with episodic conditions, disclosure is no simple matter. Occupational Health at Work. [Forthcoming].

Gino Rubini. Canada. IWH launches tool to help workers with chronic conditions find tailored work accommodations [Canada. IWH lancia uno strumento per aiutare i lavoratori con patologie croniche a trovare sistemazioni su misura per il lavoro] [Internet]. Diario Prevenzione; 2023 Mar 26. [cited 2024 Feb 5]. Available from: <https://www.diario-prevenzione.it/canada-iwh-lancia-uno-strumento-per-aiutare-i-lavoratori-con-patologie-croniche-a-trovare-sistemazioni-su-misura-per-il-lavoro/>

Institute for Work & Health. A tool to help workers with chronic conditions find job-tailored accommodations [Internet]. Rehab & Community Care Medicine; 2023 [cited 2024 Feb 5]. Available from: <https://www.rehabmagazine.ca/healthcare/workplace-health/a-tool-to-help-workers-with-chronic-conditions-find-job-tailored-accommodations/>

Institute for Work & Health. Older workers not prone to ask for employer support citing ageism and other issues [Internet]. Rehab and Community Care Medicine. 2023;Spring:12-14. Available from: <https://www.rehabmagazine.ca/featured-carousel/older-workers-not-prone-to-ask-for-employer-support-citing-ageism-and-other-issues/> PDF version: <https://www.bluetoad.com/publication/?m=1929&i=789088&p=12&ver=html5>

Mercer S. Accommodation tools aims to bridge gaps between workers and employers [Internet]. Canadian Occupational Safety; 2023 Mar 17 [cited 2024 Feb 5]. Available from: <https://www.thesafetymag.com/ca/news/general/accommodation-tools-aims-to-bridge-gaps-between-workers-and-employers/439950> Featured on the home page: <https://www.thesafetymag.com/ca>.

Mercer S. Tool to help workers with chronic and episodic health conditions [Internet]. Canadian Occupational Safety; 2023 Mar 8 [cited 2024 Feb 5]. Available from: <https://www.thesafetymag.com/ca/topics/technology/tool-to-help-workers-with-chronic-and-episodic-health-conditions/438794>

Vu U, Gignac MAM. Facilitating adjustments. Introducing the JDAPT: a tool to help workers with chronic conditions access support. Occupational Health at Work. 2023;20(2):16-18.

IWH Speaker Series presentations:

Gignac MAM. Challenges in accommodating mental and physical health conditions: what workplace parties are saying. Presentation at: Open plenary for the Institute for Work & Health's Speaker Series. Webinar. 2018 Jun 5. Available from: <https://www.iwh.on.ca/events/speaker-series/2018-jun-12>

Gignac MAM. Does it matter what workers' reasons are for disclosing or not disclosing an episodic disability at work? Presentation at: Open plenary for the Institute for Work & Health's Speaker Series. Webinar. 2020 Nov 24. Available from: <https://www.iwh.on.ca/events/speaker-series/2020-nov-24>

Gignac MAM. What do workplaces need to know to help older workers stay on the job? A qualitative study of older workers' disclosure decisions. Presentation at: Open plenary for the Institute for Work & Health's Speaker Series. Webinar. 2022 Sept 20. Available from: <https://www.iwh.on.ca/events/speaker-series/2022-sep-20>

Workshop:

Gignac MAM, Coderre S, Slepchik R. Chapnick J. (moderator). Working with episodic disabilities: using the latest tools. (A program approved for Continuing Professional Development by the Law Society of British Columbia, by the Law Society of Saskatchewan). Toronto, ON: Lancaster House; 2023 Jul 18.

Financial incentives to promote employment of people with disabilities: when and how do they work best? (2297)

URL: <https://www.iwh.on.ca/projects/financial-incentives-to-promote-employment-of-people-with-disabilities-when-and-how-they-work-best>

Reasons for the project: Financial incentives (FIs) for employers to recruit, retain and promote persons with disabilities take many forms. They are used in Canada and elsewhere to address low rates of employment among people with disabilities. In Canada, the federal government directly operates programs in this domain and supports other initiatives through transfer payments to the provinces. The funds allocated to employment support activities are substantial. However, little research has been done examining how and when financial incentives work to improve employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

Objectives of the project:

- Develop a map of the Canadian financial incentives policy arena and the key stakeholders who engage in it, with details of the characteristics of program offerings and funds allocated.
- Undertake an international environmental scan of good practices in the use of financial incentives.
- Develop case studies using qualitative and quantitative methods that contextualize how and when financial incentives work well or do not work well and why.
- Develop contextualized, evidence-informed resources for stakeholders (including government and employer representatives) on best practices in the use of financial incentives.

Methods: Multi-method study

Project status: October 2017 – March 2025

Research Team and Roles: Emile Tompa, Rebecca Gewurtz (McMaster University) (Principal Investigators), Emma Irvin, Heather Johnston (McMaster University), Dan Samosh (Queen's University) (Research Team)

Collaborators and Partners: Maureen Haan (CCRW), Michael MacDonald (Jazz Aviation), Abdou Saouab (ESDC), Bob Vansickle (Independent Consultant)

Knowledge Transfer Strategies: This project uses an integrated KTE approach. Research findings will be tailored for lay audiences and disseminated through established IWH communication vehicles.

Target Audience: Federal and provincial/territorial governments and policymakers, service providers who provide job development, matching and support services for workers with disabilities and employers.

Linkage to MLITSD's *Prevention Works Strategy*: Objective 1: Build and use the best evidence, Objective 3: Support workplace parties to fulfil their OHS roles and responsibilities and achieve excellence.

Funded by: MLITSD, SSHRC

Project findings available in Open Access journals, platforms, or repositories (If not, please indicate if a preprint will be posted publicly): Not applicable.

Related research summaries:

Tompa E, Samosh D, Johnston H, Irvin E, Gewurtz R, Padkapayeva K, et al. Funding employment services to create sustainable employment opportunities for persons with disabilities: a policy issues briefing for program funders. Toronto, ON: Institute for Work & Health; 2022. Available from: https://www.iwh.on.ca/sites/iwh/files/iwh/reports/iwh_report_funding_employment_services_for_persons_with_disabilities_2022.pdf

Preventing work disability among millennial young adults with rheumatic disease (2310)

URL: <https://www.iwh.on.ca/projects/preventing-work-disability-among-millennial-young-adults-with-rheumatic-disease>

Reasons for the project: Despite advances in clinical care, millennial young adults (born 1982-1999) with rheumatic disease (e.g., arthritis) continue to report difficulties finding employment and staying productive at work. Previous research suggests that workplace policies and practices play an important role in supporting the employment of people with rheumatic disease; but because this research tended to focus on older adults with rheumatic disease, it is unclear if millennial young adults with rheumatic disease who are just beginning their career have the same needs or access to workplace support. This study is one of the first to examine the needs of millennials with rheumatic disease within the workplace.

Objectives of the project:

- Conduct a longitudinal survey of 365-plus millennials with rheumatic disease.
- Identify the workplace supports needed by millennial young adults with rheumatic disease and the extent to which these supports are available and used.
- Examine the characteristics of millennial young adults with rheumatic disease and how their work conditions relate to unmet workplace support needs.
- Assess whether those who report greater unmet workplace support needs are more likely to indicate difficulties with employment.
- Examine whether work conditions affect the relationship between unmet workplace support needs and difficulties with employment.
- Offer concrete messages and strategies that workplaces can use to encourage the employment participation of millennial young adults with rheumatic disease.
- Offer information to service providers to help them provide recommendations to adolescents with rheumatic disease who are preparing to enter the labour market.

Methods: Mixed methods

Project status: January 2018 – December 2024

Research Team and Roles: Arif Jetha (Principal Investigator), Monique Gignac, Catherine Backman (UBC), Vicki Kristman (Lakehead University), Laurie Proulx (Canadian Arthritis Patient Alliance), Lori Tucker (UBC) (Research Team), Lahmea Navaratnerajah (Project Coordinator)

Collaborators and Partners: Arthritis Society, Canadian Arthritis Patient Alliance, Cassie + Friends

Knowledge Transfer Strategies: This project uses an integrated KTE approach. Research findings will be tailored for lay audiences and disseminated through established IWH communication vehicles.

Target Audience: Millennials with rheumatic disease, employers and human resources professionals, clinicians, rehabilitation professionals, community agencies serving people with arthritis.

Linkage to MLITSD's *Prevention Works Strategy*: Objective 1: Build and use the best evidence, Objective 3: Support workplace parties to fulfil their OHS roles and responsibilities and achieve excellence.

