

Wellness Works

The Handbook for Healthy
Workplaces

2005



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Table of Contents

Section 1 **Introduction**

Section 2 **Overall Healthy Workplace Policy**

Section 3 **Steps to Creating A Healthy Workplace Policy**

Section 4 **Cultural Social Environment**

- *Organizational Culture*
- *Stress Management*
- *Work-Life Balance*
- *Shift Work*
- *Parenting*
- *Breastfeeding at Work*

Section 5 **Healthy Lifestyle Practices**

- *Healthy Eating*
- *Physical Activity*
- *Type 2 Diabetes*
- *Oral Health*
- *Substance Abuse Prevention*
- *Sexual Health*
- *Reproductive Health*
- *Cancer Prevention*

Section 6 **Health and Safety Practices**

- *Tobacco Use Prevention*
- *Motor Vehicle Safety*
- *Car Seat Safety*
- *Sun Safety*
- *Infectious Disease Control*
- *Adult Immunization*
- *Hepatitis B/C*
- *Tuberculosis*
- *HIV/AIDS*
- *Falls Prevention in Older Adults*

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Introduction

Introduction to Wellness Works Handbook

Comprehensive Workplace Health Promotion “Living Healthy...Working Healthy”

Health is an important concept of our daily lives, both at home and in our workplace. The Brant County Health Unit believes the health of employees and their workplaces is crucial to success and growth within the business environment. A growing number of employers are increasingly recognizing the importance of establishing and implementing a “Comprehensive Workplace Health Program”, for both the employer and their employees. Employees who feel they are “healthy” have increased productivity, use fewer sick days, have improved work attitudes, and have an increased incentives to stay with their particular job.

The Handbook for Healthy Workplaces was developed as part of the workplace health promotion project, *Wellness Works*. *Wellness Works* supports the development of a sustainable Comprehensive Workplace Health Promotion Program within your workplace, by providing resources, tools and information to address the health needs of all employees. The Handbook was developed with a “workplace environment” focus. Combined with the use of the *Wellness Works Guide For Building a Healthier Workplace* and the *Wellness Works Meter* (Assessment Tool), the Handbook assists in the development and implementation of workplace strategies and policies, specific to the needs of your organization.

The *Wellness Works Handbook* provides examples of possible health related topics and strategies of focus within the workplace environment. The topics and strategies selected by organizations should reflect employee interests, needs and concerns.

The development of a Comprehensive Workplace Health Program should address all three aspects of the workplace environment:

- **Cultural/Social Environment** – Elements of the cultural/social environment include leadership style, management practices, the way in which work is organized, employee autonomy, control and social support (THCU, 2004). Activities could address the following issues: balancing work and family, staff satisfaction and morale, organizational communication, employee training and development, flexible work environment, employee recognition and involvement in decision-making.
- **Lifestyle** – These initiatives are designed to support and encourage healthy lifestyle practices. Examples include smoking cessation, healthy eating, physical activity, stress management, substance use, etc.
- **Health & Safety** – This addresses work-related injury, illness and disability within the workplace by focussing on environmental and chemical hazards in the workplace. Examples include ergonomics, safe lifting, employee violence, work pace, air quality, etc.



A Comprehensive Workplace Health Promotion Program should address all three components of workplace health to optimize its effectiveness and impact on the workplace and its staff.

The Wellness Works Handbook is designed to support the concepts and characteristics of a Comprehensive Workplace Health Program. Effective initiatives should, include awareness raising, skill building, environmental support and policy development strategies.

1. **Awareness Raising Activities** – activities could include bulletin boards, flyers or paycheck inserts to increase employee awareness of the health related.
2. **Skill Building Activities** – activities that provide employees with the skills needed in order to change and support positive behaviour. Examples include walking groups, lunch n’ learns, training opportunities, etc.
3. **Environmental Support** – ongoing, sustainable activities, which encourage employer and employee participation in changing health practices and behaviours.
4. **Healthy Policy Development** – policies are designed to clarify roles and expectations between employees and employers. Comprehensive Workplace Policies demonstrate an organizational commitment to employee well-being and to the corporate values of health. Examples of this could include an overall Healthy Workplace Policy, supported by workplace policies related to specific areas of interests (i.e. physical activity, health and safety, employee recognition), healthy workplace vision statement, and mission statement.

The Handbook is structured according to different topic areas, including strategies for implementation. For each topic, you will find:

1. Background information about the topic/issue, and importance of individual and workplace health.
2. Goals for your workplace to strive for.
3. Getting started: A comprehensive list of ideas/strategies/activities your workplace can implement.
4. Helpful resources.

Wellness Works can help employees stay in good physical, mental and emotional shape. The Wellness Works Team can provide ongoing assistance to establish and support your company’s ability to provide a happy, healthy and safe working environment. Creating a workforce that has a positive balance of work, family, and social supports will benefit our entire community. For more information about the Handbook or Wellness Works, please contact us at 753-4937 ext. 472 or email workplace@bchu.org.

“Working Today for a Healthy Tomorrow”

Overall Healthy

Workplace Policy

Overall Healthy Workplace Policy

“Policies exist in almost every organization. They let employees know what they can expect from the company and what the company expects from them.”¹

It is recommended that all workplaces have an overall healthy workplace policy. This will form the foundation for other new or existing “wellness” related policies. It ensures that policies are consistent and complementary.

An overall healthy workplace policy should include the following:

- the purpose of the policy
- be tied to the vision/mission and values of a company
- demonstrate a long-term commitment to providing a healthy workplace environment
- be based on key factors that influence wellness including cultural/social environment, healthy lifestyles and health & safety issues
- incorporate comprehensive strategies into initiatives including awareness raising, skill-building and environmental/policy support
- be based on key elements of a healthy workplace such as: managerial support and participation; employee driven and voluntary programs; accessibility to all employees; address the needs of all employees; adapt to the special features of each workplace environment; provide incentives and recognition systems to support employee involvement; provide continuous monitoring and evaluation
- outline the role and responsibility of each different level of the workplace. For example: union, senior management, managers, employees, health and safety committee, wellness committee, etc.

By having an overall healthy workplace policy, a workplace will benefit with more consistent, long-standing policies to support their comprehensive healthy workplace program.



¹ Region of Ottawa-Carlton Health Department, 1998.

Sample Overall Healthy Workplace Policy²

In accordance with its philosophy of caring for the individual, and as part of its responsibility to the community in which it resides, XYZ strives to enhance employee health and the quality of their lives. XYZ strive to accomplish its mission “in a healthy, sustainable work environment”.

XYZ also believes that healthy employees help to create a healthy organization. Greater health and wellness lead to improved satisfaction and morale, which contribute to a more effective organization. In this competitive business environment, XYZ feels it is important to attract and hold on to the best people. This means offering a health-supportive work environment.

Creating a health-supportive work environment requires a comprehensive effort that includes the following key elements of a healthy workplace:

1. *The Physical Environment*

Refers to health, comfort and safety factors of a workplace such as noise levels, toxic substances, air quality, light levels, equipment and design of workspace.

2. *Health Practices*

Refers to individual lifestyle practices that affect health such as physical activity, eating habits, sleeping habits, as well as, smoking, alcohol and drug/substance use.

3. *The Social Environment*

Refers to psychosocial factors of a workplace that affect health and employee stress levels such as reasonableness of deadlines, organization and design of work, opportunities to influence how tasks are done, relationship with supervisors and co-workers, quality of communications, adequacy of training and development and the interplay of home and work responsibilities.

4. *Personal Resources*

Refers to the means by which individuals cope with stress, the sense of control they have over their work and health, and the perception that there is support in a person’s time of distress or unhappiness.

Health-oriented efforts must also adhere to the following principles:

- Leadership through involvement – i.e., the commitment and support of senior management to reinforce and allow changes necessary for improvement while engaging managers at all levels in reinforcing a healthy workplace.

- Address the needs of all employees, regardless of their current level of health and to accommodate different needs, preferences and attitudes.

² McKeown, G. and Perry, J., 2002. Excellerating NQI PEP: Healthy Workplace Policy Implementation Workshop

- Recognize that an employee's lifestyle consists of an interdependent set of health habits. A comprehensive workplace health promotion program includes improvements in the physical environment, person resources, social environment and personal resources. These four areas interact synergistically to meet employee need thus influencing their health and well-being.
- Adapt to the special features of each workplace environment.

Participation

Employees participate in developing, implementing and reviewing policies, programs and actions related to the health of the workplace. The following describes how we share the responsibility to implement the Healthy Workplace Policy and drive the healthy workplace initiative:

Senior management will:


- Support and encourage the reassessment of the practices and policies for XYZ, whether they are directly health-related or indirectly associated with physical and mental health, so as to make them more health supportive.
- Visibly encourage participation, by communicating their support of all programs to employees by taking part in the activity when possible.
- Provide adequate resources to continuously improve and sustain a healthy workplace environment.

Managers will:

- Receive relevant training and development such as, in the participative approach to decision-making.
- Promote and practice the participative approach and consideration for the impact of decisions as much as possible, in day-to-day business.
- Respond to the specific health and safety requirements in their position description.
- Be invited to contribute their ideas, opinions and expertise in all aspects of the work at XYZ.

Employees will:

- Be encouraged to contribute their ideas, opinions and skills to their work and the YXZ workplace.
- Be encouraged to take advantage of health programs, activities and resources.

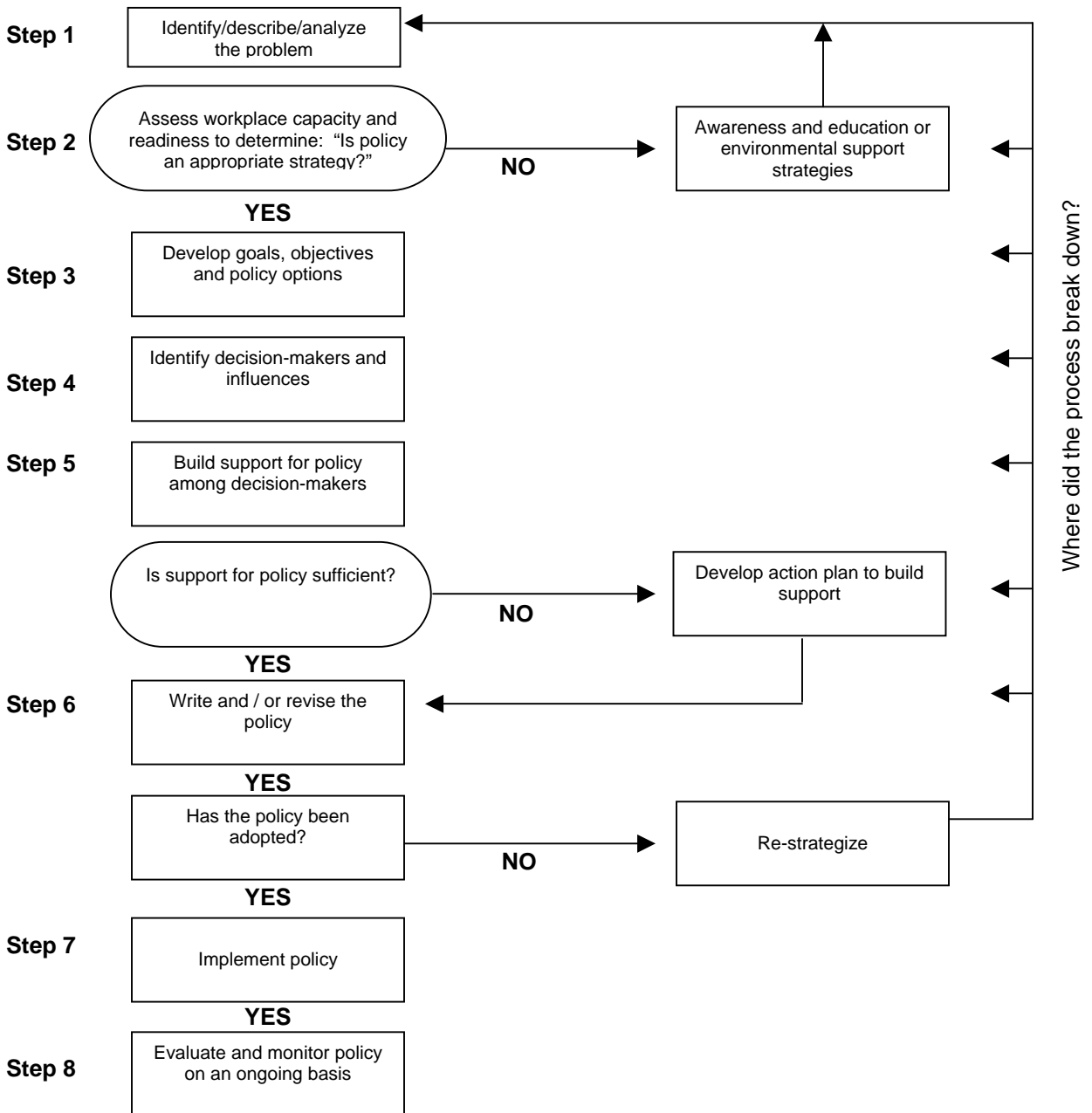


Create a Healthy

Workplace Policy

Steps To Creating A Healthy Workplace Policy

Development of Healthy Workplace Policyⁱ Roadmap to Policy Development



The Health Communication Unit, at the Centre for Health Promotion, University of Toronto., 2004. Roadmap to Policy Development.

Introduction

The following eight steps will help you and your organization in the development of your healthy workplace policy. While this process may not work for everyone, it is intended as a guideline and checklist for the development, implementation and evaluation.

STEP 1: Identify, Describe and Analyze the Problem

Describing The Problem

Once you realize that something is wrong and/or needs to be changed, your next task is to understand the nature of the problem.