Funded by: MLITSD, Arthritis Society

Project findings available in Open Access journals, platforms, or repositories (If not, please indicate if a preprint will be posted publicly):

Jetha A, Tucker L, Chen C, Gignac MAM. Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the employment of Canadian young adults with rheumatic disease: longitudinal survey findings. *Arthritis Care and Research*. 2021;73(8);1146-1152. <https://doi.org/10.1002/acr.24617>

Jetha A, Tucker L, Backman C, Kristman VL, Bowring J, Hazel EM, et al. Rheumatic disease disclosure at the early career phase and its impact on the relationship between workplace supports and presenteeism. *Arthritis Care & Research*. 2022;74(10);1751-1760. <https://doi.org/10.1002/acr.24620>

Jetha A, Tucker L, Vahid Shahidi F, Backman C, Kristman VL, Hazel EM, et al. How does job insecurity and workplace activity limitations relate to rheumatic disease symptom trajectories in young adulthood? A longitudinal study. *Arthritis Care & Research*. 2023;75(1);14-21. <https://doi.org/10.1002/acr.24982>

Related research summaries: Not applicable

Related interviews and articles:

Dujay J. How can workers with psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis be better supported [Internet]. *Canadian HR Reporter*; 2023 Mar 2 [cited 2024 Feb 5]. Available from: <https://www.hrreporter.com/focus-areas/compensation-and-benefits/how-can-workers-with-psoriasis-and-psoriatic-arthritis-be-better-supported/374052>

Janes S. How employers can support employees with psoriatic conditions [Internet]. *Benefits Canada*; 2023 Feb 21 [cited 2024 Feb 5]. Available from: <https://www.benefitscanada.com/benefits/disability-management/how-employers-can-support-employees-with-psoriatic-conditions/>

IWH Speaker Series presentations: Not applicable

Extension of Project ECHO Occupational and Environmental Medicine (OEM) and testing of a new clinical tool (2336)

URL: <https://echooem.iwh.on.ca/>

Reasons for the project: In 2021-2022, the pilot ECHO (Extensions for Community Healthcare Outcomes) OEM (Occupational and Environmental Medicine) was developed, implemented, and evaluated to increase the capacity of primary health-care providers across the province to better manage patients with complex conditions that affect their ability to work. It was demonstrated that ECHO OEM was feasible, acceptable, and effective in training primary care providers to support return to work and recovery. The evaluation of the program revealed a gap in primary care providers' knowledge and capacity to take their patients' occupational histories. Understanding occupational history is key to identifying health care needs and supporting return-to-work. To address this gap, an Occupational History Recording Tool (OHRT) was developed and pilot-tested among the ECHO OEM participants. This project aims to offer ECHO OEM for an additional two years and test the OHRT.

Objectives of the project:

- To extend the offering of ECHO OEM for another 2 years (4 cycles).
- To test the feasibility and usability of the newly developed Occupational History Recording Tool (OHRT) among clinicians who participate in ECHO OEM.

Methods: tele mentoring, quantitative and qualitative

Project status: July 2023 – June 30, 2025

Research Team and Roles: Andrea Furlan, Anil Adishes (Dalhousie University) (Principal Investigators), Nancy Carnide, Emma Irvin, Sara Macdonald, Behdin Nowrouzi-Kia (University of Toronto) (Research Team), Shireen Harbin, Colette Severin (Project Coordinators).

Collaborators and Partners: Partners include the ECHO Ontario Superhub, ECHO Institute at the University of New Mexico, University of Toronto, Association of Family Health Teams of Ontario (AFHTO), Nurse Practitioners' Association of Ontario (NPAO), Lakehead University, Occupational Cancer Research Centre, St. Michael's Hospital, Occupational Medicine Specialists of Canada (OMSOC), Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers (OHCOW), and the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board.

Knowledge Transfer Strategies: This project uses an integrated KTE approach. Research findings will be tailored for lay audiences and disseminated through established IWH communication vehicles.

Target Audience: Clinicians in primary care, including family physicians, nurse practitioners, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, social workers, injured workers, and workplace parties.

Linkage to MLITSD's Prevention Works Strategy: Objective 1: Build and use the best evidence, Objective 2: Improve OHS knowledge and practices, Objective 3: Support workplace parties to fulfil their OHS roles and responsibilities and achieve excellence.

Funded by: MLITSD, WSIB

Project findings available in Open Access journals, platforms, or repositories (If not, please indicate if a preprint will be posted publicly): Not applicable.

Related research summaries: Not applicable

Related interviews and articles: Not applicable

IWH Speaker Series presentations: Not applicable

Future-focused job accommodation practices for the school-to-work transition (2340)

URL: <https://www.iwh.on.ca/projects/future-focused-job-accommodation-practices-for-school-to-work-transition-0>

Reasons for the project: The future of work is characterized by diverse social, technological, economic, environmental and political changes (e.g., artificial intelligence and the automation of jobs, an aging workforce, climate change) that are expected to disrupt every industry, transforming working conditions, and affecting the types and availability of jobs. Young people with disabilities who are transitioning from school to work are especially vulnerable to the complex barriers posed by a rapidly changing labour market. Studies indicate that the school-to-work transition is particularly challenging for the two million young people (aged 18-35 years of age) living with a disability in Canada. Job accommodations are essential for young people with disabilities to find and sustain employment and career advancement during the school-to-work transition. However, a recent survey of young people with disabilities in Canada found that most perceived a number of barriers to accessing job accommodations. Difficulties faced by young people during the school-to-work transition can have a lasting effect and contribute to adverse labour market outcomes (e.g., underemployment, lost productivity) that extend across one's working life. The future of work may create the need for innovative job accommodations and workplace supports.

Objectives of the project:

- Better understand specific job accommodations that can enhance the school-to-work transition.
- Better understand the emerging barriers that young people with disabilities could face in accessing needed job accommodations within the changing world of work.
- Generate future-oriented and proactive evidence regarding the school-to-work transition of young people with disabilities and advance knowledge of job accommodation practices.

Methods: Multi-method study

Project status: March 2020 – Sept 2024

Research Team and Roles: Arif Jetha (Principal investigator), Monique Gignac, Emile Tompa, Dwayne Van Eerd, Kathleen Martin Ginis (University of British Columbia) (Research Team), Sara MacDonald (KTE Lead), Kay Nasir (Project Coordinator)

Collaborators and Partners: Abilities Centre, CCRW, National Educational Association for Disabled Students

Knowledge Transfer Strategies: This project uses an integrated KTE approach. Research findings will be tailored for lay audiences and disseminated through established IWH communication vehicles.

Target Audience: Employers, educators, employment service providers, policy-makers, subject-matter experts (disability, strategic foresight), young adults with disabilities and their families

Linkage to MLITSD's *Prevention Works Strategy*: Objective 1: Build and use the best evidence, Objective 3: Support workplace parties to fulfil their OHS roles and responsibilities and achieve excellence.

Funded by: MLITSD, Accessibility Standards Canada

Project findings available in Open Access journals, platforms, or repositories (If not, please indicate if a preprint will be posted publicly):

Jetha A, Nasir K, Van Eerd D, Gignac MA, Martin Ginis KA, Tompa E. Inclusion of young people with disabilities in the future of work: forecasting workplace, labour market and community-based strategies through an online and accessible Delphi survey protocol. *BMJ Open*. 2022;12(7): e055452. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjopen-2021-055452>

Related research summaries:

Jetha A, Nasir K. Strategies to ensure young persons with disabilities are included in the future of work. (Interim report). Toronto, ON: Institute for Work & Health; 2022 [cited 2024 Feb 6]. Available from: <https://www.iwh.on.ca/scientific-reports/strategies-to-ensure-young-persons-with-disabilities-are-included-in-future-of-work>

Related interviews and articles: Not applicable.

IWH Speaker Series presentations: Not applicable

Inclusive Design for Employment Access (IDEA): A social innovation lab to increase demand-side capacity to employ persons with disabilities in Canada (2405)

URL: <https://www.iwh.on.ca/projects/inclusive-design-for-employment-access-idea-social-innovation-lab-to-increase-demand-side-capacity-to-employ-persons-with-disabilities-in-canada>

Reasons for the project: Talented people are all too often excluded from equal opportunities and choices in careers, jobs and work because they are ‘different.’ That is frequently the case for the 20 per cent of the Canadian population who are persons with disabilities (PWDs). They have disproportionately poorer employment outcomes, even with appropriate qualifications and work readiness. Despite efforts to improve their employment levels by governments and other stakeholders, labour-force participation rates of PWDs in Canada remain substantially lower than persons without disabilities—59 per cent compared to 80 per cent. Among those working, many remain stuck in entry-level, low paying, precarious employment—experiences that give rise to instability, lack of protection, insecurity, and social and economic vulnerability. These challenges are compounded for PWDs from marginalized groups, who face additional systemic barriers to secure employment, based on their gender, sexual orientation, and/or racial identity.

Traditionally, programs and research on employment of PWDs in Canada and internationally have focused on preparing individuals for employment. However, little attention has been given to employer attitudes towards, interest in, and capacity for hiring and accommodating PWDs. Without attention to employer needs and improving the literacy of workplace stakeholders on inclusive practices, the fundamental context of the workplace will remain unchanged, and barriers and assumptions unchallenged.

In this project, we are proposing a new framework for a holistic, interdisciplinary approach to applied research in work disability policy and practice in the form of a social innovation laboratory we are calling Inclusive Design for Employment Access (IDEA), which will focus on building capacity for sustainable and rewarding employment opportunities for PWDs. By drawing on knowledge from rehabilitation science, disability and social policy, design and technology, management, economics, and program evaluation, we are better poised to tackle the complex challenges of this arena.

Objectives of the project:

- Expand demand-side capacity across the Canadian economy so employers can capitalize on the diverse talents of PWDs.
- Increase accessibility and inclusiveness of Canadian labour markets such that PWDs have equal opportunities and choices in careers, jobs, and work as persons without disabilities.
- Establish a best-practice methodology and capacity for co-designing solutions in the work disability policy arena.

Methods: Multi-method study

Project status: October 2021 – September 2027

Research Team and Roles: Emile Tompa, Rebecca Gewrutz (McMaster University) (Principal Investigators), Tammy Bernasky, Alexis Buetting, Emma Irvin, Arif Jetha, Dwayne Van Eerd (IWH) Bruce Bonyhady, Susanne Bruyere, Peter Coppin, Marie-France Coutu, Robert Fleisig, Raphael Gomez, Karen Harlos, Takeo Kondo, Vicki Kristman, Marie Laberge, Jordana Maisel, Carrie Anne Marshall, Valérie Martin, Sandra Moll, Dan Samosh, Firat Sayin, Jennifer Smith-Merry, Mahadeo Sukhai, Hélène Sultan-Taieb, Jutta Treviranus, Angelika Veres, Catherine Wyndham-West (Research Team)

Collaborators and Partners: Flavio Volpe (Automotive Parts Manufacturers' Association), Collinda Joseph (Accessibility Standards Canada), Maria Ash (CNIB), David Brown (CIBC), Wendy Cukier (Diversity Institute), Joseph Giulione (L'Arrimage), Carmine Tiano (Provincial Building & Construction Trades Council of Ontario), Cindy Moser (IWH), Sari Sairanen (Unifor), Boris Vukovic (Carleton Technology and Training Centre), Steven Tobin (Labour Market Information Council), Drew Sousa (Ontario Occupational Health Nurses Association), Krista Carr (Inclusions Canada), Michael MacDonald (Jazz Aviation), Abdou Saouab (ESDC), Frank Smith (National Educational Association of Disabled Students), Don Gallant (Ready, Willing and Able), Victoria Smallman (Canadian Labour Congress), Francis Fung (March of Dimes), Emmanuelle Lopez-Bastos (United Food and Commercial Workers), Maureen Haan (CCRW), Leah Nord (Canadian Chamber of Commerce), Ian Graham (Ottawa Hospital Research Institute), Janice Folk-Dawson (Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL)), Jeannette Campbell (Ontario Disability Employment Network (ODEN)), Tracey Odell (Citizens with Disabilities – Ontario (CWDO)), Martin Beach (ETHOS)

Knowledge Transfer Strategies: This project uses an integrated KTE approach. Research findings will be tailored for lay audiences and disseminated through established IWH communication vehicles.

Target Audience: Canadian work disability policy system stakeholders, including injured worker/ disability community representatives, employers, policymakers, disability program administrators, educators and service providers.

Linkage to MLITSD's *Prevention Works Strategy*: Objective 1: Build and use the best evidence, Objective 3; Support workplace parties to fulfil their OHS roles and responsibilities and achieve excellence.

Funded by: MLITSD, New Frontiers in Research Fund Transformation Stream (a Tri-Council initiative among Canadian Institutes for Health Research (CIHR), Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) and Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC))

Project findings available in Open Access journals, platforms, or repositories (If not, please indicate if a preprint will be posted publicly): Not applicable

Related research summaries:

www.vraie-idea.ca

Related interviews and articles:

Institute for Work & Health. Social innovation lab at McMaster and IWH focuses on innovations that build up employers' capacity to employ persons with disabilities [Internet]. Toronto, ON: Institute for Work & Health; 2022 Aug 23 [cited 2024 Feb 6]. Available from:

<https://www.iwh.on.ca/newsletters/at-work/109/new-initiative-skills-up-employers-to-hire-promote-support-workers-with-disabilities>

McMaster University. McMaster researchers ready to reimagine workplaces for employees with disabilities [Internet]. Hamilton: McMaster University; 2022 Jan 12 [cited 2024 Feb 6]. Available from: <https://brighterworld.mcmaster.ca/articles/mcmaster-researchers-ready-to-reimagine-workplaces-for-disabled-employees/>

IWH Speaker Series presentations:

Tompa E. Development and implementation of a framework for estimating the economic benefits of an accessible and inclusive society. Presentation at: IWH Speaker Series. 2022 Feb 8 [cited 2024 Feb 6]. Available from: <https://www.iwh.on.ca/events/speaker-series/2022-feb-08>

Tompa E. Skills development barriers for persons with disabilities and the promising practices to address them. Presentation at: IWH Speaker Series. 2023 Apr 18 [cited 2024 Feb 6]. Available from: <https://www.iwh.on.ca/events/speaker-series/2023-apr-18>

Other Knowledge Mobilization Activities:

Accessibility Standards Canada (ASC). CAN-ASC-1.1 Standard on employment. (Tompa, Technical Committee Member). (Public Review Launch). Accessibility Standards Canada (ASC); 2023 Jul 26.

Canadian Standards Association (CSA). CSA Z301 - 2023 Standard: equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility in apprenticeship programs. (Tompa, Technical Committee Member). (Public Review Launch). Canadian Standards Association (CSA); 2023 Jul 28.

Centre for Research on Work Disability Policy. Disability and Work in Canada (DWC) Conference: livelihoods and influencing the future of work for people with disabilities: a focus on rights and quality of life [Internet]. (Both in-person and virtual conference). Ottawa, ON; 2023 Nov 29-30 [cited 2024 Feb 6]. Available from: <https://www.crwdp.ca/en/annual-conference-2023-disability-and-work-canada>

Disability and Work in Canada (DWC), Federal-Provincial/Territorial Policy Round Table. Initiatives to strengthen employer capacity to employ and fully include persons with disabilities. Virtual meeting. 2023 Sept 18.

Inclusive Design for Employment Access (IDEA). New social innovation lab to build employer confidence in hiring, supporting and promoting persons with disabilities [Internet]. NewsWire; 2023 May 18 [cited Feb 6]. Available from: <https://www.newswire.ca/news-releases/new-social-innovation-lab-to-build-employer-confidence-in-hiring-supporting-and-promoting-persons-with-disabilities-815232156.html>

Institute for Work & Health, McMaster University. Inclusive Design for Employment Access (IDEA) launch [Internet]. (Held in Toronto and virtually). 2023 May 18 [cited 2024 Feb 6]. Available from: <https://www.iwh.on.ca/events/2023-may-18>

Ontario Disability Employment Network (ODEN). EP. 8. IDEA: the new six-year initiative that's reimagining Canadian workplaces for disability inclusion [Podcast]. (You Can't Spell Inclusion Without a D, podcast with Emile Tompa and Rebecca Gewurtz). 2023 Apr 4 [cited 2024 Feb 6]. Available from: <https://youcantspellinclusionwithoutad.podbean.com/e/idea-%e2%80%94-the-new-six-year-initiative-that-s-reimagining-canadian-workplaces-for-disability-inclusion/>

Tompa E. Advancing employment opportunities for persons with disabilities through demand side capacity building. Keynote presentation at: VIRK Vocational Rehabilitation Fund of Iceland 15th Anniversary Conference. Reykjavik, Iceland; 2023 May 31 [cited 2024 Feb 6]. Available from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8zVFKoKU1QA>

Tompa E, Gewurtz R. Inclusive design for employment access. Virtual presentation at: the Federal-Provincial/Territorial (FPT) Deputies of Public Works Committee. 2023 Jun 12.

Tompa E, Gewurtz R. Creating accessible and inclusive workplaces through inclusive design. Workshop presentation at: the Ontario Secondary School Teachers Federation (OSSTF) President's Symposium. Toronto, ON; 2023 Aug 25 [cited 2024 Feb 6]. Available from: <https://www.osstf.on.ca/calendar/Presidents-Symposium-2023.aspx>

Tompa E, Gewurtz R. Overview of the IDEA social innovation laboratory. Presentation at: the Velliv (Danish Pension Insurance Fund). Toronto, ON; 2023 Sept 22.

Tompa E, Gewurtz R, Farquhar A, Samosh D. IDEA workshop with the Canadian federal government to brainstorm on four inclusive employment capacity building projects. Ottawa, ON; 2023 Nov 2.

Tompa E, Gewurtz R. Building employer capacity for inclusion, diversity, equity and accessibility. Workshop presentation at: the Ontario Disability Employment Network (ODEN) Rethinking Disability Conference. 2023 Nov 13-15.

Tompa E, Gewurtz R, Farquhar A. Creating accessible and inclusive workplaces through inclusive design. Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL) Pilot Train-the-Trainer workshop. Toronto, ON; 2023 Dec 13.

Tompa E, Imam S, Varickanickal J, Mofidi A, Gewurtz R, Irvin E, et, al. Advancing foundational and transferable skills of persons with disabilities. Presentation at: 16th Equality Diversity Inclusion Conference. London UK: University of London; 2023 July 10-11 [cited 2024 Feb 6]. Available from: <https://www.city.ac.uk/news-and-events/events/2023/july/16th-equality-diversity-inclusion-conference-2023>

Tompa E, Mofidi A, Irvin E, Gewurtz R, Imam S. Culture change in the area of disability inclusion. Presentation at: 16th Equality Diversity Inclusion Conference. London UK: University of London ;2023 July 10-11 [cited 2024 Feb 6]. Available from: <https://www.city.ac.uk/news-and-events/events/2023/july/16th-equality-diversity-inclusion-conference-2023>

Tompa E, Mofidi A, Jetha A, Lahey P, Buettgen A. Development and implementation of a framework for estimating the economic benefits of an accessible and inclusive society. *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion*. 2022;41(3): 318-339. <http://doi.org/10.1108/edi-07-2020-0186>.