1. What is the extent of a problem? How big a problem is it?
2. What and who is involved?
3. What are the limits of the problem?
4. What are the origins of the problem? Is there a starting point to your problem? When did it first become apparent?
5. Are you looking at a real problem or a symptom of a larger problem or issue?

Ideally, at the end of this analysis you will be able to state your problem in one sentence. The ability to do this increases your ability to communicate the nature of the problem to others, thereby building support for policy development or policy change.

Analyzing The Problem

After you have identified and described the problem, the next task is to conduct an analysis of the problem. This involves finding out why the problem exists in the first place and who is affected by it.

1. What is it about the situation or condition that is unacceptable or wrong? What events or incidents illustrate this?
2. What factors in the workplace affect the problem (e.g., employee attitudes, traditional values, conflicting agendas, economic difficulties, cultural differences)?
3. What has been done to try to resolve the problem?
4. What is the cost of the problem (human and financial)? What is the cost of doing nothing about the problem?

Identifying And Understanding Stakeholders

A key step in analyzing a problem is determining the individuals and groups with an interest or stake in the problem or issue under consideration. These include those individuals and groups who would be positively or negatively affected if the problem was resolved. The extent of the likely support for, and opposition to, a policy solution to a problem has to be considered during the analysis stage. In other words, you need to know who the key stakeholders with an interest in your issue are. Many health issues addressed by policies are linked to a broad range of stakeholder interests.

1. Who will be positively or negatively affected if the problem was resolved?
2. Who else sees this as a problem?

3. What exactly do some stakeholders stand to gain from resolving the problem? How important is it to them?
4. Are the stakeholders' reasons for wanting the problem solved the same as yours? If not, what are their reasons?
5. Are there others who you might bring on side if the matter was brought to their attention?
6. What exactly do other stakeholders stand to lose from resolving the problem? How strong is their opposition likely to be? What counter-arguments can be anticipated?

Gathering Data About A Problem Or Issue

Solid, reliable data is critical for raising awareness about a problem and building support for policies aimed at addressing the problem.

- **Community service directories** can help you identify the groups, agencies and organizations that have an interest in your issue and/or have taken action in response to your issue.
- **Population health status data** is available from your local public health unit, district health council or health research organizations.
- **Socio-demographic data** can include key social and economic variables in your community or workplace, such as household income, education level, food bank use, age distribution or occupational categories. Relevant sources for this information include Statistics Canada or your local social planning council. In addition to providing you with local data, this information may allow you to compare your community or workplace with others across the province or country.
- **Other studies about the problem or issue**, such as needs assessments, research reports, and journal articles are good sources. This documentation could be located through searches at reference libraries or keyword searches of on-line databases such as Medline.
- **Newspaper or magazine articles** may have relevant information about the problem or issue. Pay particular attention to articles that refer to controversy surrounding the issue or indicators of support.
- **Interviews with key individuals or groups** can provide valuable information about a problem or issues. Remember that they can only give you their perspective, so you will need to consult with a wide range of people. This will increase your ability to 'make the case' for recognizing and addressing the problem. The clear identification, description and analysis of a problem are the starting points in the journey towards policy development as a solution. Because all other actions stem from the way in which a problem is identified, it is important to devote considerable attention to the initial step of the policy development model. This lays the foundation for all other actions that follow.

STEP 2: Assess Workplace Support, Capacity And Readiness To Determine If Policy Is An Appropriate Strategy

Before reaching a decision to work towards establishing a policy, it is vital to assess

- The amount of support you have to address your problem and proceed with policy

- The level of capacity to develop and implement policy that exists within your organization and the broader community
- The level of workplace readiness to embrace policy as a solution to the identified problem

Workplace Support And Capacity

As you can see from the policy model, this is a step that needs to occur early in the policy-development process. You will need to know whether or not members of your workplace agree with your viewpoint. Without their support, you may have to temporarily suspend your work until you can bring them onside. Two distinct forms of support are needed to proceed with the policy development process. First, you will need to know if the workplace views the issue as a serious problem. If this is the case, they are more likely to support policy as a way of addressing it. Second, you will need the support of individuals and groups who are both strongly committed to the issue and interested in developing policy as a solution.

1. Are there educational and awareness programs in your community that focus on your problem? How long have they been running? How successful have they been? How popular are they?
2. What kinds of environmental support for your issue exist in your workplace?
3. Has the problem been a recent focus in the media (radio, TV, newspaper editorials, etc.)?
4. If similar issues have arisen in the past, what kinds of actions were taken?
5. Is there valid and representative survey data measuring public opinion about the problem?
6. Are there signs in the workplace that indicate a need for change (e.g., dissatisfaction with the status quo or interest in a new idea)?
7. What general capacities to deal with the problem exist (assets, organizational infrastructure, community leaders, social capital)?

Decision Makers

In assessing workplace support, it is important to be mindful of the role of **decision makers**, those people with the power to implement policy. Some have actual decision-making power; others are extremely influential but may or may not have official power. In order to assess the support for your issue, you need to consider who in your workplace has both official and influential power. You need to assess their views about the problem and the likelihood they will support policy as a potential solution.

Force Field Analysis: Assessing The Climate For Change

The **climate for change** refers to the combination of attitudes, values, atmosphere and employees that encourages or hinders change. It is extremely important to gauge the climate of change in your workplace regarding your issue because you want to predict the degree of support and opposition you are likely to encounter. Keep in mind that this climate can be difficult to assess as it can change very quickly. To predict how well a policy proposal will be received, it can be useful to determine the forces likely to support and oppose the policy. **Force field analysis**, a process

developed by Kurt Lewin, maps these opposing forces and studies their relative strengths. Force field analysis is particularly useful for identifying and responding to potential counter-arguments against the adoption of a policy.

To conduct a force field analysis, you need to ask yourself the following questions:

1. What will help us to take action on the problem? What are the driving forces?
2. What will hinder us? What are the negative or restraining forces?

Determining If Policy Is An Appropriate Strategy

Now that you have carefully examined your problem, you have a critical decision to make about whether or not to proceed with policy. Keep in mind that policy is not the only solution to a health problem or issue; in some cases, policy may not be the best solution.

1. Is there more than one solution to your problem?
2. What does each solution require in terms of time, people, money and/or additional resources?
3. Which solution offers the greatest benefit at the least cost?
4. Do any of the solutions involve policy development?
5. Are you willing to do the work required to develop policy?
6. Is your organization willing to support you in your policy development work?
7. Does your organization have a mandate that includes policy development?
8. Do you have the necessary level of management support for policy change?

The decision about whether or not to proceed with policy is based on finding the optimal fit between:

- The mission, purpose and goals of your group or organization
- The strengths and weaknesses of your organization as an agent for policy change (resources, capabilities, etc.)
- The forces in the external environment (opportunities and threats)

If you have carefully considered the full range of possible alternatives and determined that policy is the best solution to your problem, then you are ready to proceed through the subsequent steps of the model. If not, then you may choose to take a step back and focus on building the necessary prerequisites for policy, such as stakeholder support.

Alternatively, you may decide to proceed with another health promotion strategy, such as education, organizational change or environmental support, as a means of addressing your problem or issue.

STEP 3: Develop Goals And Policy Objectives

Setting clear, measurable and attainable goals and objectives is an important part of the policy development process. A **goal** is a broad statement summarizing the ultimate direction or desired achievement of your policy.

When setting policy goals, consider

- What aspect of a health issue/problem you want to address
- What your policy can realistically achieve over the short and long-term

An **objective** is a brief statement specifying the desired impact or effect of a policy (i.e., how much of what should happen to (whom) by when). Most policies have one, or, at most, two to three goals, and multiple objectives. Objectives can be viewed as directions or building blocks towards the achievement of policy goals.

Here is an easy way to remember how to write good objectives. They should be S.M.A.R.T.

S = Specific

M = Measurable

A = Attainable

R = Realistic

T = Time limited

Here are some tips for setting policy objectives:

- Consider the specific policy components and time frame needed to meet your goals
- Each objective should focus on one desired policy change or result
- Remember that a comprehensive policy will entail multiple objectives (both long and short term)
- Objectives must be measurable so the impact of a policy can be evaluated

Once you have drafted a set of goals and objectives, take a step back and ask yourself the following:

1. Are these goals and objectives consistent with how you/your group/organization define the problem?
2. Are they consistent with what members of your group/organization want to do?
3. Are they realistic, given the nature of the problem and the resources available to address it?
4. The value of setting goals and objectives should not be underestimated. With clear goals and objectives, you will have a good idea of the scope of the problem and what can be done about it.

In order to choose which kind of policy to pursue, you should first consider the degree of support for each policy option. Strong workplace support for a particular policy will make it more attractive to decision makers, thereby increasing its likelihood of implementation. Although it can be difficult to measure support, you could interview a cross-section of people to get their views. Through this process, you may find that your workplace needs to be better informed about the issue. To increase support for your policy option, you could also investigate how similar issues have been handled in other settings. Assessing the various policy options for addressing your issue and the corresponding degrees of support for these options forces you to be realistic about what you can achieve. It also shows you that you may need to negotiate with decision makers and accept less than you want in order to move forward. It may also help you to identify options that you would not accept as a solution. Central to this process is the workplace's receptivity to, and degree of support for, the change you are proposing.

STEP 4: Identify Decision Makers And Influencers

You will have to identify the main decision makers for your issue and the degree of influence you can exert. Then you will have to decide which decision makers to approach. Here are some factors to consider when making these decisions:

- Pick your decision makers carefully. Don't automatically start with the person at the top; you may be more successful with the support of someone lower down in the hierarchy. You probably want to start with sympathetic people who are linked with your decision maker. If more than one person is involved, think about the order in which they should be approached
- Who you approach depends on the issue being addressed

Status-oriented decision makers are highly concerned about generating positive image and avoiding unfavourable decisions. **Mission-oriented** decision makers hold strong beliefs and values that guide their decision-making. **Process-oriented** decision makers are most concerned with serving their clientele or constituency. When identifying decision makers, it's also important to remember that these individuals are influenced by the opinions of others, including their constituents, community opinion leaders and other decision makers. Also remember that decision makers are typically dealing with a variety of issues – not just yours. One critical factor for decision makers is knowing that they have the support of their constituents. Consider these factors carefully before identifying and seeking the support of decision makers for your policy.

STEP 5: Building Support for the Policy

Gaining the support of both the stakeholder groups affected by a policy and the decision makers responsible for implementing a policy is critical; without this support, a policy will not succeed. To build support for a policy, workplace health promoters can choose from a range of persuasion strategies. The nature of the strategies used to build support for a policy can vary according to the degree of visibility or 'profile' they generate. All policies may produce opposition for at least one of the following reasons. When 'making the case' for your policy, be prepared to counter one or more of the following arguments.

1. The proposed change is too costly.
2. Increased legislation/regulations restrict individual freedoms to an inordinate degree.
3. There is an alternative (non-policy) means of addressing the issue.
4. There is a philosophical difference about the origin of, or the needed response to, the problem.

Here are some tips for convincing decision makers to proceed with a policy:

- Policies need to be clearly linked to a compelling issue or problem
- Build as many plausible links between the health issue and the desired policy as you can
- Proposed solutions/policies need to be clearly explained, straightforward and not overly complex

- Look for signs that indicate a need for change (e.g., dissatisfaction with the status quo)

Presentations

Presentations are a good way of getting known by decision makers while enhancing your own credibility as a spokesperson for a particular policy or issue. A well-received presentation can also be a critical step in building support for your policy. Here are some tips for making presentations to decision makers as a tactic to build support for policies:

- Carefully consider your objective for the presentation
- Avoid jargon, abbreviations, acronyms and sophisticated language
- If possible, use audio-visual aids to retain interest and communicate complex ideas
- Provide a written brief or handout of your presentation for members of the audience
- Have your supporters present and readily identifiable

When stating your case for a policy:

- Keep it short
- Clearly identify the benefits of, and the need for, the policy
- Substantiate your position with local data, scientific facts and the experiences of other workplaces
- Counter the opposing arguments

When building support for your policy, it's important to remember that the persuasion strategies noted above are ways of moving towards your policy. They should not be regarded as ends in themselves. When you are considering which action strategy to use, always keep the big picture in mind – your ultimate goal is the resolution of your problem or issue.

STEP 6: Write and Revise the Policy

Whatever their purpose, written policies usually include the following:

- A preface or preamble describing the purpose of the policy
- Policy goals and objectives (often incorporated into the preface)
- A description of the policy components (e.g., the associated activities, regulations, sanctions, that constitute the 'meat' of the policy)
- Procedures for dealing with failure to comply with the regulations specified in the policy
- A plan for promoting and disseminating the policy
- A plan for monitoring and evaluating the policy

When developing a policy, the drafting or writing process is usually done by a small subcommittee (two to three persons), with a designated lead writer. The committee assumes responsibility for writing drafts of the policy, obtaining feedback from other stakeholders (as appropriate) and undertaking revisions to the policy.

STEP 7: Implement the Policy

A policy is ready for implementation if the following conditions are met:

- Have you identified and analyzed the issues your policy needs to address?
- Do you have sufficient information about these issues to support and justify the implementation of your policy?
- Are your policy goals reasonable and your policy objectives measurable?
- Do you have the required support and approval of key decision makers? If not, how will this be obtained?
- Have you selected your policy components and prepared a written policy that describes these components and a strategy for implementation?
- Do you have an accurate estimate of the resources (time, money, person power and expertise) needed to implement and monitor your policy?
- Is the timeline for implementation realistic?
- Does your policy specify who is responsible for what?
- Have you identified the barriers to implementation you are likely to encounter?
- Do you have a plan for dealing with these barriers?
- Have you shared your draft policy with other key stakeholders who will be responsible for implementation?
- Is this the appropriate time to start implementing your policy?

Costs of implementation

There may be costs involved with policy development and are likely to occur when the policy is implemented. Therefore, try to anticipate what expenses you may have to absorb.