Tompa E, Samosh D, Santuzzi AM. Guest editorial: The benefits of inclusion: disability and work in the 21st century. *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion*. 2022;41(3): 309-317. <https://doi.org/10.1108/EDI-04-2022-376>.

Work Wellness Institute (WWI). Inclusive Design for Employment Access (IDEA) project: an interdisciplinary approach to workplace inclusivity for all [Podcast]. (Podcast with Emile Tompa and Rebecca Gewurtz). 2023 Oct 11 [cited 2024 Feb 6]. Available from:

<https://workwellnessinstitute.org/resource/inclusive-design-for-employment-access-idea-project-an-interdisciplinary-approach-to-workplace-inclusivity-for-all/>

Work Wellness Institute (WWI). One size fits one: building inclusive workplaces for all [Podcast]. (Podcast with Emile Tompa and Rebecca Gewurtz) 2023 Oct 11 [cited 2024 Feb 6]. Available from: <https://workwellnessinstitute.org/resource/one-size-fits-one-building-inclusive-workplaces-for-all/>

Inclusive Design for Employment Access (IDEA): Transition to work and career development (2406)

URL: Currently not available

Reasons for the project: Persons with disabilities encounter barriers as they transition into work and advance within their careers. Disability scholarship and practice has increasingly focused on the school-to-work (STW) transition. Specifically, existing research tends to focus on the experience of obtaining entry-level positions and the barriers and facilitators to early stages of employment. Far less research exists on understanding the determinants to job quality (e.g., secure employment that meets career aspirations, offers competitive wages, and provides opportunities for career growth) and the career success of persons with disabilities (e.g., feeling satisfied with a career as well as access to career advancement and leadership positions). Further, there exist few evidence-based interventions to prevent workers with disabilities from being forced into precarious working situations or to support career advancement and development. We will conduct rapid reviews to identify and synthesize innovative STW transition programs/practices/interventions that emphasize access to high-quality jobs and career success.

Objectives of the project:

- To examine and synthesize interventions and practices that support the transition into jobs with higher quality among persons living with disabilities.
- To examine and synthesize interventions and practices that support the career success of persons with disabilities.
- Utilize findings from rapid reviews to develop demand-side initiatives that are relevant to the school-to-work transition for persons living with disabilities.

Methods: Rapid review, evidence synthesis

Project status: September 2022 – September 2027

Research Team and Roles: Arif Jetha, Emile Tompa (Principal Investigators), Faraz Vahid Shahidi, Duygu Gulseren (York University), Marie Laberge (University of Montreal), Dan Samosh (Queens University) (Research Team)

Collaborators and Partners: Jazz Aviation, Holland Bloorview, National Educational Association for Disabled Students, Youth Employment Services

Knowledge Transfer Strategies: This project uses an integrated KTE approach. Research findings will be tailored for lay audiences and disseminated through established IWH communication vehicles.

Target Audience: Canadian work disability policy system stakeholders, including injured worker/disability community representatives, employers, policy-makers, disability program administrators, educators and service providers

Linkage to MLITSD's *Prevention Works Strategy*: Objective 1: Build and use the best evidence, Objective 3; Support workplace parties to fulfil their OHS roles and responsibilities and achieve excellence, Objective 4: Make OHS easier for small businesses.

Funded by: MLITSD, New Frontiers in Research Fund (a Tri-Council initiative among CIHR, SSHRC and Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council)

Project findings available in Open Access journals, platforms, or repositories (If not, please indicate if a preprint will be posted publicly): Not applicable

Related research summaries: Not applicable

Related interviews and articles: Not applicable

IWH Speaker Series presentations: Not applicable

Inclusive Design for Employment Access (IDEA): A social innovation lab to increase demand-side capacity to employ persons with disabilities in Canada: Evidence Synthesis (2407)

URL: <https://www.iwh.on.ca/projects/inclusive-design-for-employment-access-idea-evidence-synthesis>

Reasons for the project: Inclusive Design for Employment Access (IDEA) is a social innovation lab at McMaster University that focuses on the employment of persons with disabilities. It was recently funded for six years by the New Frontiers in Research Fund Transformation Stream, administered by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC). The activities of the IDEA laboratory are focused on advancing knowledge and practice on how workplaces and related systems can be better designed to support full inclusion of persons with disabilities, including the social aspects of employment. Knowledge synthesis is one of four activity areas that will support tool and resource development across all hubs through the 5-Step Signature Methodology of the project. The Knowledge synthesis activity will build upon rapid review methods developed by the Institute for Work & Health through collaboration with other Evidence synthesis centres e.g., McMaster Health Forum.

Objectives of the project:

- Build methodological capacity through the hub members to conduct rapid evidence syntheses and environmental scans.
- Identify issues through rapid review methods and environmental scans of needs/challenges, knowledge gaps, existing evidence-informed tools, and promising practices.
- Conduct an environmental scan to find out what wrap around supports are and how they are used in different contexts.

Methods: Environmental scan, rapid review, scoping review, systematic review

Project status: September 2022 – September 2027

Research Team and Roles: Emile Tompa, Rebecca Gewurtz (McMaster University) (Principal Investigators), Alexis Buettgen, Emma Irvin, Arif Jetha, Sara Lacarte, Amir Mofidi, Dan Samosh, Dwayne Van Eerd (IWH), Bruce Bonyhady, Susanne Bruyere, Peter Coppin, Marie-France Coutu, Robert Fleisig, Raphael Gomez, Karen Harlos, Takeo Kondo, Vicki Kristman, Marie Laberge, Jordana Maisel, Carrie Anne Marshall, Sandra Moll, Firat Sayin, Jennifer Smith-Merry, Mahadeo Sukhai, H el ene Sultan-Taieb, Jutta Treviranus, Angelika Veres, Catherine Wyndham-West (Research Team), Renato Barbosa dos Santos, Ashvene Sureshkumar (Students).

Collaborators and Partners: Flavio Volpe (Automotive Parts Manufacturers' Association), Collinda Joseph (Accessibility Standards Canada), Maria Ash (CNIB), David Brown (CIBC), Wendy Cukier (Diversity Institute), Joseph Giulione (L'Arrimage), Carmine Tiano (Provincial Building & Construction Trades Council of Ontario), Cindy Moser (IWH), Sari Sairanen (Unifor), Boris Vukovic (Carleton Technology and Training Centre), Steven Tobin (Labour Market Information Council), Drew Sousa (Ontario Occupational Health Nurses Association), Krista Carr (Inclusions Canada), Michael MacDonald (Jazz Aviation), Abdou Saouab (ESDC), Frank Smith (National Educational Association of Disabled Students), Don Gallant (Ready, Willing and Able), Victoria

Smallman (Canadian Labour Congress), Francis Fung (March of Dimes), Emmanuelle Lopez-Bastos (United Food and Commercial Workers), Maureen Haan (CCRW), Leah Nord (Canadian Chamber of Commerce), Ian Graham (Ottawa Hospital Research Institute).

Knowledge Transfer Strategies: This project uses an integrated KTE approach. Research findings will be tailored for lay audiences and disseminated through established IWH communication vehicles.

Target Audience: Canadian work disability policy system stakeholders, including injured worker/disability community representatives, employers, policy-makers, disability program administrators, educators and service providers.

Linkage to MLITSD's *Prevention Works Strategy*: Objective 1: Build and use the best evidence, Objective 3; Support workplace parties to fulfil their OHS roles and responsibilities and achieve excellence, Objective 4: Make OHS easier for small businesses.

Funded by: MLITSD, New Frontiers in Research Fund (a Tri-Council initiative among CIHR, SSHRC and Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council)

Project findings available in Open Access journals, platforms, or repositories (If not, please indicate if a preprint will be posted publicly): Not applicable.

Related research summaries: Not applicable

Related interviews and articles: Not applicable

IWH Speaker Series presentations: Not applicable

What are the long-term health and labour market outcomes of workers who experienced work-related COVID-19 transmission? (2410)

URL: <https://www.iwh.on.ca/projects/what-are-long-term-health-and-labour-market-outcomes-of-workers-who-experienced-work-related-covid-19-transmission>

Reasons for the project: Canadians who have acquired COVID-19 at work likely experience unique circumstances that could influence how well they recover physically, how they fare emotionally, and how well they return to the setting where their infection occurred. Yet, we know virtually nothing about the recovery experiences of workers with work-related COVID-19 infections, representing an important knowledge gap for a vulnerable population subgroup. Our proposed project will fill this gap.

Objectives of the project:

- Survey a sample of workers who acquired COVID-19 in the course of their employment, approximately 18 months after their initial absence from work.
- Quantify the prevalence of depression, anxiety, self-rated health and physical functioning among people who experienced work-related COVID-19 transmission.
- Estimate, among people who experienced work-related COVID-19 transmission, the proportion who are back at work, in the same occupation with the same employer.
- Explore the factors, at the system, workplace, health-care provider and individual levels, that are associated with RTW and health outcomes following work-related COVID-19 transmission.
- Compare health and RTW outcomes of workers who acquired COVID-19 at work with those of workers who sustained a non-COVID-19 work-related injury or illness around the same time. Explore the extent to which these differences are explained by differences in the RTW process.

Methods: Cross-sectional study linked to workers' compensation claim data

Project status: April 2022 – April 2024

Research Team and Roles: Peter Smith (Principal Investigator), Nancy Carnide, Arif Jetha, Cameron Mustard, Mieke Koehoorn (UBC), Cheryl Peters (U Alberta) (Research Team), Victoria Nadalin, Colette Severin (Analysts)

Collaborators and Partners: WSIB

Knowledge Transfer Strategies: Research findings will be tailored for lay audiences and disseminated through established IWH communication vehicles.

Target Audience: MLITSD, Primary prevention policy-makers, Labour, Employers

Linkage to MLITSD's *Prevention Works Strategy*: Objective 1: Build and use the best evidence, Objective 2: Improve OHS knowledge and practices, Objective 3: Support workplace parties to fulfil their OHS roles and responsibilities and achieve excellence.

Funded by: MLITSD, CIHR

Project findings available in Open Access journals, platforms, or repositories (If not, please indicate if a preprint will be posted publicly): Not applicable.

Related research summaries: Not applicable

Related interviews and articles: Not applicable

IWH Speaker Series presentations: Not applicable

Pilot Project ECHO Ontario Public Safety Personnel (ECHO PSP) (2420)

URL: <https://echosp.iwh.on.ca/>

Reasons for the project: There is a high incidence of occupational mental health injury among Public Safety Personnel (PSP) that puts them at risk of work disability and poor return-to-work outcomes. Clinicians in primary care, including psychologists, family physicians, occupational therapists, social workers, and psychiatrists often lack the opportunity to better understand PSP's unique work cultures to optimize support of PSP at work, or in return-to-work, after an illness or injury. We are proposing the use of ECHO methodology to establish a community of practice in which PSP workplace cultural competency can be established. To do this, we will be including clinicians and stakeholders who support PSP in reintegration and return to work.

Objectives of the project:

- Develop an ECHO for return-to-work (RTW) among PSP, including firefighters, paramedics, corrections, and police.
- Successfully train experts to participate as HUB members, and to recruit healthcare providers in primary care, occupational health, and mental health providers to attend and present cases in ECHO
- Evaluate the implementation and performance of ECHO PSP in Ontario

Methods: Tele mentoring, quantitative and qualitative

Project status: January 2023 – December 2024

Research Team and Roles: Andrea Furlan, Nadia Aleem (Centre for Addiction and Mental Health) (Principal Investigators), Emma Irvin, Emile Tompa, Dwayne Van Eerd, (Research Team) Shireen Harbin, Colette Severin (Project Coordinators)

Collaborators and Partners: Partners include the ECHO Ontario Superhub and the ECHO Institute at the University of New Mexico.

Knowledge Transfer Strategies: This project uses an integrated KTE approach. Research findings will be tailored for lay audiences and disseminated through established IWH communication vehicles.

Target Audience: Clinicians in primary care, including psychologists, family physicians, occupational therapists, social workers, and psychiatrists, injured workers, workplace parties.

Linkage to MLITSD's *Prevention Works Strategy*: Objective 1: Build and use the best evidence, Objective 2: Improve OHS knowledge and practices, Objective 3: Support workplace parties to fulfil their OHS roles and responsibilities and achieve excellence.

Funded by: MLITSD, WSIB

Project findings available in Open Access journals, platforms, or repositories (If not, please indicate if a preprint will be posted publicly): Not applicable.

Related research summaries: Not applicable

Related interviews and articles: Not applicable

IWH Speaker Series presentations: Not applicable

First Responder Mental Health Treatment Services: Formative evaluation of a pilot program (2425)

URL: <https://www.iwh.on.ca/projects/first-responder-mental-health-treatment-services-formative-evaluation-of-pilot-program>

Reasons for the project: The Ontario Workplace Safety & Insurance Board (WSIB) has contracted with Trillium Health / Insight Health Solutions (IHS) to establish a mental health assessment and treatment specialty pilot program for first responders with an accepted compensation claim arising from post-traumatic stress disorder, major depression or substance use disorder. IWH and the Institute for Better Health (IBH) are collaborating on a formative evaluation of this pilot program to describe the extent to which the program is addressing perceived needs as experienced by First Responder participants in the FRMHT program. The formative evaluation methods is also collecting observations from clinical staff on features of program implementation, conducting analysis of longitudinal clinical measures and collecting both qualitative and quantitative information from representatives of first responder employers to understand the challenges and opportunities in accommodating a first responder's return-to-work following treatment for PTSD.

Objectives of the project:

The formative evaluation has four components:

- Component 1: Interviews with clinical providers regarding program suitability and effectiveness in meeting and supporting client needs (IBH led)
- Component 2: Interviews with first-responder clients regarding program appropriateness, suitability and effectiveness (IBH led)
- Component 3: Quantitative analysis of client clinical measures as indicators of progress in the program (IWH led)
- Component 4: Interviews with employers to understand perspectives on supporting return to work among first-responders in treatment for PTSI (IWH led)

Methods: Multi-method study combining qualitative and quantitative components

Project status: September 2022 – August 2024

Research Team and Roles: Cameron Mustard; Walter Wodchis (DLSPH) (Principal Investigators), Gingin Chien, Kathleen Dobson, Basak Yanar (Research Team), Leslie Vesely (Project Coordinator)

Collaborators and Partners: Institute for Better Health (Trillium Health Partners), WSIB

Knowledge Transfer Strategies: This project uses an integrated KTE approach. Research findings will be tailored for lay audiences and disseminated through established IWH communication vehicles.

Target Audience: Associations representing Ontario first-responder employees and Schedule 2 employers of first-responders in Ontario.

Linkage to MLITSD's *Prevention Works Strategy*: Objective 1: Build and use the best evidence.

Funded by: MLITSD, WSIB

Project findings available in Open Access journals, platforms, or repositories (If not, please indicate if a preprint will be posted publicly): Not applicable

Related research summaries: Not applicable

Related interviews and articles: Not applicable

IWH Speaker Series presentations: Not applicable

TIE-C-MI: Trajectories of income and employment of Canadians with mental illness (2435)

URL: <https://www.iwh.on.ca/projects/trajectories-of-income-and-employment-of-canadians-with-mental-illness>

Reasons for the project: Mental illness and substance use disorders increase the risk of earning lower wages, becoming unemployed, and depending on income assistance programs. At the same time, poor employment and low-income levels may impact or exacerbate a mental illness and the ability to access treatment. In Canada, we know little about what employment and income look like over time for Canadians with mental health and substance use disorders. This information is a necessary first step to identifying the most appropriate time to implement health- and labour-related interventions to retain these Canadians in the workforce. The goal of this project is to understand the employment and income experiences of Canadians with mental and substance use disorders during their prime working years.

Objectives of the project:

- Uncover the trajectories of employment and income among Canadian males and females between the ages of 18 to 64 who experience a common mental disorder (e.g., anxiety disorder, depressive disorder), severe mental disorder (e.g., bipolar disorder, schizophrenia), eating disorder, substance use disorder or multiple disorders.
- Determine which sociodemographic and health factors most strongly influence trajectory membership for each mental disorder group.
- Compare these trajectories to those of working-aged Canadians who do not experience mental, or substance use disorders.

Methods: Quantitative and data linkage

Research Team and Roles: Kathleen Dobson (Principal Investigator), Monique Gignac, Rubab Arim (Statistics Canada), Mark Ferro (University of Waterloo), Claire de Oliveira (University of Toronto/CAMH), Simone Vigod (University of Toronto/Women's College Hospital) (Research Team), Gingin Chien (Analyst), Sabrina Tonima (KTE Lead)

Collaborators and Partners: Mindset Mental Health Strategy, Mood Disorder Society of Canada, Statistics Canada

Knowledge Transfer Strategies: This project uses an integrated KTE approach. Research findings will be tailored for lay audiences and disseminated through established IWH communication vehicles.

Target Audiences: MLITSD, MH<C CIHR, health-care providers, mental health advocates, employers, WSIB and workers' compensation authorities

Linkage to MLITSD's *Prevention Works Strategy*: Objective 1: Build and use the best evidence.

Project Status: April 2023 – March 2025

Funded by: MLITSD, CIHR

Project findings available in Open Access journals, platforms, or repositories (If not, please indicate if a preprint will be posted publicly): Not applicable

Related research summaries: Not applicable

Related interviews and articles:

Dobson KG, Gignac MA, Mustard CA. The working life expectancy of American adults experiencing depression. *Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology*. 2023;[epub ahead of print]. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00127-023-02547-4>

IWH Speaker Series presentations: Not applicable

Building disability confidence in the Canada's financial sector (3235)

URL: <https://www.iwh.on.ca/projects/building-disability-confidence-in-canadas-financial-sector>

Reasons for project: Using an evidence-informed intersectional approach, this project aims to develop and launch an online toolkit specifically designed for the Canadian financial sector, featuring products, guidance and services designed to fulfil employer responsibilities under the *Accessible Canada Act* while also meeting the talent needs of the sector. This toolkit will aid managers and staff across all departments to define and understand 'disability confidence,' and what it means to be confident and not just compliant in all areas pertaining to disability. A secondary objective of our project is to bring the community of disability-focused organizations together to collectively support the development of the toolkit, while ensuring that all organizations' unique viewpoints are captured and incorporated within the final product. IWH contributions to the larger project are the development of a guide for engagement of workers with disabilities and a peer-reviewed manuscript from the study.