STEP 8: Evaluating and Monitoring

Evaluation is the systematic gathering, analysis and reporting of data about a policy to assist in decision making. A thorough evaluation will help to:

- Collect evidence on the effectiveness of a policy (i.e., was it successful in achieving its stated goals and objectives)
- Be accountable to the stakeholders who supported the development and implementation of the policy
- Identify ways of improving a policy by determining what works, what doesn't work and why, improving the usefulness of the resources and materials needed to implement a policy and assessing the extent of compliance with a policy (Hyndman, 2000)

There are two basic types of evaluation. **Process evaluation** monitors the implementation of your policy. It examines the procedures and tasks involved in carrying out a policy in an effort to determine "what is happening to whom." Process evaluation includes:

- Tracking the number of people affected by a policy (e.g., number of beneficiaries, number of infractions)
- Tracking the quantity and type of activities carried out to implement a policy (e.g., number of server training sessions delivered as part of an ergonomics policy)

- Assessing the quality of the activities carried out to implement your policy (e.g., participant satisfaction with a policy training workshop)
- Tracking modifications to your policy over time

Outcome evaluation assesses the results or impacts of a policy, both intended and unintended, to determine whether or not the policy made a difference. Outcome evaluations can assess both short-term results, such as increased knowledge about the health and safety benefits ergonomics, as well as longer-term results, such as the decreased incidence of repetitive strain injuries as a result of mandatory ergonomic assessments.

Here are some important points to consider when designing an evaluation for a Policy:

- Link your evaluation measures to the goals and objectives of the policy
- Select easy, realistic methods to collect evaluation data, such as questionnaires, surveys and focus groups. Make sure that data is collected systematically from the moment the policy is implemented. Don't wait until a policy has been in place for a long period of time before starting to evaluate its impact
- Review the evaluation results on an ongoing basis to guide appropriate changes and modifications to the policy
- Evaluations should include a mix of both quantitative (numerical) and qualitative data. Both types of information are needed to fully understand the impact of a policy. Effective healthy workplace policies are not static; they are flexible enough to incorporate insights gained from past experience while responding to future developments and trends

Evaluation questions: Looking back and looking ahead

Once a policy has been implemented, it's important to take some time for reflection – looking back and looking ahead.

Looking Back

- Is the situation better than it was before the policy was implemented?
- If the policy was not as effective as anticipated, why not? What could have been done differently?
- Are people who were involved in the policy development and implementation process happy with the results of their efforts?
- Do the people affected by the policy have a favourable view of the policy? If not, what can be done to address their concerns?

Looking Ahead

- Does more need to be done to implement the policy?
- Are there any foreseeable developments that may affect the policy?

Characteristics Of Effective Policies

In addition to meeting their intended objectives (e.g., reducing absenteeism, increasing physical activity, improving communications), effective policies:

- Are developed using a bottom-up approach (i.e., consulting with stakeholders to determine needs and appropriate solutions)
- Have realistic goals and objectives
- Do not rely exclusively on enforcement and punitive measures
- Are responsive to changing circumstances and unintended consequences

Conclusion

Having worked through the steps presented here, you probably realize that workplace policy development does not require a new set of skills. It does, however, require looking at a health-related problem or issue in a different way, being persistent and flexible and working with others. It involves planning and systematically approaching a process that can, at times, be unclear and unpredictable. While policy is not a solution for all workplace problems, it is an effective option that has the capacity to bring about far-reaching change. In spite of the inherent challenges, the policy development process has tremendous potential to involve people and give them ownership over some of the issues that affect them.

Power to act on wellness-related issues does not simply lie in the hands of a few decision makers. It also lies within those who have a strong commitment to improving the quality of life in their workplaces and communities. The key to success lies in helping people realize that they have the power to bring about change and providing them with the resources to do so.

ⁱ The Health Communication Unit, at the Centre for Health Promotion, University of Toronto. [Developing Health Promotion Policies](#), 2004.

Cultural / Social Environment

Organizational Culture

For many Canadian organizations, addressing employee health and well-being concerns is a key strategy in order to attract and retain workers, and to contain the costs related to ill employees. Numerous research studies over the past few decades have shown that healthy workplaces benefit both organizations and individuals. Most workplaces, however, have focused their employee health programs on employee safety and usually, to a lesser degree, healthy lifestyle promotion initiatives. While these programs are important contributors to the overall health of employees in a workplace and have some impact on reducing absenteeism, evidence now shows that workplace health promotion programs are more effective when a comprehensive approach is used. A comprehensive approach includes elements that address the organizational environment, in combination with lifestyle and health and safety.

Elements of the organizational environment include leadership style, management practices, the way work is organized, employee autonomy and control, and social support. These factors have been shown to have a dramatic impact on employee health outcomes.¹ These factors are also known as *psychosocial* factors or part of a *psychosocial* work environment. When the organizational environment is perceived by employees as negative, high levels of employee stress are reported. It is employee stress that has the largest impact on employee health and productivity. In fact, research shows that workers stressed due to “high effort - low reward” situations experience much higher rates of cardiovascular disease, depression, and certain cancers. Stressed workers are also at risk for two to three times the number of accidents compared to their peers without these particular stressors.² Unfortunately, workplace stress-related illnesses are on the rise in Canada and cost organizations dearly in terms of absenteeism, higher insurance claims, lost efficiency and lost productivity.³

"Little of today's technology is proprietary. Technology is easily obtained and replicated and only levels the playing field...an organization's valued human assets cannot be copied."

Bill Gates

Evidence shows, however, that when organizations improve their working environments by organizing work in ways that promote health, all related adverse health outcomes, including injury rates and absenteeism, decrease.⁴ Organizations can do this by keeping demands on time and energy within reasonable boundaries, maximizing the degree to which employees participate in the governance of their own work, and providing adequate recognition for work well done.⁵ Changing the organizational environment and influencing the culture and personal working styles of managers takes time and commitment from an organization, and is no easy task.

(This section has been adapted with permission from the Health Communications Unit at the Centre for Health Information, University of Toronto.)

¹ Shain, M., Suurvali, H. (2001). *Investing in Comprehensive Workplace Health Promotion*. Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) and the National Quality Instituted (NQI). 8

² Shain, M., Suurvali, H. (2001), 12 and Burton, J. (2002). "The Leadership Factor: Management practices can make employees sick." *NQI Excellence Articles*. 4

³ Shain, M. Suurvali, H. (2001). 74

⁴ Shain, M. Suurvali, H. (2001). 74

⁵ Shain, M. Suurvali, H. (2001). 53

Organizational Environment Factors Affecting Health

The organizational environment of a workplace can be defined as all the organizational and job factors that affect the interaction between people, their work and the organization.⁶ The organizational environment has a major impact on employee health and productivity and is influenced by many factors including:

- Leadership style – belief in and commitment to employee health and satisfaction and the link between employee health and the organizations business objectives.
- Management practices – how work is distributed, directed, and designed; how employees are involved and how they participate in decisions as well as fairness, communication, feedback and rewards, and support for work-life balance.
- Social support – interpersonal relationships and communication between peers and supervisors.
- Pervading culture – unconscious beliefs values and norms shared by members of the organization; how employees think, act and feel; and what management pays attention to and rewards.

A healthy organization is one "...whose culture, climate and practices create an environment that promotes employee health and safety as well as organizational effectiveness."

*Cited in Lowe, Graham. (Jan.2004).
Healthy Workplace Strategies: Creating
Change and Achieving Results.*

This next section will review three main themes discussed in the literature as they impact the organizational environment and the influencing factors listed above:

- stress and mental health issues,
- work-life balance, and
- management practices.

Of course, these issues overlap and this section is meant only as an introduction to these complex issues. As well, several terms are used interchangeably in the literature when discussing the organizational working environment. For a list of some terms and their definitions please see **Appendix A**.

STRESS AND MENTAL HEALTH

Workplace stress related illnesses are on the rise in Canada. Recent insurance company statistics indicate that mental and nervous disorders are the top conditions causing long-term disability.⁷ The 2002 Aventis Health Care survey found that 51% of Canadian employees said they experienced a great deal of stress at work.⁸ Findings of the Association of Professional Executives of the Public Service of Canada (APEX) show that the executive cadre is experiencing stress in the high to extreme range.⁹ Workplace stress

In the 2002 Aventis Healthcare Survey, 51% of Canadian employees said they experienced a great deal of stress at work. Roughly, 25% of these employees said that their workplace stress had been so overwhelming that it made them physically ill at times. More than half of the employees surveyed said they worried that the stress they experienced at work could cause serious long-term illness. When asked if their employer was doing enough to help them manage their stress at work, 44% of respondents said "no."

Source: Cited in Canadian Council on Integrated Health Care (2002) Discussion Paper. p.21

⁶ Bachmann, Kimberley. (October 2002). *Health Promotion Programs at Work A Frivolous Cost or a Sound Investment?* Conference Board of Canada: Ottawa.10

⁷ Canadian Council on Integrated Healthcare (CCIH). (October 2002). *A Discussion Paper on Workplace Health*. 20

⁸ Aventis Health Care Survey 2002 cited in CCIH (2002). 21.

⁹ Association of Professional Executives of the Public Service of Canada (APEX). (November 28, 2002). *The Health Status of Executives in the Public Service of Canada*.

today is linked to working more hours, an increased intensity of job demands, a lack of control over the pace of work or a lack of understanding of how to carry out duties, poor communication with supervisors and an imbalance between work and personal responsibilities.¹⁰ According to a report from the Roundtable on Global Business and Economic Roundtable on Addiction and Mental Health on Corporate Leadership in Mental Health¹¹:

- Mental illness in the labour force is a clear and present danger confronting the global economy and the corporations competing therein.
- Depression and ischemic heart disease are on track to become the leading causes of work years lost in the global economy by 2020 through human disability and premature death.
- Upwards of 20-25 per cent of the Canadian and U.S. labour force suffers from depression and anxiety disorders in any given year. Those numbers double over the course of a lifetime.
- Men and women in their prime working years – the backbone of our consuming and producing economy – are the most vulnerable to mental health problems.
- The global information economy is an economy of mental performance; 85 per cent of the jobs in North America, according to a McKinsey study, now require cerebral, not manual, skills.
- The costs of mental illness in the Canadian labour force, only recently documented, exceed \$33 billion a year in production loss alone.

Dr. Martin Shain, from the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health and the University of Toronto's Centre for Health Promotion, summarized much of the research in this area. He describes the key factors behind the development of strain in the workplace:

- High job demand, where there is too much to do and constant deadlines;
- Low job control, where the person has too little influence over the organization of his or her work;
- High effort or energy needed to achieve goals; and
- Low reward compensation, or acknowledgement of effort. When there is high job pressure combined with low job control, and high effort combined with low reward, particularly when there is also home stress and a lack of social support, stress can result.

Source: Wilson, Jane. (May 5, 2003). *An Unhealthy Workplace can be Bad for You.* www.nqi.ca

Research shows that high job demands, or having too much to do over too long a period, with constant imposed deadlines, are one of the most harmful workplace stressors. The most stressful combination is having high demands and low control, plus an absence of social support at work.^{12 13 14}

This is based on the Karasek and Theorell's demand-control-support model.¹⁵ Another model used to explain stress at work is the Effort/Reward Imbalance Model. This model shows that high job strain results when high mental or physical job effort is expended to achieve organizational goals, and low compensation or acknowledgement of effort is rewarded, in terms of bestowed status, financial gain or career advancement.

¹⁰ The Health Communication Unit (THCU). (April 2002). *Supporting Comprehensive Workplace Health Promotion in Ontario Project.*

¹¹ Wilkerson, Bill. (February 4, 2004). Global Economic Roundtable on Addiction and Mental Health.

¹² Bachmann, Kimberley. (October 2002). 10

¹³ Cited in Bachmann, K. (October 2002). 10

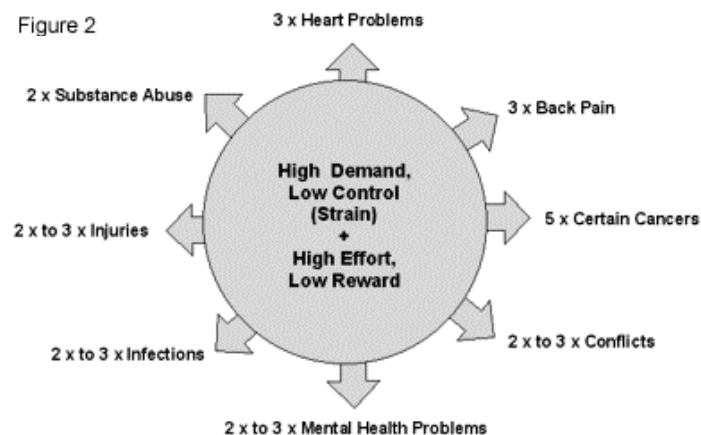
¹⁴ Shain, M. (2000). *Best Advice on Stress Risk Management in the Workplace.* Health Canada. 33.

¹⁵ Shain, M. (2000) and Burton, J. (2002).

According to physiological research, stress can lead to changes in brain chemistry, which then affects the body's ability to defend itself against infections and other diseases.¹⁶ Some stressors are worse than others, in terms of their effects. Data show that people working with high demands and low control, compared with workers who have a high level of control, experience significantly higher rates of heart and cardiovascular disease, anxiety, depression, alcohol abuse, infectious diseases, back pain and repetitive strain injuries (RSIs). As employees become more stressed by increased job demands and emotional stressors, they are more likely to be involved in workplace accidents and sustain injuries.¹⁷ Shain reports that stress can increase workplace rates of injury by a factor of two to three times.¹⁸

The following figure summarizes the many negative health and safety effects that result from constant exposure to high demands and low control, and high effort and low rewards in the workplace.¹⁹

Figure 2 – Health Consequences of Stress



It has been shown that “satisfiers”, such as control and rewards, can mitigate the stress caused by too much demand and effort.²⁰ Workers who are satisfied with their jobs tend to be healthier, whereas people who are dissatisfied with their jobs experience negative physical and psychological consequences.²¹ Furthermore, literature suggests that there is a “spill-over” effect from job to leisure, indicating that people who hold stimulating jobs might be more likely to engage in physical activity and other healthy behaviours.²² Job satisfaction is also linked to customer/client satisfaction and ultimately, the bottom line.²³ For example, Sears, Roebuck and Company was one of the first to recognize this link, and was able to increase revenues by over \$200 million in 12 months by increasing employee satisfaction.²⁴

¹⁶ Wilson, Jane. (May 5, 2003). *An Unhealthy Workplace can be Bad for You*. NQI

¹⁷ Shain (2000).

¹⁸ Shain (2000).

¹⁹ Shain (2000)

²⁰ Amos, Susan. (2003). *The Business Health Culture Index – A tool to Foster Organizational Health* Slide presentation. Human Resources Development Canada.

²¹ Peterson, M., Wilson, J. (1996). “Job satisfaction and perceptions of health.” *Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine*, 38(9):891-8.

²² THCU (April 2002).194.

²³ THCU. (April 2002). 5.

²⁴ Corbett, Dan. (2003). *Why Focus on a Healthy Workplace?* NQI.

Award winning Quebec business man Remi Tremblay in his recently published book "Happiness at Work" states that workers who feel good make clients feel good and have a positive effect on business.
Source: *Nebenzahl, D. (Wed. March 31, 2004). Happy employees are essential to success. Ottawa Citizen.*

Dr. Shain has recently demonstrated that perceived fairness by employees is another powerful influence on health.²⁵ He describes two kinds of fairness:

- Distributive - who gets what, and when
- Procedural - the processes through which decisions are made

Feelings associated with a sense of unfairness include anger, depression, demoralization and anxiety. Feelings associated with fairness include satisfaction, calmness, enthusiasm and happiness. Strong negative feelings translate into compromised immune systems, setting the stage for a variety of adverse physical and mental health outcomes.

In other words, feelings of unfairness magnify the effects of perceived stress on health. In contrast, a sense of fairness is related to trust, which is key to employer-employee relations, high morale and productivity.

A number of Canadian research studies have shown links between how work is organized and health outcomes. For example:

- A study of hourly paid workers at a General Motors plant in Oshawa, Ontario, conducted by the Institute for Work and Health, found that both physical and psychosocial factors were linked to the development of lower back pain. In particular, the study found that individuals who had low job control or workers who felt more negative about the general atmosphere at work were more likely to report low-back pain than those who were not exposed to these situations.
- A study of non-production employees at the Toronto Star found that physical factors, such as long hours in front of a keyboard, as well as psychosocial factors, such as tight deadlines, low levels of co-worker support, and low job control, were associated with the occurrence of repetitive strain injuries.

Source: *Bachman, K. (October 2002). Health Promotion Programs at Work A Frivolous Cost or a Sound Investment? Conference Board of Canada: Ottawa.p. 10*

Understandably, in today's fast-paced society, businesses cannot succeed without making high demands on employees, and often expecting a lot of effort in return. Most employees can cope with high demands if given appropriate control over the way they work, and can put out sustained high efforts if they feel appropriately rewarded and appreciated.

WORK-LIFE BALANCE

A leading issue causing stress for many Canadians is the challenge of balancing work and personal responsibilities (work-life balance). The most compelling Canadian studies on this topic are by Duxbury and Higgins, who discuss the changes from their Canada-wide surveys on work-life balance in 1991 versus 2001. Studies done in 1991 and repeated in 2001 show that work-life balance has deteriorated significantly in the past 10 years. Duxbury and Higgins state that work-life conflict occurs when time and energy demands imposed by our many roles become incompatible with one another. Employees experience much of this conflict as role overload and work interfere with family life. "Employees with work-life conflict are significantly less committed to the organization and satisfied with their jobs."²⁶

²⁵ Based on information presented in article by Joan Burton (2002). "The Leadership Factor: Management practices can make employees sick." *NQI Excellence Articles*.

²⁶ Cited in Burton, J. (2002).

They also report significantly higher levels of job stress, absenteeism, EAP use, prescription drug use and intent to turnover. Yet in the same companies, employees with "supportive supervisors" reported significantly higher job satisfaction, trust of managers and commitment to the organization, as well as less role overload, job stress, depression, poor health, work-life conflict, fatigue, absenteeism and intention to leave the company.²⁷

In the Duxbury and Higgins Status Report on Work-Life Balance they found employees in Ontario fare slightly worse than the rest of Canada. For example they found:

- Have heavy demands at work and at home
- Have difficulties balancing work and family
- Are in poorer mental health
- View their work environment as non-supportive
- Work for a non-supportive manager
- Are not satisfied with either their jobs or their organization
- Lower job satisfaction
- Higher belief (especially in the professional group) that the culture in their organization is one of hours that emphasizes work or family rather than balance
- Supportive policies do not seem to be in place in many organizations
- Lower use of flexible work arrangements and lower perceived flexibility

Source: *Work-life Balance in Ontario: A Status Report* Linda Duxbury, Ph.D. Professor, Sprott School of Business, Carleton University Christopher Higgins, Ph.D. Professor, Ivey School of Business U.W.O. www.worklifesummit.com

MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

Canadian organizations are not addressing the real issue affecting employees' mental health and stress- the organizational environment. A survey by Statistics Canada in 1999 of over 6,000 workplaces found that roughly half (49.5 per cent) had adopted an organizational practice of sharing information with employees. Other organizational practices supporting employee well-being were limited. For example, only about a third (31.9 per cent) had instituted flexible job designs, 31 % had employee suggestion programs, 25.7% had problem-solving teams and 10.3 % had self-directed workgroups.²⁸

Employee Retention

In two surveys carried out by AON Consulting and Prudential Life, the top seven drivers for employee retention were (not in rank order):

- management/supervisory quality
- management recognition of work/life balance
- opportunities for personal growth
- keeping pace with skills needed for the job
- open communication
- satisfying customer needs, and
- competitive pay.

Source: *Burton, J. (2002). The Leadership Factor: Management practices can make employees sick. NQI Excellence Articles.*

The Association for Professional Executives of the Public Service of Canada (APEX)'s study of federal public service executives demonstrated that executives continue to have low levels of decision latitude, significant increases in work demands and deteriorating health status. In fact, 53% of executives interviewed reported high levels of stress – almost twice the rate for the average Canadian of the same gender and age.²⁹ As APEX points out - "put a healthy person in an unhealthy environment, and eventually they will become ill."³⁰

²⁷ Cited in Burton, J. (2002).

²⁸ Cited in Bachman, K. (October 2002). 11

²⁹ APEX (November 28, 2002). 2

³⁰ APEX (November 28, 2002). 2

"If you are a lousy leader...you are making people sick. Ambiguity, inconsistency, uncertainty, insecurity, arbitrariness, bad decision-making, self-centredness, rewarding the wrong things in the office, the fostering of office politics, and rewarding political behaviour - that's the earmark of weak leadership."

Source: Bill Wilkerson, President and Co-Founder Global Economic Roundtable on Addiction and Mental Health. Cited in Burton, J. (2002). *The Leadership Factor: Management practices can make employees sick*. NQI Excellence Articles.

Recent research shows that many of the organizational initiatives designed to increase productivity are closely linked to health. Organizations that understand the impact of employee satisfaction and health on business outcomes are strategically better placed at being successful.³¹ Leadership is key to making this happen and good leaders realize that "**workplace well-being is a business strategy.**"³²

The National Quality Institute (NQI) asserts that *Leadership* is key because a healthy workplace can only be sustained when the organization's leaders believe in and are committed to that goal. Leadership means aligning workplace health with organizational goals. Leadership also means that the executive management team provides direction and resources while at the same time, sharing the leadership, responsibility and accountability for healthy workplace issues throughout the organization.

The National Quality Institute (NQI) has developed Canadian Healthy Workplace Criteria to assist organizations with implementing CWHP. These criteria were developed in partnership with Health Canada and in association with professionals from the health and safety sector. The criteria provide a logical framework for developing and sustaining a healthy workplace through what NQI calls the four essential "drivers": Leadership, Planning, People Focus and Process Management. The emphasis on leadership and people speaks to the importance of the organizational environment.

Telus BC, a large telecommunications company with headquarters in Burnaby BC, is a NQI Healthy Workplace Award trophy recipient. Telus BC has identified resilience, change mastery and a corporate culture that supports work-life balance and employee health needs as key success factors. They determined these priorities through dialogue with senior management, strategic planning sessions, employee surveys and studies, and industry and national business trends. Telus uses the Balanced Scorecard approach to encourage management accountability for meeting healthy workplace objectives and, as such, has experienced a positive change in corporate culture. Telus is showing positive trends in employee health and well-being, as well as cost savings to the company. They state a return on investment of three dollars for every dollar invested in the program.

Source: McKeown, Geri. (Mar 4, 2001). *Workplace Wellness: Something's Happening Here*. NQI.

Although the workplace is an environment that can negatively affect health, it simultaneously offers great potential for improving overall employee health and well-being. Management can improve the workplace organizational environment by organizing work in ways that promote health. They can do this by keeping demands on time and energy within reasonable boundaries, maximizing the degree to which employees participate in the governance of their own work, and by providing adequate recognition for work well done.³³ Shain argues that organizational change is a key ingredient in workplace health promotion. He states that health promotion programs will be effective only under conducive managerial conditions (primarily those that stimulate employee job satisfaction).³⁴

³¹ Corbett, D. (2001). *Why Focus on a Health Workplace?* NQI.

³² Amos, Susan. (2003). HRDC, personal interview 27/02/03

³³ Shain, M. Suurvali, H. (2000). 53

³⁴ Shain, M. Suurvali, H. (2000). 53

Shain defines what he calls the key social skills of managers and common set of practices as:

- Self-Awareness - How do I affect others?
- Willingness and ability to balance demand and control/effort and reward
- Challenges and Skills - at an individual and group level
- Perceptiveness about others' legitimate needs, interests, strengths, and limitations
- Ability to negotiate an equitable division of labour in a work group
- Ability to mediate disputes
- Fairness (to be fair and to be seen as fair)

Although these social skills may sound simple, Shain notes that their simplicity conceals some of the real difficulties in achievement. These skills often require personal transformation for managers and a change in workplace culture. Encouraging managers to identify and take action on areas they have control over is a key strategy to improving the working conditions for employees. When this happens, managers can also identify problems they do not have control over and then can work with senior management to make the necessary changes.

- The Treasury Board of Canada list a number of common characteristics found in the literature of "what makes a good place to work." These include:
- People are engaged in their work
- There is mutual respect and trust between employees and manager
- People feel they are treated fairly
- There is a clear sense of purpose
- Employees are able to balance their work and personal responsibilities
- Employees feel safe (i.e. free from harassment and/or discrimination)
- They also suggest a number common conditions from the literature that help create great places to work such as:
- Senior management is committed to the tasks
- Supportive middle managers are recognised and rewarded
- Open and honest communication are encouraged throughout the organization
- Employee participation in decision making is encouraged and facilitated
- Employees are given some control over their work.

Source: Treasury Board of Canada (May 2002). Annotated Bibliography Workplace Well-Being.

Management practices in organizations are influenced by the workplace culture and vice versa.³⁵ The culture in a workplace is made up of the assumptions, values, beliefs and attitudes that employees learn in the organization about how to work together and manage organizational life.³⁶ These beliefs and values are often unconscious. The behaviour modeled by the leader and management shapes the culture and practices.³⁷

According to Linda Duxbury culture is demonstrated by:

- What leaders pay attention to, measure and control on a regular basis
- The reactions of leaders to critical incidents and organizational crisis
- Observed criteria by which leaders allocate scarce resources
- Deliberate role modeling, teaching and coaching
- Criteria for allocating rewards
- Criteria for recruitment, selection, promotion, retirement and exiting.

Norm William, vice-president of human resources programs at AT&T Canada notes "Many people equate wellness with expensive fitness facilities and daycare centres.... We're building the concept of healthy workplace into everyday management practices and that does not require a lot financial resources..." What it does require is commitment from the top and plenty of communication.

Source: NQI. The Healthy Workplace: Just Good Business. www.nqi.ca

³⁵ Duxbury, L. (2004). *Work-life Balance in Ontario: A Status Report*.

³⁶ National Quality Institute (NQI). (2000). *Framework for the Development of a Healthy Workplace*. 76.

³⁷ Hagberg, R. Heifetz, J. (2000). *Corporate Culture/Organizational Culture: Understanding and Assessment*. Telling the CEO his/her baby is ugly. Hagberg Consulting Group (HCG).

What can be done?

BY WORKPLACES...

Research clearly shows that reducing employee health risks requires changes in job design, workplace culture, organizational systems and management practices. But this change is not an easy process. Creating healthy and productive workplaces takes time and dedication at many levels including the individual manager, senior executives in organizations, and governments. In most cases, creating a healthy workplace requires a serious commitment from a company's leaders, a transformational leadership style to change the culture of the organization, and patience to make changes over the long-term. Graham Lowe in his paper on *Creating Change and Achieving Results* refers to creating a healthy organization through organizational and management change as *Transformational Change*.³⁸ Transformational change requires a systemic change with clarity of vision, strong commitment, and a strong degree of cooperation and involvement of everyone in the organization.

The main steps supporting the development of a healthy workplace are described in The Wellness Works Guide For Building A Healthy Workplace.³⁹ For a copy of the Guide contact Wellness Works at 753-4937 ext 286.

³⁸ Lowe, Graham. (Jan.2004). *Healthy Workplace Strategies: Creating Change and Achieving Results*. Prepared for the Workplace Health Strategies Bureau, Health Canada.