Objectives of the project:

- Develop and launch an online toolkit specifically designed for the Canadian financial sector, featuring products, guidance and services that fulfil employer responsibilities under the *Accessible Canada Act* while also meeting the talent needs of the sector.
- Bring the community of disability-focused organizations together to collectively support the development of the toolkit and ensure their viewpoints are incorporated into toolkit.
- For the IWH component, lead the development of an evidence informed module in the toolkit on determining the level of and fostering engagement among workers with disabilities and publish a peer-reviewed article about the research that informs the module.

Methods: Qualitative

Project status: January 2021 – September 2024

Research Team and Roles: Emile Tompa (Principal Investigator), Alexis Buettgen, Emma Irvin (Research Team), Andrea Gardiola (Student)

Collaborators and Partners: Alliance for Equality of Blind Canadians, Autism Speaks Canada, Barrier Free Saskatchewan, BC Aboriginal Network on Disability Society, Business Disability International, Canadian Autism Spectrum Disorder Alliance, Canadian Council of the Blind, Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work (CCRW), Canadian Cultural Society of the Deaf, Canadian Hard of Hearing Association, Canadian Mental Health Association, Canadian National Institute for the Blind, Council of Canadians with Disabilities, Disabled Women's Network of Canada, Every Canadian Counts Coalition, Eviance, Inclusion Canada, Institute for Research and Development on Inclusion and Society, March of Dimes, Manitoba League of Persons with Disabilities, Millions Missing Canada, Muscular Dystrophy Canada, National Education Association of Disabled Students, National ME/FM Action Network, Spinal Cord Injury Canada

Knowledge Transfer Strategies: Research findings will be tailored for lay audiences and disseminated through established IWH communication vehicles.

Target Audience: Canadian financial sector employers (including managers and human resources professionals), employment service providers who work with job seekers with disabilities, policy-makers focused on employment services for persons with disabilities, and disability community representatives.

Linkage to MLITSD's *Prevention Works Strategy*: Objective 1. Build and use the best evidence, Objective 3: Support workplace parties to fulfil their OHS roles and responsibilities and achieve excellence.

Funded by: MLITSD, ESDC

Project findings available in Open Access journals, platforms, or repositories (If not, please indicate if a preprint will be posted publicly): Not applicable.

Related research summaries:

Buettgen A, Gardiola A, Tompa E. Engaging workers with disabilities in the financial sector: a resource for organizational leadership and management. Inclusive Design for Employment Access (IDEA), Toronto, ON: Centre for Research in Work Disability Policy; 2022 [cited 2024 Feb 6]. Available from: https://www.crwdp.ca/sites/default/files/worker_engagement_resource_final.pdf

Related interviews and articles:

Buettgen A, Gardiola A, Tompa E. Engaging workers with disabilities in the financial sector: exploring promising practices through key informant interviews and a rapid literature review. Prepared for submission to Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation.

IWH Speaker Series presentations: Not applicable

Implementation of PTSI programs in Alberta first responder organizations (3430)

URL: <https://iwh.on.ca/projects/implementation-of-ptsi-programs-in-alberta-first-responder-organizations>

Reasons for the project: The prevalence of post-traumatic stress injury (PTSI) among first responders is high and often leads to work disability. Studies have shown that organizational policies and practices have an important impact on PTSI. Our ongoing research revealed Alberta first responder workplaces are developing PTSI policies and programs. However, preliminary findings also show there are challenges to program implementation, particularly among smaller services/communities. Through our earlier work, we have established a strong stakeholder network; we propose to work with them in the current study about implementation steps for PTSI policies and programs.

Objectives of the project:

- To determine the current implementation approaches for PTSI policies and programs in Albertan first responder organizations and what are the key challenges to implementation.
- To determine the promising implementation steps and processes given the knowledge base and experience from current implementation efforts.

Methods: Qualitative

Project status: August 2023 – August 2024

Research Team and Roles: Dwayne Van Eerd, Emile Tompa (Principal Investigators), Emma Irvin, Monique Gignac, Douglas Gross (University of Alberta) (Research team), Sharmigaa Ragunathan (Project Coordinator), Sabrina Tomina (KTE)

Collaborators and Partners: Megan McElheran (Wayfound Mental Health Group)

Knowledge Transfer Strategies: This project uses an integrated KTE approach. Research findings will be tailored for lay audiences and disseminated through established IWH communication vehicles. Research findings will be tailored for lay audiences and disseminated through established IWH communication vehicles.

Target Audience: First Responders (Police, Fire, Paramedics), First Responder services (organizations) in Alberta

Linkage to MLITSD's *Prevention Works Strategy*: Objective 1: Build and use the best evidence, Objective 2: Improve OHS knowledge and practices, Objective 3: Support workplace parties to fulfil their OHS roles and responsibilities and achieve excellence.

Funded by: MLITSD, Alberta Government SPHIFR Applied Research Grant

Project findings available in Open Access journals, platforms, or repositories (If not, please indicate if a preprint will be posted publicly): Not applicable.

Related research summaries: Not applicable

Related interviews and articles: Not applicable

IWH Speaker Series presentations: Not applicable

Incentives-based approaches to Support Stay at Work / Return to Work – an Environmental Scan (3440)

URL: Currently not available

Reasons for the project: Work disability is increasingly recognized as an issue that affects most people at some point in their lives, either directly or via a loved one, friend, or colleague. Work disability is defined as a “functional limitation, whether permanent, temporary, or episodic in nature, that, in interaction with barriers, including social/attitudinal and in the built environment, hinders a person’s full and equal participation in the labour force and paid employment activities.” In Canada, we are confronting the realization that future labour force productivity and output, as well as global competitiveness, is contingent on the inclusion of all adults who can and want to work, regardless of their ability status. The aging of the labour force and related onset of chronic/episodic health conditions, high unemployment/ non-participation rates for persons with disabilities, financial pressures on social safety net and disability support programs, as well as looming shortages of labour, all point to a pressing need to act. The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have further exacerbated the issue, and ongoing research has shed light on the longer-term impacts of the pandemic on disability and employment.

Objectives of the project:

- To determine the types of incentives that promote stay at work/return to work.
- To determine the key contextual factors associated with effective incentives.
- To examine if there are additional benefits or risks to these incentives beyond stay at work/return to work.

Methods: Environmental scan, qualitative

Project status: November 2023 – November 2024

Research Team and Roles: Dwayne Van Eerd, Emma Irvin (Principal Investigators), Emile Tompa, Dan Samosh (Queen’s University), (Research Team), Morgane Le Pouésard (Project Coordinator), Renato Santos (PhD Student)

Collaborators and Partners: WorkSafeBC

Knowledge Transfer Strategies: This project uses an integrated KTE approach. Research findings will be tailored for lay audiences and disseminated through established IWH communication vehicles. Research findings will be tailored for lay audiences and disseminated through established IWH communication vehicles.

Target Audience: Workers’ compensation boards, private disability insurers, employers, unions, human resources and disability prevention professionals, workers, and policy makers are primary audiences for this research

Linkage to MLITSD’s *Prevention Works Strategy*: Objective 1: Build and use the best evidence; Objective 2: Improve OHS knowledge and practices

Funded by: MLITSD, WorkSafeBC

Project findings available in Open Access journals, platforms, or repositories (If not, please indicate if a preprint will be posted publicly): Not applicable.

Related research summaries: Not applicable

Related interviews and articles: Not applicable

IWH Speaker Series presentations: Not applicable

Correcting for participation bias in nonprobability samples using multiple reference samples (3435)

URL: <https://www.iwh.on.ca/projects/correcting-for-participation-bias-in-non-probability-samples-using-multiple-reference-samples>

Reasons for the project: non-probability (convenience) samples are becoming increasingly popular among applied health researchers due to lower costs and higher response rates than those of probability samples. Since participation mechanism in convenience samples is not controlled by design, these samples can over- or under-represent certain demographic, lifestyle, occupational and health-related characteristics in the target population, which can, in turn, lead to erroneous inference. Currently available methods aim to mitigate this bias by using a probability reference survey in conjunction with the convenience sample to approximate the unknown participation mechanism. However, more than one reference sample will often be required to account for all the important variables associated with individual's participation decision, and yet, existing statistical methods are not designed to accommodate more than one reference sample. Our proposed study will fill this gap.

Objectives of the project:

- Expand existing methods to integrate two reference surveys.
- Assess the performance of the new methods in simulated data under scenarios of practical importance.
- Apply the new methods to real-world observational and multicenter RCT convenience samples.
- Develop software packages in R and SAS to help other researchers to apply these new methods to their primary data collected through convenience samples.