³⁹ Wellness Works (2001).

Resources and Supports

Many groups offer a variety of tools to help organizations and managers to create culture change and organizations supportive of positive work environments for employees.

Wellness Works, Brant County Health Unit - www.bchu.org/wellnessworks

Recommended Reading:

- Wellness Works: A Guide for Building a Healthy Workplace

The Health Communication Unit (THCU)- www.thcu.ca/Workplace/Workplace.html.

Recommended Reading:

- Comprehensive Workplace Health Promotion “Making Cents of a Good Idea” – Business Case. June 2003
- An Introduction to Comprehensive Workplace Health Promotion- Info-pack. June 2004
- Evaluating Comprehensive Workplace Health Promotion – Info-pack. June 2004
- Organizational Culture – Info-Pack June 2004

National Quality Institute (NQI) - www.nqi.ca -

Recommended reading:

- Canadian Healthy Workplace Criteria.

Canadian Centre for Occupational Safety and Health - www.ccohs.ca/ccohs.html

Canadian Health Network- www.canadian-health-network.ca/1workplace_health.html).

Neighbour at Work Centre - www.neighbouratwork.com

Canadian Mental Health Association www.cmha.ca & www.mentalhealthworks.ca

Canadian Policy Research Networks - www.cprn.com

Recommended Reading:

- Graham Lowe Group, Research Associate with CPRN's Work Network paper prepared for Health Canada - *Healthy Workplace Strategies: Creating Change and Achieving Results*.

Workplace Health Strategies Bureau of Health Canada- www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hecs-sesc/workplace/publications.htm

Recommended Reading:

- Shain, M. (2000). *What Do We Know? Best Advice on Stress Risk Management in the Workplace*.

Centre for Families, Work and Well-Being

See www.worklifecanada.ca

Recommended Reading:

- Work Life Practices and Flexibility in Small Business - A Canadian Report.

Other Government sources

- Statistics Canada – www.statcan.ca/english
- Treasury Board of Canada - www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/survey-sondage
- Canadian Management Development (CMDP) - www.tbs-sct.gc.ca
- Human Resources and Skills Development Canada – <http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca>.

Other Key websites for information on workplace organizational health

- Canada's Healthy Workplace Week www.healthyworkplaceweek.ca
- Canadian Workplace Research Network www.cwrn-rcrmt.org
- Centre for Addiction & Mental Health www.camh.net
- Centre for Families, Work & Wellbeing www.worklifecanada.ca/
- Global Business and Economic Roundtable on Addiction and Mental Health www.mentalhealthroundtable.ca
- Health Canada, Workplace Health Strategies Bureau www.hc-sc.gc.ca/whsb
- Human Resources and Skills Development Canada - Work-Life Balance in Canadian Workplaces <http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca>.

Appendices

APPENDIX A: SOME DEFINITIONS

Stress - the result of any emotional, physical, social, economic, or other factors that require a response or change. It is generally believed that some stress is okay (sometimes referred to as "challenge" or "positive stress") but when stress occurs in amounts that you cannot handle, or is prolonged, it has a negative affect both emotionally and physically. Chronic stress may lead to symptoms of anxiety, depression, heart palpitations, muscle aches or pain. The most common result is illness, due to the decreased effectiveness of the immune system. This is caused by the hormones of stress that inhibit the activity of the white blood cells of our immune system.⁴⁰

Work stress - the relationship between stressors on the job and how the worker physically and emotionally reacts. Stress at work can also involve job security, unstimulating work, salary problems and other issues.

Psychosocial hazards - also known as workplace stressors - issues related to the way work is organized that can threaten the mental and physical health and safety of employees.⁴¹

Examples include:

- Work overload and time pressure;
- Lack of influence over day-to-day work;
- Lack of training or preparation to do the job;
- Too little or too much responsibility;
- Ambiguity in job responsibility;
- Lack of status rewards (appreciation);
- Discrimination or harassment;
- Poor communication;
- Neglect of legal and safety obligations; and
- Lack of respect or support for work-life balance.

Organizational culture – assumptions, values, beliefs and attitudes that employees learn in the organization about how to work together and manage organizational life.⁴² These beliefs and values are often unconscious. The behaviour modeled by the leader and management shapes the culture and practices.⁴³

Psychosocial work environment - a set of organizational and job factors related to the interaction between people, their work and the organization.⁴⁴

⁴⁰ http://www.melpomene.org/old_site_archive/intheknow/stress.html

⁴¹ Burton, J. (2002). 1

⁴² National Quality Institute (NQI). (2000). Framework for the Development of a Healthy Workplace. 76

⁴³ Hagberg, R. Heifetz, J. (2000). Corporate Culture/Organizational Culture: Understanding and Assessment. Telling the CEO his/her baby is ugly. Hagberg Consulting Group (HCG). Retrieved at [www.http://w3.hcgnet.com](http://w3.hcgnet.com)

⁴⁴ Bachmann, Kimberley. (October 2002). *Health Promotion Programs at Work A Frivolous Cost or a Sound Investment?* Conference Board of Canada: Ottawa.10

Stress Management

BACKGROUND INFORMATION/RATIONALE FOR FOCUS:

Workplace stress continues to be a major issue for many employers and employees. According to the 2002 Aventis Health Care Survey, 51% of Canadian employees said they experienced a great deal of stress at work¹. Other statistics indicate that 63% of working Canadians say that their workplace is a moderate to major source of stress and anxiety in their lives.² Mental health problems cost Canadian businesses over \$16 billion a year.³

Organizations need to examine the decisions and choices that produce stress and then establish strategies to help employees manage stress.⁴ Recognizing the impact that stress has on the workplace, both employers and employees can benefit from implementing strategies to minimize stress in the workplace and to manage it more effectively.

GOALS FOR THE WORKPLACE TO STRIVE FOR:

1. To reduce work-life conflict by providing a family sensitive work environment with several alternative work arrangements.
2. To develop and implement a stress management policy to help decrease workplace stress.
3. To create a supportive environment that assists employees to manage their stress.

GETTING STARTED:

Awareness Raising

- Utilize bulletin boards to display posters and intranet sites featuring stress management and time management strategies
- Designate accessible areas to display pamphlets and resources about healthy lifestyle issues, mental health and stress (see *Helpful Resources*)
- Include short articles in internal newsletters, (check websites i.e. BCHU and local newspaper for relevant articles)
- Incorporate presentations/seminars on stress or related topics such as care-giving, parenting, balancing work/family life, etc.
- Distribute self-screening tools to employees to determine their stress level, workplace triggers, and their ability to manage stress

¹ The Health Communications Unit (2004) Influencing the Organisational Environment to create Health Workplaces: Info Pack Version 1.0 June 7, 2004

² COMPAS Inc. (2001). The 2001 Canadian Mental Health Survey.

³ Global Business and Economic Round table on Addiction and Mental Health. www.teamcrystalis.com

⁴ Dr. Martin Shain (1999) – www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hppb/fitness/work

Skill Building

- Offer the six-session video course, “Success with Stress” which will help employees identify their stressors, discover new coping strategies, and develop a personalized action plan
- Provide presentations/workshops on relaxation techniques, time management, and communication skills
- Provide management training regarding stress management, communication skills, and team building
- Regularly review workloads with employees

Creating a Supportive Environment

- Create a relaxation room for employees to use throughout the day
- Offer stress management/counselling through Employee Assistance Program
- Develop healthy workplace policies
- Establish work schedules that are compatible with demands and responsibilities outside the workplace (eg. Opportunities for flex-time, reduced work week, job sharing)
- Improve communication, keep employees informed of goals, plans, and decisions
- Allow employees to participate in decisions that affect their jobs and performance of tasks
- Ensure workload is manageable and in line with employees’ interests and capabilities

Healthy Workplace Policy Suggestions

- Stress management policy
- Flex time/flexible working arrangements policy
- “Family-friendly” employment policy
- Communication policy that focuses on management/employee relations, team building, organizational goals and values, and job descriptions
- Physical activity/exercise policy
- Healthy eating policy

HELPFUL RESOURCES:

Through the Brant County Health Unit (753-4937 ext. 259)

- Stress display
- Reducing Stress at Work & Reducing Stress in the Workplace: Tips for Employers

Booklet

- Coping with Stress (Also available from Canadian Mental Health Association or Heart & Stroke Foundation)

Books, Videos and Kits

- *Structured Exercises in Stress Management*, Volumes 1-4
- *Success with Stress* (1999). A six session video program with facilitator’s guides and worksheets

Community

- Canadian Mental Health Association (752-2998)
- Heart & Stroke Foundation (752-1301)
- Brant Mental Health Crisis Response System (752-2273)
- Family Counselling Centre – non-crisis counselling (753-4173)

Web-Based

- <http://www.stresscanada.org>
- <http://www.cmha.ca> (*Canadian Mental Health Association*)
- <http://www.canadian-health-network.ca> (*Canadian Health Network*)
- <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca> (*Health Canada*)
- <http://www.heartandstroke.ca> (*Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario*)
- <http://www.workhealth.org> (*Job Stress Network*)
- <http://www.mentalhealthworks.ca>

Work-Life Balance

BACKGROUND INFORMATION/RATIONALE FOR FOCUS:

Studies done in 1991 and repeated in 2001 by Duxbury and Higgins show that work-life balance has deteriorated significantly in the last 10 years.¹ Employees with high work-life conflict report:

- being less satisfied with their job and committed to the organization
- having higher levels of stress, absenteeism, EAP use, prescription drug use and intent to turnover

It is estimated that the direct cost of work-life conflict from absenteeism alone to Canadian business is approximately three to five billion dollars per year.²

The Conference Board of Canada (1999) also reported that organizations that supported their employees' personal or family responsibilities had more satisfied employees who were absent less often. It is possible to create a work environment supportive of a balanced life, which encourages family and personal goals to be achieved alongside work goals.

To reduce work-life conflict and improve overall quality of life, employers need to focus their efforts on four sets of initiatives.³

- Increase the number of supportive managers within the organization
- Provide flexibility around work
- Increase employees' sense of control
- Focus on creating a more supportive work environment

Companies who adopt a family-friendly work policy will often see a positive difference in job performance and productivity.

GOALS FOR THE WORKPLACE TO STRIVE FOR:

1. To create a family friendly environment which supports the personal/family goals of all employees.
2. To develop flexible work arrangements for employees.

GETTING STARTED:

Awareness Raising

- Utilize bulletin boards advertising local family oriented community events. For example, information about parenting skills, time management, etc.
- Provide resources and referral services for childcare centres and elder care initiatives
- Include short articles in internal newsletters (check websites i.e. BCHU and local newspaper for relevant articles)

¹ The Health Communications Unit (2004) Influencing organizational Environment to Create Health Workplaces: Info Pack. Version 1.0 Page 9.

² Duxbury, L. and Higgins, C. (2003) Work-Life Conflict in Canada in the New Millennium: A status report. <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/pphb-dgsps/publicat/work-travail/report2/index.html>

³ Work-Life Balance in Canadian Workplaces 2002.

Skill Building

- Incorporate presentations/workshops based on employee interest through lunch and learn sessions discussing issues surrounding work and family balance, time management and stress management strategies
- Survey staff to determine needs and interest regarding flexible work arrangements (flex time, job sharing, telecommuting, compressed work weeks, reduced hours and working from home etc.)
- Provide incentives to managers/employees who are creative and flexible in getting the work done by working smarter, not longer

Creating a Supportive Environment

- Offer flexible break times and lunches for employees on a rotating basis
- Encourage creativity and test alternative work arrangements. Get employees involved in the process
- Provide a suggestion box for staff to anonymously express their concerns
- Develop flex-time policies based on employee feedback
- Establish a “kids day” at the workplace, host family picnics, support “Bring Your Kids to Work” day
- Consider the implementation of the following flexible options in your workplace: flex time, job sharing, telecommuting, compressed work weeks, reduced hours and working from home etc.)

Healthy Workplace Policy Suggestions

- Establish flexible scheduling policies for personal leave and child/parental appointments
- Offer alternative work arrangements/ work from home policy

HELPFUL RESOURCES:

Through the Brant County Health Unit (753-4937 ext. 472)

- Stress Management Display/Literature
- Wellness Works Literature (*Balance in the Workplace*)
- Displays, literature and presentations re: child/parent relationships
- Information and literature on care giving, seniors and child safety
- Shift Work Like Clockwork Resource Binder

Community

- Canadian Mental Health Association (752-2998)
- Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (1-800-463-6273)
- Chamber of Commerce (753-2617)
- Brantford Public Library (756-2220)
- Adult Recreation Therapy Centre (753-1882)
- Brantford United Way (752-7848)

Web-Based

- <http://www.uoguelph.ca/cfww/index.html> (*Centre for Families, Work, Well-Being*)
- <http://www.cflri.ca> (Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute)
“Juggling Home and Work”
- <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca> (*Health Canada*)

Shift Work

BACKGROUND INFORMATION/RATIONALE FOR FOCUS:

If your workplace employs individuals outside of the standard 8-hour shift, promoting the health of shift workers should be part of your business plan.

Over 3 million Canadians are considered to be shift workers. The overall prevalence of shift work in workplaces continue to rise as the demand for services, which are available 24 hours a day, increase. It is estimated that the cost of shift work to the Canadian economy could be anywhere between 7 to 15 billion dollars a year, related to a variety of consequences of shift work.¹ These may include:

- Increased fatigue and sleepiness
- Reduced and less effective sleep
- Impaired job performance
- Increased risk of accidents
- Decreased well-being
- Circadian rhythm disturbance
- Impaired domestic and social relationships
- Poor nutrition and reduced fitness
- Increased risk of substance abuse
- Increased gastrointestinal disturbance
- Increased risk of coronary heart disease²
(Heslegrave, R. 1998).

By focusing on strategies within the workplace environment to address these challenges, employers and employees can be more productive.

GOALS FOR THE WORKPLACE TO STRIVE FOR:

1. To improve the health of shift workers by providing information about the impact of shift work on their health, lifestyle and overall job performance
2. To recognize and reduce potential health risks or health hazards within the work environment which may adversely affect shift work lifestyle

GETTING STARTED:

Awareness Raising

- Utilize bulletin boards and displays featuring strategies for day/night shift workers
- Designate accessible areas to display pamphlets and resources related to healthy lifestyle and local services (i.e. sleep clinics, recreation centres, smoking cessation groups etc.)
- Include short articles in internal newsletters related to benefits and sleep deprivation

¹ Shiftwork Like Clockwork – Facilitator’s Guide, 1998, Sudbury District Health Unit and Porcupine Health Unit

² Helsgrave, Ronald (1998) Asleep at the Switch: *Coping with Shiftwork*. The Canadian Journal of Diagnosis

Skill Building

- Incorporate presentations/workshops based on employee interest. Provide an orientation to “shift work” workshop
- Support employees by including copies of relevant information through pay-stub inserts or intranet site for employees that are unable to attend relevant meetings/information sessions

Creating a Supportive Environment

- Modify the work environment to ensure that appropriate lighting, ventilation and a comfortable rest area are available
- Encourage staff to take a 15-minute nap instead of a coffee break
- Ensure EAP/counselling services are available for employees who work shifts
- Allow staff input regarding work and holiday schedules
- Support healthy eating around the clock by having healthy food choices available at all times (vending machines)

Healthy Workplace Policy Suggestions

- Incorporate “shift work” training into orientation
- Make a suggestion box available for staff to voice their concerns/suggestions

HELPFUL RESOURCES:

Through the Brant County Health Unit (753-4937 ext. 472)

- “Shift Work like Clockwork” – program materials and handouts, facilitator program
- “Eating Around The Clock – Nutrition for Shift workers”

Community

- Sleep Disorder Clinic (442-6389)

Web-Based

- <http://www.geocities.com/~sleepwake/> (*Sleep/Wake Disorders of Canada*)
- <http://www.sleepfoundation.org> (*The National Sleep Foundation*)
- <http://www.sleepnet.com> (*Sleepnet*)
- <http://www.nightworkers.com>

Parenting

BACKGROUND INFORMATION/RATIONALE FOR FOCUS:

After a child is born, returning to work can be a struggle for both parents. During the time away from work, the parents have developed a new role of nurturing and caring for their child and it is sometimes difficult to incorporate this new role into a work-life balance. Careful planning and a supportive work environment can assist in this process. Employment status and working conditions strongly influence the parents and children as well as strongly influencing the economic opportunities of parents. These factors can affect their ability to carry out parenting responsibilities and to develop healthy relationships with their children.¹

The transition between work and family life can be a difficult one for some families. The development of time management skills and having social support can be the difference between balance and stress. A supportive workplace – coupled with workplace policies that recognize and support the needs of parents – can reduce stress and improve parents' ability to meet the demands of both working and parenting.

GOALS FOR THE WORKPLACE TO STRIVE FOR:

1. To provide a supportive work environment to promote healthy pregnancies, post-natal period, and returning to work after maternity/paternity leave.
2. To encourage active and supportive communication between employers and employees who are pregnant, or are returning from leave, while maintaining confidentiality.

GETTING STARTED:

Awareness Raising

- Utilize bulletin boards and displays featuring tips for a healthy pregnancy, breastfeeding, local community services and programs, parenting classes and parenting information
- Designate accessible areas to display pamphlets and materials relating to healthy pregnancy, breastfeeding, post-natal health, and parenting skills
- Provide a list of videos available from the Health Unit or local library
- Include short articles in internal newsletters (check websites i.e. BCHU and local newspaper for relevant articles)
- Provide current up-to-date legislation regarding paternity and maternity leaves and benefits etc.

¹ www.hc-sc.gc.ca/dca-dea/publications/healthy-dev-partb-2-e.html March 16, 2004

Skill Building

- Incorporate presentations/workshops based on employee interest through lunch and learn sessions discussing pregnancy, parenting, post-natal health, work-life balance, child care options, family activities (i.e. recreation centres), parent support groups etc.) and health care benefits

Creating a Supportive Environment

- Provide a quiet room/environment for pregnant mothers/post-natal parents to rest during breaks
- Offer flexible break time for employees to attend prenatal/postnatal child appointments
- Offer part-time, shared positions for parents returning to work, if they are not prepared to return to work on a full-time basis
- Offer a take-out service to order meals for families on the go, who may not be able to prepare hearty meals on a regular basis due to work schedule

Healthy Workplace Policy Suggestions

- Breastfeeding friendly workplace policy
- Flex time policy
- Maternity/paternity policy (re: salary top-ups)
- Part-time/shared position policy
- Family friendly benefits policy

HELPFUL RESOURCES:

Through the Brant County Health Unit (753-4937 ext. 472)

- Post Natal Classes (0-1 year) (753-4937 ext. 257)
- Incredible Years Parent Training Program (753-4937 ext. 257)
 - Toddler Version (2 –3 years)
 - Young Child Version (3 – 8 years)

Variety of resources related to:

- Planning pregnancy
- Prenatal health
- Postnatal health
- Breastfeeding
- Infant nutrition
- Child nutrition

Child Growth & Development

- Play
- Communication
- Attachment
- Growth Charts
- Physical Activity
- Childcare

Parenting

- Fathering
- Parenting
- Grand parenting
- Children & self esteem
- Behaviours
- Discipline
- Routines
- Toileting

Diseases and Disorders of Children

- Autism
- ADHD
- Childhood illnesses
- Immunization
- Asthma
- Smoking
- Oral health
- Emotional and mental health

Safety for children

- Family violence
- Spousal abuse
- Child abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Separation and divorce

Community

- The Ontario Early Years Centre: Brant (753-3833)
 - A variety of resources and programs for children under 6 years old
- Room to Grow: At the Ontario Early Years Centre: Brant (753-3833)
 - Well baby well child healthy growth & development clinic
- Parent Help Line (1-888-603-9100)

Web-Based

- <http://www.www.bchu.org> (*The Brant County Health Unit*)
- <http://www.parenthelpine.ca>
- <http://www.healthyontario.com>
- <http://www.ontarioearlyyears.ca>
- <http://www.eycbrant.ca>
- <http://www.safety-council.org/info/child/children.html>
- <http://www.canadianparents.com> (*Work life balance focus*)
- <http://www.todayparent.com>

Breastfeeding at Work

BACKGROUND INFORMATION/RATIONALE FOR FOCUS:

In Canada today, approximately 63% of women with children under six years of age are in the labour force.¹ Some women will continue to breastfeed after returning to work and is important for workplaces to make special considerations for this to occur.

Breastfeeding provides a number of benefits to mother and baby. It strengthens the bond between mother and child and provides the best natural nutrients for a growing baby. The ease and convenience of breastfeeding should continue when a mother decides to return to work, and should be encouraged in the workplace. Women who breastfeed are less likely to develop certain types of ovarian and breast cancer, in addition have less post-partum complications. Breastfed babies have stronger immune systems and are healthier than infants who receive breast milk substitutes. Supporting employees who breastfeed can result in decreased absenteeism, employee retention and improved productivity. Employers who establish breastfeeding policies and a workplace environment supportive of continued breastfeeding are supportive of the well-being of employees and their families.

GOALS FOR THE WORKPLACE TO STRIVE FOR:

1. To provide a supportive and hygienic work environment to promote breastfeeding in the workplace, continuing to support nursing mothers returning to work following a maternity leave.
2. To recognize and reduce potential health hazards within the work environment that may discourage continued breastfeeding for return to work mothers.
3. To encourage active and supportive communication between employees and employers who would like to facilitate continued breastfeeding upon return to work.

GETTING STARTED:

Awareness Raising

- Utilize displays and bulletin boards featuring tips for breastfeeding post-natal and upon return to work, including importance of overall health and nutrition for nursing mothers
- Designate an accessible area to display pamphlets and materials available relating to breastfeeding principles, techniques and local support services
- Provide a list of videos available from the Health Unit and local library
- Include short articles in internal newsletters or paycheck inserts (check websites i.e. BCHU and local newspapers for relevant articles)

¹ Simcoe County Workplace Wellness Network – Policy – The Key to a Healthy Workplace – A guide to making your organization healthier

Skill Building

- Incorporate presentation/workshops based on employee interest through lunch and learn sessions discussing benefits of breastfeeding and post-natal health
- Provide educational funding/support for employee reimbursement/paid time off, allow Health & Safety/Wellness Committee to attend training courses related to establishing a breastfeeding friendly workplace

Creating a Supportive Environment

- Create a “mother’s room” or a private area which is clean, quiet and has enough space for a comfortable chair for breastfeeding or expressing of breast milk via pump. A washroom is not an appropriate environment in which to breastfeed a baby or to express/pump milk
- Offer flexible hours to allow for pumping and feeding
- Offer an appropriate place to store breast milk. A refrigerator is a safe place to store breast milk
- Provide ongoing employee education in order to create a positive work environment for women returning to work, and who would like to continue to breastfeed

Healthy Workplace Policy Suggestions

- Establish flexible scheduling policies for breastfeeding/pumping/feeding
- Create a breastfeeding supportive workplace policy

HELPFUL RESOURCES:

Through the Brant County Health Unit (753-4937 ext. 259)

- Variety of resources /literature related to breastfeeding

Community

- Brant Community Health Care System Breastfeeding Clinic (751-5559)
- La Leche League (757-1254)
- Breast pump rental – Dell Pharmacy, 260 St. Paul’s Ave. (752-0382)

Web-Based

- <http://www.bchu.org> (*Brant County Health Unit*)
- <http://www.bchsys.org/services/matbreastfeeding.html>
- <http://www.parenthelpline.ca>
- <http://www.canadianparents.com>
- <http://www.todayparent.com>



Healthy

Lifestyle Practices

BACKGROUND INFORMATION/RATIONALE FOR FOCUS:

The leading causes of death in Canada are heart disease (28%), cancer (27%), and cardiovascular disease (7.5%).¹ Heart disease is the number one reason that working adults are off the job, costing an estimated 4.5 billion dollars in lost productivity in the workforce of Ontario each year.²

While mounting scientific evidence indicates that eating vegetables and fruit can reduce the risk of diabetes, cancer, and cardiovascular disease, more than 60% of Brant County residents are not eating the recommended 5-10 servings of vegetables and fruit daily. Physical activity has been shown to reduce the risk of chronic disease and obesity. Yet, in a recent survey of Brant County residents, 59% indicated that they do not get as much physical activity as they need.³ Body Mass Index (BMI) of 27 or greater is associated with several health problems, particularly diabetes and heart disease. In Brant County/Haldimand-Norfolk, 33% of residents have a BMI of 27 or greater, which is significantly higher than the Ontario average of 28%.⁴

The workplace setting has the potential to enable employees to make healthy choices every day in an easy, effective and achievable manner. Two thirds of Canadians over the age of 15 are employed, and approximately 60% of waking hours are spent at work.⁵ Workplace environments promote important social relationships and support networks when thinking about behaviour change. Social norms within the work environment can support or deter healthy lifestyle choices, making employers key in promoting healthy, active living.

GOALS FOR THE WORKPLACE TO STRIVE FOR:

1. To increase the percentage of Brant County residents meeting the recommendations for daily intake as per *Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating*, including vegetables and fruit.
2. To assist Brant County residents to eat a healthy diet, maintain or attain a healthy weight, and engage in regular physical activity.
3. To promote healthy eating behaviours.

GETTING STARTED:

Awareness Raising

- Utilize bulletin boards and displays featuring resources related to healthy lifestyles and healthy eating

¹ Health Canada, 2000

² Ontario Ministry of Health and Long Term Care, 1999. Diabetes: Strategies for Prevention

³ Final Report: Brant County Diabetes Awareness Survey, Research and Evaluation Centre Georgian College, 2002

⁴ Community Health Status Report, 2001

⁵ National Quality Institute (1999) Canadian Healthy Workplace Criteria

- Dedicate an accessible area to display pamphlets and resources regarding healthy lifestyle issues, healthy eating and meal strategies
- Include short articles in an internal newsletter or staff-e-mails (check websites e.g. BCHU and local newspaper for relevant articles)

Skill Building

- Offer presentations/workshops based on employee interest through lunch and learn sessions discussing pertinent issues such as stress, shiftwork, healthy eating for busy lifestyles and food label reading
- Offer incentive programs by subsidizing gym certificates, healthy pot-lucks and fruit trays for staff meetings to encourage workers to participate, stay motivated and learn easy, healthy habits
- Provide continuing education for management and employees to encourage healthy eating habits
- Distribute self-screening tools to employees to help assess their eating habits and request feedback for interested topics/issues about making healthier choices

Creating a Supportive Environment

- Provide educational funding/reimbursement/paid time off and flexible work arrangements, allowing employees to attend workshops/courses
- Conduct an environmental scan of the workplace to determine how supportive the workplace is regarding healthy eating and physical activity

Healthy Workplace Policy Suggestions

- Develop healthy workplace policies suited to your particular workplace environment. (Please contact your Wellness Works Representative for more information)
- Create workplace policies promoting healthy lifestyles (healthy eating, physical activity, stress reduction)
- Establish work schedules that are compatible with healthy eating programming, and consider the demands and responsibilities of workers outside of the workplace
- Establish and continually modify/monitor healthy eating policy for available healthy food and beverage choices (i.e. vending machines, cafeterias)
- Incorporate healthy eating programming in your facility, suited to your worker's needs/interest

HELPFUL RESOURCES:

Through Brant County Health Unit (753-4937 ext.458)