Methods: Statistical methodological study

Project status: April 2023 – April 2025

Research Team and Roles: Victoria Landsman, Peter Smith (Principal Investigators), Nancy Carnide, Ivan Carrillo-Garcia (StatsCan), Barry Graubard (US-NCI), Aya Mitani (UofT), Lingxiao Wang (US-NCI), (Research Team)

Collaborators and Partners: Not applicable

Knowledge Transfer Strategies: This project uses an integrated KTE approach. Research findings will be tailored for lay audiences and disseminated through established IWH communication vehicles.

Target Audience: Not applicable

Linkage to MLITSD's *Prevention Works Strategy*: Not applicable

Funded by: MLITSD, CIHR

Project findings available in Open Access journals, platforms, or repositories (If not, please indicate if a preprint will be posted publicly): Not applicable.

Related research summaries: Not applicable

Related interviews and articles: Not applicable

IWH Speaker Series presentations: Not applicable

Methodological developments in evidence synthesis (0951)

URL: Currently not available

Reasons for the project: IWH is committed to continuously improving the field of evidence synthesis methodology. In 2024, we propose to initiate, undertake, and advance the following methods projects: piloting our rapid review methodology; refining the evidence synthesis methods for environmental scans; updating our evidence synthesis algorithm; conducting projects using artificial intelligence; updating IWH Systematic Review and Knowledge Transfer methods papers and environmental scan of OHS in culturally diverse workplaces; and conducting a scoping review with EPID@work.

Objectives of the project:

- Pilot a methodology for rapid review methods.
- Refine realist review methods.
- Continue to teach evidence synthesis methods to system partners.

Methods: Not applicable

Project status: Not applicable

Research Team and Roles: Emma Irvin, Morgane Le Pouésard, Dwayne Van Eerd (Institute Coordinators), Nancy Carnide, Andrea Furlan, Joanna Liu, Maggie Tiong, Basak Yanar, Jill Hayden (Dalhousie University), Jo Jordan (Keele University), Maurits Van Tulder (VU, Amsterdam) (Research Team), Renato Barbosa dos Santos, Ashvene Sureshkumar (Students)

Collaborators and Partners: Not applicable

Knowledge Transfer Strategies: This project uses an integrated KTE approach. Research findings will be tailored for lay audiences and disseminated through established IWH communication vehicles.

Target Audience: MLITSD, provincial system partners, research community

Linkage to MLITSD's *Prevention Works Strategy*: Objective 1: Build and use the best evidence.

Funded by: MLITSD

Project findings available in Open Access journals, platforms, or repositories (If not, please indicate if a preprint will be posted publicly): Not applicable.

Related research summaries: Not applicable

Related interviews and articles: Not applicable

IWH Speaker Series presentations: Not applicable

Knowledge transfer & exchange (KTE) and Communications

At the Institute for Work & Health, knowledge transfer & exchange (KTE) is a process by which research information is made available and accessible through interactive engagement with stakeholders for improving awareness, practice, planning and policy-making. KTE at IWH is integrated into the research process. Stakeholders are involved in helping us identify research priorities and frame research questions and provide input on findings. They help us communicate findings in ways and through channels that are useful for policy and practice.

In conjunction with KTE processes is a corporate communications strategy that ensures the IWH brand is seen as a trusted and reliable source of evidence-based information. Communications strategies ensure our projects, findings, resources and events are known to, and understood by, our stakeholders in the workplace health, safety and disability prevention arenas. KTE and communications activities also actively work to build capacity in our audiences to understand and use research evidence.

The target audiences for the Institute's research include policy-makers (e.g., provincial and federal ministries in the fields of occupational health and safety, disability management, workers' compensation, accessibility and inclusion, and public health); workplace parties (employers, labour representatives and workers); human resource professionals, occupational health and safety professionals, disability management professionals; health practitioners; other researchers in the field of work and health; intermediary organizations representing and serving these external stakeholders (e.g., health and safety associations, professional associations, service organizations, trade or sector-specific media publications); health charities and innovation groups.

2024/25 KTE and communications activities that are tied to specific projects are reported with those projects in the previous section. Listed in this section are system- and organization-wide KTE and communications activities. They are aligned with the IWH Strategic Plan, 2023-27, specifically IWH's strategic directions to advance the science of work and health, and to expand the reach and impact of IWH research. Specific activities within these objectives are listed below.

1. Advance the science of work and health.

Conduct excellent research KTE supports. IWH researchers work with partners to undertake research examining diverse facets of work and health in Ontario, in Canada and around the world, and our KTE and communications team facilitate IWH research use by our stakeholders.

Provide expert advice. KTE and Communications support IWH scientists to provide expert advice, by presenting at local, provincial, national and international conferences and events, and by sharing findings with key stakeholders.

2. Expand the reach and impact of IWH research.

Strengthen our networks. KTE creates formal and informal networks of stakeholders and works with intermediary organizations (health and safety associations, professional organizations, employer associations and labour groups) to build and sustain stakeholder engagement and

interest in research findings for use in practice and policy. We attend a variety of conferences and events to present IWH research messages and to raise awareness about IWH, developing new connections with diverse professionals who can use IWH in policy and practice.

Deliver accessible evidence. KTE and Communications work with our scientists and stakeholders to develop a wide range of user-friendly products (tools, guides, policy briefings, news articles, plain-language research summaries, infographics, videos) that are accessible to, and used by, stakeholders. We offer stakeholders and partners in-person and virtual opportunities to strengthen their knowledge and capacity to find, understand and use research.

Expand our reach. KTE and Communications continue to explore strategic and creative ways to expand evidence dissemination and facilitate knowledge exchange. The website remains our key conduit for reaching our audiences along with the publication of our monthly newsletter, IWH News. We will continue to pursue coverage in trade media and are using social media to share research findings and to follow issues important to our stakeholders. IWH researchers share their research with a growing national and international audience through the IWH Speaker Series webinars. We will continue to provide tailored workshops and briefings focused on understanding research evidence and its application.

The above goals are incorporated in the KTE/Communication activities described in the following pages.

Stakeholder Networks (0638)

Reasons for the project: The Institute manages formal stakeholder networks that allow for two-way communication about research findings and research needs. One network, launching in 2024, involves stakeholders from a wide range of audiences concerned with health, safety and wellbeing of working people. The purpose of this network is to facilitate exchange of research findings and practice experience to inform IWH research and KTE activities and stakeholder practices and programs. Network members are encouraged to share experiences of research use and to disseminate relevant findings to their own networks. Members are often approached to participate in research projects or for assistance with study participant recruitment. IWH also connects with other groups including policy-makers, employers, and organized labour in informal networks.

IWH also hosts a network of Ontario prevention partner organizations, the Prevention Knowledge Exchange Group (PKEG), to foster dialogue and strengthen knowledge exchange and collaboration in the prevention system. The network comprises the six Ontario health and safety associations (HSAs); five other Ontario research centres; the Prevention Division and the Fair, Safe and Healthy Workplaces Division of the Ontario Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training Skills and Development (MLITSD); and the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB). IWH also participates in other Ontario prevention system forums such as the System Ergonomics Committee and the Workplace Vulnerability Working Group.

Objectives of the project:

- Facilitate and support knowledge exchange among IWH researchers and network members to enhance existing research and future studies at IWH
- Disseminate research findings and facilitate the uptake of research
- Increase participation in IWH research projects and IWH events
- Collaborate with prevention partners to harmonize research activities and knowledge exchange opportunities for supporting the application of research evidence in Ontario workplaces

Team and Roles: Morgan Lay/Kate Cowan, Sara Macdonald (Leads), Monique Gignac, Peter Smith, (Co-leads), Siobhan Cardoso, Pam Cardwell, Sabrina Tonima (Team)

Collaborators and Partners: Professional bodies (associations/regulatory colleges), health and safety associations, MLITSD, WSIB, Ontario prevention system research centres

Knowledge Transfer Strategies: This project uses an integrated KTE approach. Research findings are tailored for network audiences and disseminated through established IWH communication vehicles.

Target Audience: Policy-makers, employers, labour representatives, human resource professionals, occupational health and safety professionals, disability management professionals; health practitioners, researchers, and intermediary organizations representing the above.

Linkage to MLITSD's *Prevention Works Strategy*: Objective 1: Build and use the best evidence.

Funded by: MLITSD

Project findings available in Open Access journals, platforms, or repositories (If not, please indicate if a preprint will be posted publicly): Not applicable

Related research summaries: Not applicable

Related interviews and articles: Not applicable

IWH Speaker Series presentations: Not applicable

IWH Hosted Events (0643)

Reasons for the project: The Institute for Work & Health hosts annual and monthly stakeholder events. The IWH Speaker Series is a monthly webinar series featuring presentations by IWH scientists about the Institute's latest research findings. The IWH Speaker Series runs from September to June and each public webinar session regularly attracts over 200 attendees from a diversity of professions across Ontario and beyond. Presentations are recorded and made available on the IWH website and YouTube channel.

The IWH also offers regular opportunities for external academics to present work and health research through internal Speaker Series presentations to IWH staff and scientists. New for 2024-25 is a key event co-hosted by the IWH, a "topic-based forum", bringing together research and practice experts from across Canada to discuss and address longstanding and pertinent issues related to worker health. The IWH also brings members of the IWH Forum together annually for an exchange regarding IWH research.

Objectives or the project:

- To increase the visibility and reach of the Institute's research provincially, nationally, and internationally.
- To provide access to emerging and novel evidence in work-health research.
- To expand our networks of academic, policy and practitioner experts.
- To provide an opportunity for networking among work and health researchers and users of their research, including workplace parties (e.g., workers, employers), policy-makers, and practitioners.

Team and Roles: Kate Cowan, Monique Gignac, Morgan Lay, Arif Jetha, Sara Macdonald, Peter Smith, Sabrina Tonima (Project Leads), Siobhan Cardoso, Pam Cardwell, Andrea Larney, Lyudmila Mansurova, Leening Ningombam, Uyen Vu (Team)

Collaborators and Partners: Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety

Knowledge Transfer Strategies: This project uses an integrated KTE approach. Presentations of research findings will be tailored for lay audiences.

Target Audience: Policy-makers (in the fields of occupational health and safety, disability management, workers' compensation, accessibility and inclusion, and public health); workplace parties (employers, labour representatives and workers); human resource professionals, occupational health and safety professionals, disability management professionals; health practitioners; other researchers in the field of work and health; and the intermediary organizations representing and serving these external stakeholders (e.g., health and safety associations, professional associations, service organizations)

Linkage to MLITSD's *Prevention Works Strategy*: Objective 1: Build and use the best evidence.

Funded by: MLITSD

Project findings available in Open Access journals, platforms, or repositories (If not, please indicate if a preprint will be posted publicly): Not applicable

Related research summaries: Not applicable

Related interviews and articles: Not applicable

IWH Speaker Series presentations: Not applicable

Outreach and Promotion (0650)

Reasons for the project: The Institute for Work & Health engages in ongoing activities to increase its visibility provincially, nationally, and internationally, as well as to increase the potential uptake and application of its research evidence. Throughout the year, the Institute raises awareness and the profile of IWH research through participation in key events and conferences where targeted resources are made available to stakeholder groups.

Objectives of the project:

- Seek new opportunities to reach out to stakeholders at non-academic conferences and events (e.g., professional association events).
- Present key research initiatives at non-academic, stakeholder events where appropriate.
- Work with intermediary organizations, e.g., professional groups and associations to reach their members/clients.
- Assist IWH researchers in linking with workplace parties and other stakeholders.
- Enhance knowledge exchange with leaders from employer and labour communities.
- Profile the IWH as a credible and reliable resource of evidence-based information and tools for improving the health of workers.

Team and Roles: Sara Macdonald, Uyen Vu (Project Leads), Siobhan Cardoso, Pam Cardwell, Kate Cowan, Andrea Larney, Leening Ningombam, Sabrina Tonima (Team)

Collaborators and Partners: Professional groups, employer associations, unions, health and safety associations

Knowledge Transfer Strategies: This project uses an integrated KTE approach. Research findings will be tailored for lay audiences and disseminated through established IWH communication vehicles.

Target Audience: All stakeholder groups, with particular attention to workplace parties and stakeholders concerned with occupational health and safety, disability management and accessibility and inclusion.

Linkage to MLITSD's *Prevention Works Strategy*: Objective 1: Build and use the best evidence.

Funded by: MLITSD

Project findings available in Open Access journals, platforms, or repositories (If not, please indicate if a preprint will be posted publicly): Not applicable

Related research summaries: Not applicable

Related interviews and articles: Not applicable

IWH Speaker Series presentations: Not applicable

Products: Newsletters, Plain-Language Summaries and Other Resources (0604, 0611, 0629, 0636, 0660, 0663, 0665, 0690)

Reasons for the project: The Institute for Work & Health's Communications Team produces a wide range of products that are designed to share IWH research findings, events, and resources with stakeholders. These products include newsletters, plain-language summaries, infographics, videos, annual/corporate reports, and articles written for stakeholder publications and other resources. Communications and KTE together also develop tools and guides, policy briefs, case studies and other resources, as appropriate. All products and resources are written in plain language, with messages tailored to targeted audiences.

The main product for sharing plain-language IWH findings with our stakeholders is the monthly newsletter, IWH News, which is distributed by email to subscribers.

Objectives of the project:

- Develop lay-friendly, easy-to-access products and informational resources targeted to and valued by external stakeholders.
- Keep external stakeholders aware of the research and events coming out of the Institute.
- Ensure IWH information is of high quality and is relevant to and easily understood by stakeholders.
- Encourage and support uptake and use of IWH research findings and resources.
- Increase the Institute's visibility as a credible, reliable, and impartial source of research evidence
- Facilitate recruitment of participants into research projects, as appropriate.

Team and Roles: Uyen Vu (Project Lead), Pam Cardwell, Jan Dvorak, Andrea Larney, Sara Macdonald, Leening Ningombam, Sabrina Tonima (Team)

Collaboration and Partners: IWH scientists, researchers, and other staff

Knowledge Transfer Strategies: This project uses an integrated KTE approach. Research findings will be tailored for lay audiences and disseminated through established IWH communication vehicles.

Target Audience: Policy-makers (in the fields of occupational health and safety, disability management, workers' compensation, accessibility and inclusion, and public health); workplace parties (employers, labour representatives and workers); human resource professionals, occupational health and safety professionals, disability management professionals; health practitioners; other researchers in the field of work and health; and the intermediary organizations representing and serving these external stakeholders (e.g., health and safety associations, professional associations, service organizations, trade or sector-specific media publications), health charities and innovation groups.

Linkage to MLITSD's *Prevention Works Strategy*: Objective 1: Build and use the best evidence.

Funded by: MLITSD

Project findings available in Open Access journals, platforms, or repositories (If not, please indicate if a preprint will be posted publicly): Not applicable

Related research summaries: Not applicable

Related interviews and articles: Not applicable

IWH Speaker Series presentations: Not applicable

Reach and Dissemination: Website, Outreach, Media, Social Media, e-Alerts and Subscriber Acquisition (0630, 0650, 0655, 0660, 0682, 0690)

Reasons for the project: The Institute for Work & Health's research findings, news, events and resources only become useful, valued and effective when they reach their intended audiences. The Institute's Communications Team, working closely with the KTE Team and Director, Strategic Relations, ensures the Institute reaches a growing number of people within its stakeholder audiences through various dissemination activities, including websites, e-alerts, social media channels, media relations activities and stakeholder conferences. Through these channels and other subscriber-growth activities, the Institute also seeks to extend its reach to ensure more targeted stakeholders are receiving and taking up IWH research.

The main vehicle for housing the Institute's information is the IWH website: www.iwh.on.ca. Regular contact with our stakeholders is maintained via our monthly e-newsletter, IWH News. The Institute also disseminates information through its social media accounts (LinkedIn, X, formerly known as Twitter, and YouTube), targeted e-alerts and various KTE activities (see Stakeholder Networks and Outreach and Promotion).

Objectives of the project:

- Keep external stakeholders aware of current Institute research, news, and events.
- Encourage, support, and increase uptake and use of IWH research findings and resources.
- Build awareness of the Institute for Work & Health brand as a reliable source of information.
- Promote events, including the IWH Speaker Series.
- Extend the reach/audience for IWH research.
- Support the building and maintenance of strong and active stakeholder relationships.
- Monitor and manage reach, dissemination, and impact metrics.
- Keep website contents, features, design, and security up to date.

Team and Roles: Uyen Vu (Project Lead), Siobhan Cardoso, Pam Cardwell, Kate Cowan, Jan Dvorak, Andrea Larney, Morgan Lay, Sara Macdonald, Lyudmila Mansurova, Leening Ningombam, Sabrina Tonima (Team)

Collaborators and Partners: IWH scientists, researchers and other staff

Knowledge Transfer Strategies: Research findings will be tailored for lay audiences and disseminated through established IWH communication vehicles and targeted promotions.

Target Audience: Policy-makers (in the fields of occupational health and safety, disability management, workers' compensation, accessibility and inclusion, and public health); workplace parties (employers, labour representatives and workers); human resource professionals, occupational health and safety professionals, disability management professionals; health practitioners; other researchers in the field of work and health; and the intermediary organizations representing and serving these external stakeholders (e.g., health and safety associations, professional associations, service organizations, trade or sector-specific media publications), health charities and innovation groups.

Linkage to MLITSD's *Prevention Works Strategy*: Objective 1: Build and use the best evidence.

Funded by: MLITSD

Project findings available in Open Access journals, platforms, or repositories (If not, please indicate if a preprint will be posted publicly): Not applicable

Related research summaries: Not applicable

Related interviews and articles: Not applicable

IWH Speaker Series presentations: Not applicable

Corporate services

Corporate Services plays a crucial role in providing facilities, human resources management, finance and accounting capacity and oversees the purchase and maintenance of equipment and supplies. The administrative infrastructure and human resource function supports the diversity and complexity of Institute work. It also provides liaison and support to the Institute's Board of Directors.

In 2024/25, Corporate Services will continue work on ensuring IWH's policies and procedures are in line with industry best practice and support organizational activities to ensure IWH is a healthy, safe and engaging place to work. Achieving this objective is also supported through collaborative engagement between IWH's Joint Health & Safety Committee (JHSC) and Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility (DEIA) Committee with the Executive Committee. Corporate Services will also ensure compliance with the Ontario government's directive concerning travel, meal and hospitality expenses.