- Factsheets and Pamphlets, Videos, Kits-to-Go Displays, Resource Manuals

General Nutrition

- Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating (tear-offs)
- Using Canada's Food Guide (booklet)
- Do you know your ABC's to Healthy Eating? (2003)

- Joy of Soy (2001)
- The Healthy Vegetarian Way
- Rate Your Food Habits (Quiz)
- Dietary Fibre
 - Dietary Fibre (pamphlet, heart and stroke)
 - High Five for Fibre (pamphlet)
 - Fibre Scoreboard

Dietary Fat

- Dietary Fat (pamphlet)
- Fat Scoreboard
- Bringing Fats Into Focus
- Matter of Fat

Vitamins/Minerals/Antioxidants

- “B” smart with your Food (2003)
- Calcium Counts (2003)
- Up the Antioxidants (2003)
- Iron for Women + Children
- Salt Facts

Healthy Weights

- Learning to Listen to your Body/A Few Little Changes Go A Long Way (2001)
- Body Image: Pursuit of the Perfect Body (2002)
- Healthy Images: A Positive Way to Look At Yourself (1993)
- 5 Tips for Healthy Eating
- Healthy Eating and Physical Activity: Energy Balance
- Put an End to Portion Distortion
- Winning the Game of Losing (1992)
- Make Your Move to Healthier Eating (1998)
- Trimming the Canadian Diet (1992)
- Why Drink Water?
- Healthy Habits Healthy Weights (booklet)
- The Heart-Smart Fitness Wheel
- How Healthy Is Your Weight? (Body Mass Index/Waist Circumference)
- Nutrition Matters: High Protein Diets (2002)
- Countdown: Hazards of Low Carb Diets (2000)
- Food Steps; series of 4 for both males and females

Shiftwork

- Surviving Shift Work (Wellness Works)
- Dining Out Again? You're Not Alone (2001)
- Hey ShiftWorkers! What's In Your Lunchbox (1994)
- ShiftWork Nutrition (1993)
- Caffeine (2000)
- Food Safety and Lunchbox Safety Tips (2003)
- Is There a Special Diet for ShiftWorkers? (2001)
- Too Stressed to Eat Well? (2002)
- Nutrition to Go! At Home (1996)
- Nutrition to Go! Away from Home (1996)

- Survival Time Series (2003):
 - It's Survival Time
 - The Survival Game
 - Survive and Thrive

Heart Health

- Living with Cholesterol
- Cholesterol Clues
- Heart Healthy Eating
 - Cholesterol
 - Triglycerides
 - Sample Menus

Diabetes

- Just the Basics – Healthy Eating for Diabetes Management and Prevention
- The Diabetes Food Guide to Healthy Eating
- The Prevalence and Costs of Diabetes
- Type 2 Diabetes... Things You Should Know
- A Healthy Eating Guide For People With Diabetes

Prenatal/Postnatal

- Thinking About Having A Baby? Healthy Babies Begin With Healthy Moms
- Food-Borne Illnesses During Pregnancy
- Food Safety During Pregnancy
- Vegetarianism and Pregnancy
- Vegetarian Food Guide for Pregnancy
- Healthy Eating for a Healthy Baby
- Pregnancy Discomforts
- For the Health of You and Your Baby

Other

- Healthy Eating for Physical Activity: Energy Balance
- Physical Activity Can Help Too!
- It Helps To Stay Active!
- The Organic Option
- Herbal Teas – Beverage or Medicine?
- Fish and Your Health
- All About Iron for Women and Children
- Nutrition Matters – Iron Works for Children Too
- Nutrition Matters – Iron for Babies and Children
- Nutrition Matters – Iron Works
- Nutrition Matters – All About Iron
- Nutrition Matters – Surviving the Fast Food Circuit
- Nutrition Matters – Best Buys in Meat & Alternatives
- Nutrition Matters – Best Buys in Milk Products
- Nutrition Matters – Best Buys in Vegetables & Fruit

- Nutrition Matters – Best Buys in Grain Products
- Veggie & Fruit Bingo
- Nutrition Matters – Food Allergies – What’s the Scoop?
- Peanut/Nut Allergy in Your School?
- Nutrition Matters – Nutritious Reading
- Vegetarian

Videos

- The Light Gourmet – T.V. Series on a variety of topics
- Shopping Heart Smart
- Still Killing Us Softly
- The Lean Life

Kits-To-Go Displays

- What’s for Supper Tonight? Display (3 panel, depicting balanced meal, Food Guide)
- Vegetable and Fruit Display (3 or 4 panels, interactive)
- Making Healthy Choices Display (3 panel)
- Healthy Eating Kit to Go! (Kit: handouts, food models, fast food facts, quizzes)
- This Lunch is A Winner! (Kit)
- Making Healthy Choices magnetic wipe boards; resource which enables individuals to track food intake and activity by the day and week. Based on the Canada’s Food Guide and Canada’s Physical Activity Guide to Healthy Living

Binders/Resources Manuals

- ShiftWork Like Clockwork: A Worksite Wellness Program to Optimize the Health of Ontario ShiftWorkers
- Healthy Eating Manual – (Healthy Eating, Dietary Fat, Fibre, Complex Carbohydrates, Healthy Weights, Eating Out)
- Healthy Eating Manual Supplement – Vegetables, Fruit, Vitamins, Minerals, Antioxidants
- Keeping the Balance: A guide to building a healthier workplace
- Healthy Eating is in Store for You! (understanding food labels; www.healthyeatinginstore.ca)
- Healthy Measures Toolkit (healthy eating, physical activity, body image; www.healthymeasures.ca)
- Healthy Eating for Healthy Aging – Manual and resources examining nutrition concerns of older people

Community Involvement

- Emergency Food Providers
- Community Kitchens
- After School Program
- Community Food Advisors
- Diabetes Awareness Partnership
- Healthy Living Coalition
- Women’s Heart Smart Task Force
- Cook’s Network

- Nutrition Health Professional's Network
- Building Blocks
- School Nutrition Initiatives

Community

- Health Information Line (753-4937 ext. 259)
- Speaker Request/Nutrition Presentations
- Grocery Store Tours – groups of 10 people
- National Nutrition Month in March
- Resource Library
- Safe Food Handler Training
- Eat Smart!
- MOTIVATE Towards a Healthier Life Series

Prenatal/Postnatal

- Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program – teens prenatal Self Learning Package

Web-Based

Healthy Eating

- www.dietitian.com (*Ask the Dietitian*)
- www.eatright.org (*American Dietetic Association*)
- www.bchu.org (*Brant County Health Unit*)
- www.cancer.ca (*Canadian Cancer Society*)
- www.canadian-health-network.ca (*Canadian Health Network*)
- www.diabetes.ca (*Canadian Diabetes Association*)
- www.dialadietitian.org/search (*Dial-A-Dietitian*)
- www.dietitians.ca (*Dietitians of Canada*)
- www.foodallergy.org (*Food Allergy Network*)
- www.hc-sc.ca (*Health Canada*)
- www.healthylivingbrant.com (*Healthy Living Coalition of Brant County*)
- www.hsf.on.ca (*Heart & Stroke Foundation of Ontario*)
- www.hhrc.net (*Heart Health Resource Centre*)
- www.mayoclinic.com (*Mayo Clinic*)
- www.nin.ca (*National Institute of Nutrition*)
- www.nutritionrc.ca (*Nutrition Resource Centre*)
- www.oznet.ksu.edu/dp_fnut/NUTLINK/N2.HTM (*Nutrition Links*)
- www.nutrition.gov (*Nutrition.Gov*)
- www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/nutrition.htm (*Nutrition and Physical Activity*)
- www.opha.on.ca (*Ontario Public Health Association*)
- www.osnpvh.on.ca (*Ontario Society of Nutrition Professionals in public Health*)
- www.peakperformance.on.ca/health (*Peak Performance*)
- www.heidismithnutrition.com (*Sport Nutrition*)
- www.navigator.tufts.edu (*Tufts Nutrition*)
- www.vrq.org (*Vegetarian Resource Group*)
- www.5to10aday.com (*5-10 a Day Campaign*)

Food Preparation

- www.allrecipes.com (*All Recipes*)
- www.BettyCrocker.com (*Betty Crocker*)
- www.canadaegg.ca (*Canadian Egg Marketing Agency*)
- www.communitykitchens.ca/resource.htm (*Community Kitchen Resources*)
- www.cookinglight.com/cooking (*Cooking Light*)
- www.healthunit.org/nutrition/consumer/cutcostcook.htm (*Cutting the Cost of Cooking*)
- www.dole5aday.com (*Dole 5 A Day*)
- www.familyfoodzone.com (*Family Food Zone*)
- www.freggietales.com (*Freggie Tales*)
- www.kinderstart.com/foodandnutrition/magazinesandezines.html (*KinderStart*)
- www.kitchenlink.com/search.htm (*The Kitchen Link*)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION/RATIONALE FOR FOCUS:

Healthy eating is very important for the health of our children. Parents play a significant role in influencing their children's eating habits. According to Breakfast for Learning, "Research shows there is a strong link between nutrition and learning. Children who do not get enough to eat are often more tired, have shorter attention spans and poorer problem-solving skills compared to classmates who eat nutritious meals".¹ The prevalence of childhood obesity in Canada increased approximately from two per cent in 1981, to between 10 and 15 per cent in 1996. Eating habits are worse than ever before. Parents can be role models for the important relationship between healthy eating and health, as it is key to supply infants, children and youth with energy and nutrients to play, learn, work, grow and develop.²

GOALS FOR THE WORKPLACE TO STRIVE FOR:

1. To provide a supportive and safe working environment to promote healthy lifestyles, including healthy eating and parenting.
2. To recognize and reduce potential health risks or health hazards within the work environment, which may adversely affect healthy eating and parenting.
3. To encourage active and supportive communications between employees and employers who are parents of infants, children or youth.

GETTING STARTED:

Awareness Raising

- Utilize bulletin boards and displays featuring resources related to healthy eating and parenting
- Dedicate an accessible area to display pamphlets and resources about healthy lifestyle issues, healthy eating and parenting
- Include short articles in internal newsletters or staff e-mails (check websites e.g. BCHU and local newspaper for relevant articles)

Skill Building

- Incorporate presentations/workshops based on employee interest through lunch and learn sessions discussing issues such as, introducing solid food, making baby food and healthy school snacks and lunches
- Provide educational funding/reimbursement/paid time off to employees to attend workshops/courses related to healthy eating
- Offer incentive programs to encourage workers to participate, stay motivated and learn easy, healthy habits (e.g. provide healthy pot-lucks)
- Provide healthy snacks, lunch ideas and fruit trays for meetings

¹ Canadian Living Foundation, News Canada 2003

² <http://www.breakfastforlearning.ca/english/who-we-are-al/index.html>. March 16, 2004

- Distribute self-screening tools to employees to help assess their family's eating habits and request feedback for interested topics/issues

Creating a Supportive Environment

- Offer flexible break times for employees to meet their children for lunch (e.g., at home or school) or to attend educational seminars/events
- Develop healthy workplace policies based on organizational and employee need that are best suited to your workplace environment
- Ongoing access to training for management and employees related to healthy eating habits
- Conduct an environmental scan of the workplace to determine how supportive the workplace is regarding healthy eating

Healthy Workplace Policy Suggestions

- Establish workplace policies (i.e., family-friendly, flex time/flexible working arrangements, communication, physical activity, stress)
- Establish supportive work schedules for employees
- Establish healthy eating workplace policy for healthy food and beverage choices (i.e., in vending machines, cafeterias)

HELPFUL RESOURCES:

Through the Brant County Health Unit (753-4937 ext. 458)

Factsheets and Pamphlets

Infant 0-12 months

- Nutrition Matters – Solid Foods for Your Baby
- Nutrition Matters – Introducing Solids to Baby's Diet
- Feeding Your Baby – From Birth to One Year
- Baby's First Foods – Parent Factsheet (*10-12 months*)
- Infant Formula Review
- Your Baby is Constipated?
- Recommended Books on Baby's and Toddlers

Toddler (12-24 months) and Preschool (3-5 years)

- Healthy Eating Tips for Tots
- How to Feed Your Growing Child (1-5 years old)
- Feeding Your Toddler (1-4 years old)
- Nutrition Matters – The Preschool Experience
- When Your Child is a Picker Eater (1+ years old)
- Nutrition Matters – The Picker Eater, Every Parents Concern
- Nutrition Matters – Strategies for your Picky Eater
- Feeding the Sick Child
- Nutrition Matters – Juice! How Much is Good for Your Child?
- Junior Juice – Your Guide to Fruit Juice and Your Baby

School Age (Children and Adolescents)

- Quick Tips for Packing Healthy Lunch
- Lunches to Grow On
- School Lunches that Make the Grade
- Nutrition Matters – Snack that Make the Grade
- Veggies and Fruits to Grow On
- Tips for Kids' Holiday Food Fun
- Vegetarianism in Children and Adolescents
- Healthy Active Children and Youth
- Teens: Are You Ready to Become a Vegetarian?

Other

- Physical Activity Can Help Too!
- It Helps to Stay Active!
- The Organic Option
- Herbal Teas – Beverage or Medicine?
- Fish and Your Health
- All About Iron for Women and Children
- Nutrition Matters – Iron Works for Children Too
- Nutrition Matters – Iron for Babies and Children
- Nutrition Matters – Iron Works
- Nutrition Matters – All About Iron
- Nutrition Matters – Surviving the Fast Food Circuit
- Nutrition Matters – Best Buys in Meat Alternatives
- Nutrition Matters – Best Buys in Milk Products
- Nutrition Matters – Best Buys in Grain Products
- Nutrition Matters – Best Buys in Vegetables and Fruit
- Veggie and Fruit Bingo
- Nutrition Matters – Food Allergies, What's the Scoop?
- Peanut/Nut Allergy in Your School?
- Nutrition Matters – Nutritious Reading
- Vegetarian

Services available at the Brant County Health Unit

- Health Information Line (753-4937 ext. 259)
- Speaker Request or Nutrition Presentation (753-4937 ext. 259)
- Grocery Store Tours (753-4937 ext. 259)

Community

- Emergency Food Providers
- Community Kitchens
- After School Program
- Community Food Advisors
- Diabetes Awareness Partnership
- Brant Diabetes Educators
- Healthy Living Coalition
- Health Information Line

- Speaker Request/Nutrition Presentations
- Grocery Store Tours
- National Nutrition Month in March
- Food Safety

Children/Youth

- Building Blocks Resource

Web-Based

Prenatal and Postnatal

- <http://www.excellence-earlychildhood.ca> (*Centre of Excellence for Early Childhood development*)
- <http://www.beststart.org> (*Best Start*)
- <http://www.motherisk.org> (*Motherisk*)
- <http://www.sogc.org> (*The Society of Obstetricians and Gynecologists of Canada*)

Infant 0-12 months, Toddler 12-24 months, and Preschool 3-5 years

- <http://www.caringforkids.cps.ca> (*Canadian Paediatric Society*)
- <http://www.healthunit.org/nutrition/schoolwork/daycare.htm> (*Day Care Nutrition*)

School Age (Children & Adolescents)

- <http://www.ophea.net> (*Curriculum & School-Based Health Resource Centre*)
- <http://www.nedic.ca> (*National Eating Disorder Information Centre*)
- <http://www.ophea.org> (*Ontario Physical & Health Education Association (OPHEA)*)
- <http://www.caringforkids.cps.ca> (*Canadian Paediatric Society*)
- <http://www.breakfastforlearning.ca> (*Breakfast for Learning, Canadian Living Foundation*)
- <http://www.bodyimagecoalition.org> (*Body Image Coalition of Peel*)
- <http://www.queensu.ca/sndc/bodyimage.htm> (*Body Image & Eating Disorders*)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION/RATIONALE FOR FOCUS:

Sixty-three percent of adults aged 18 and older are not active enough to achieve optimal health benefits¹. (Canadian Fitness and Lifestyles Research Institute, 1998). In a recent survey of Brant County residents, 59% indicated that they do not get as much physical activity as they need.²

Active Living is a key determinant of health and well-being and Active Living Policies make good business sense. Healthier employees result in:

- Lower health-care costs
- Lower turnover rates
- Reduced employee absenteeism
- Fewer medical claims
- Higher productivity
- Improved employee morale

With “Fifteen million Canadians spending one-half of their waking hours at work. It is vital, therefore to find ways of increasing physical activity at and around work”.³ “Good workplace practices including, access to physical activity in the workplace and cafeterias with healthy foods, are increasingly important to an organization’s success because they can help organizations access the best and brightest workforce.” (*Health Canada’s – Active Living at Work*)

GOALS FOR THE WORKPLACE TO STRIVE FOR:

1. To increase accessibility of physical activity options
2. To promote physical activity and increase awareness of Canada’s Physical Activity Guide to Healthy Active Living
3. To increase awareness of the relationship between physical activity and health outcomes

GETTING STARTED:

Awareness Raising

- Utilize bulletin boards and displays featuring resources related to healthy lifestyles and physical activity opportunities. Include information about local recreation centres, fitness facilities, community events etc.
- Dedicate an accessible area to display pamphlets and resources regarding healthy lifestyle issues, physical activity
- Include short articles in an internal newsletter or staff-e-mails (check websites e.g. BCHU and local newspaper for relevant articles)

¹ (Canadian Fitness and Lifestyles Research Institute, 1998). http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hppb/fitness/work/activity_e.html

² Final Report: Brant County Diabetes Awareness Survey, 2002

³ http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hppb/fitness/work/main_b_e.html

Skill Building

- Incorporate presentations/workshops/physical activity challenges based on employee interest through lunch and learn sessions
- Offer incentive programs by subsidizing gym memberships or providing onsite fitness classes and programs, to encourage workers to participate, stay motivated and learn easy, healthy habits

Creating a Supportive Environment

- Support flexible working hours to allow employees to take advantage of physical activity opportunities.
- Provide education, resources and support for employees
- Offer incentives and recognition to those employees who are physical activity
- Offer physical activity programs (Please contact your Wellness Works Representative for more information)
- Encourage walking clubs, workplace recreational leagues, etc. (Offer a variety of options for different ages and abilities)
- Provide a suggestion box so employees can submit topics of interest and feedback on activities

Healthy Workplace Policy Suggestions

- Develop healthy workplace policies suited to your particular workplace environment. (Please contact your Wellness Works Representative for more information)
- Develop flex time/flexible scheduling policies for physical activity opportunities
- Use employee expertise in physical activities, in order to share their knowledge and skills with others

HELPFUL RESOURCES:

Through the Brant County Health Unit (753-4937 ext. 457)

- Older Adult/Seniors Physical Activity display
- Walk This Way display
- Adult, Older Adult, Children & Youth Physical Activity Guides
- Physical Activity presentations
- Walking resources/pamphlets (Stick To It)
- Literature on physical activity
- “Canada Trek” program

Community

- Parks & Recreation
- Local fitness facilities
- Brantford Public Library
- Various community organizations

Web-Based

- www.bchu.org (*Brant County Health Unit*)
- www.hc-sc.gc.ca (*Health Canada*)
- www.activeontario.com
- www.cflri.ca
- www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hppb/paguide (*Health Canada*)
- www.acsm.org
- www.acfitness.org

BACKGROUND INFORMATION/RATIONALE FOR FOCUS:

In Ontario, one person is diagnosed with diabetes every 20 minutes. Diabetes is estimated to cost the Ontario health system just under one billion dollars annually. Of the two million Canadians that have diabetes, approximately one-third are unaware that they have the condition. 90% of all people with diabetes in Canada have adult-onset Type 2 diabetes.¹ Over time diabetes can result in serious health problems such as stroke, blindness, amputations and kidney damage. People with diabetes are at a greater risk of heart attacks and other conditions related to arteriosclerosis (hardening of the arteries).²

Heart disease (a complication of type 2 diabetes) is the number one reason working adults are off the job, costing an estimated 4.5 billion dollars in lost productivity in the workforce of Ontario each year.³

TAKING A LOOK AT BRANT COUNTY...

Mounting scientific evidence indicates that eating vegetables and fruit can reduce the risk of diabetes, cancer and cardiovascular disease.⁴ Despite this, more than 60% of Brant County residents are not eating the recommended 5 – 10 servings of vegetables and fruit daily. Physical activity has been shown to reduce the risk of chronic disease and obesity. In a recent survey of Brant County residents, 59% indicated they do not get as much physical activity as they need.⁵ Body Mass Index (BMI) of 27 or greater is associated with several health problems, particularly diabetes and heart disease. In Brant County/Haldimand-Norfolk, 33% of residents have a BMI of 27 or greater, which is significantly higher than the Ontario average of 28%.

Controlling high blood pressure, abnormal cholesterol, blood glucose (sugars) and lipid (fat) levels will help reduce the risk of type 2 diabetes, heart disease and other chronic diseases such as cancer and cardiovascular disease. Therefore, modifying the risk factors of diet and exercise, and maintaining a healthy body weight are key in the prevention of many chronic diseases.

GOALS FOR THE WORKPLACE TO STRIVE FOR:

1. To create a workplace environment which encourages employees to make healthier choices.
2. To reduce the number of unhealthy food choices offered during social functions, meetings, in vending machines and the cafeteria.
3. To increase the number of opportunities and to remove barriers for an employee to accumulate 60 minutes of physical activity every day.
4. To develop policies supporting healthy eating and physical activity.

¹ Health Canada, 2002

² Canadian Diabetes Association, 2002. Preventing Heart Disease, Diabetes Dialogue 49(2)

³ Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, 1999. Diabetes: Strategies for Prevention

⁴ Final Report: Brant County Diabetes Awareness Survey, Research and Evaluation Centre Georgian College, 2002

⁵ Community Health Status Report, 2001

GETTING STARTED:

Awareness Raising

- Utilize bulletin boards and displays featuring resources related to type 2 diabetes (ex. ACTIVATE Display Board and Posters)
- Dedicate an accessible area to display pamphlets and resources regarding type 2 diabetes (Ex. Motivate Booklets)
- Include short articles in an internal newsletter or staff-e-mails (check websites e.g. BCHU and local newspaper for relevant articles)

Skill Building

- Offer presentations/workshops related to signs/symptoms and risk factors for diabetes, as well as ways a person can reduce their risk of getting type 2 diabetes
- Offer physical activity challenges and healthy eating recipe contents (Contact your Wellness Works Representative for more information)

Creating a Supportive Environment

- Subsidized fitness membership, athletic gear or registration fees. (i.e.) Company X will subsidize each employee 50% up to \$100 of the cost of gym memberships, sporting registration fees or athletic shoes per calendar year
- Subsidized “healthy food options” in cafeteria, vending machines. (i.e.) Company X will subsidize healthy eating choices in the cafeteria. 50% of the items for sale in the vending machines will be a “healthy choice”, as outlined by Canada’s Food Guide

Healthy Workplace Policy Suggestions

- Create healthy eating policy for internal meetings, where food is offered. (i.e.. In all meetings held at Company X where food is provided, there will always be a healthy eating option, according to Canada’s Food Guide

HELPFUL RESOURCES:

Through the Brant County Health Unit (753-4937 ext. 460)

- Type 2 diabetes presentation - prevention and awareness presentation outlining signs/symptoms and risk factors for diabetes, as well as ways a person can reduce their risk of getting type 2 diabetes
- ACTIVATE Display Board – three panel display with signs/symptoms risk factors and prevention strategies for type 2 diabetes
- ACTIVATE Poster – poster with adhesive tear-off sheets with signs/symptoms and risk factors for type 2 diabetes. Can be posted anywhere
- MOTIVATE – type 2 diabetes information booklet with healthy recipes, physical activity tips, sign/symptoms and risk factors for type 2 diabetes
- *Keeping the Balance: A Guide for Creating Healthy Workplace Policy.* A step-by-step guide to help you plan, implement and evaluate

healthy workplace policy. You can work through this on your own or have a member of the Diabetes Awareness Partnership work with you

Community

- Canadian Diabetes Association (756-9131)
 - *Presentations and resources*
- Diabetes Education Clinic (751-5544 ext. 2245)
 - *Presentations and resources*
- VON (blood glucose testing) (759-7750)
- Brantford Public Library (756-2220)

Web-Based

- <http://www.diabetes.ca> (*Canadian Diabetes Association*)
- <http://www.healthcanada.ca/diabetes.ca> (*Health Canada*)
- <http://www.childrenwithdiabetes.ca> (*Children with Diabetes*)
- <http://www.bchu.org/diabetes> (*Diabetes Awareness Partnership*)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION/RATIONALE FOR FOCUS:

Good oral health makes an important and largely unrecognized contribution to a person's health, well-being and quality of life. Oral and dental diseases can have significant cost implications for workplaces in the following areas:

- Lower productivity in employees suffering from an acute dental condition
- Time lost from work
- Benefits

By accessing dental care on a regular basis, problems can be identified and treated early. Ignoring oral health problems can lead to needless pain and suffering, causing complications to an individual's well-being. These types of acute dental conditions contribute to a range of problems from employed adults, including restricted activity, reduced productivity and time off from work. When allowed to progress to this stage, dental diseases become more costly to the individual and the workplace.

Dental insurance is commonplace in most employee benefit packages. Providing this benefit is costly to workplaces. In 1996/97, insurance companies in Canada paid \$2.3 million in dental plan benefits. Previous dental plan utilization plays a role in determining future insurance premiums. It is, therefore of benefit for employers to promote preventative measures that can reduce the impact of common oral diseases such as tooth decay and periodontal disease.

By implementing an oral health component to your workplace wellness initiative, you will have the potential to reduce the financial impact of dental diseases in the workplace and lessen the benefit plan cost.

GOALS FOR THE WORKPLACE TO STRIVE FOR:

1. To increase employee awareness of good oral health.
2. To assist in developing the skills necessary to make positive oral health changes.
3. To emphasize the importance of regular dental visits.
4. To reduce the cost of oral diseases to the workplace.
5. To promote healthy eating behaviours.

GETTING STARTED:

Awareness Raising

- Utilize bulletin boards and displays featuring tips on maintaining oral health and preventing dental disease
- Dedicate an accessible area to display pamphlets and resources
- Include short articles in an internal newsletter or staff-e-mails (check websites e.g. BCHU and local newspaper for relevant articles)
- Hold events around campaigns that exist in the community – e.g. April is Dental Health Month

Skill Building

- Offer presentations/workshops based on employee interest through lunch and learn sessions discussing oral health topics
- Conduct events in conjunction with existing Oral Health community campaigns (e.g. April is Dental Health Month)

Creating A Supportive Environment

- Provide healthy food choices in your cafeteria, lunchroom and vending machines, as well as at workplace meetings and social functions
- Invite dental suppliers to set up displays of their products and sell them at reduced cost to employees e.g. electric toothbrushes

Healthy Workplace Policy Suggestion

- Offer a dental benefit plan that emphasizes preventative delivery. Their services will help reduce the onset of dental diseases, that may require more complex and costly treatments
- Allow employees to leave work for dental appointments. This will help eliminate some of the barriers of care

HELPFUL RESOURCES:

Through the Brant County Health Unit (753-4937 ext. 450)

- Dental display
- Literature and Information

Presentations

- Early Childhood Tooth Decay
- Pre & Post Natal Dental Care
- Oral Health Issues for Men and Women
- FAQs (*Frequently Asked Questions regarding Dental Health*)
- Diabetes & Oral Health

Community

- Brantford Public Library (752-6660)

Web-Based

- <http://www.cda-adc.ca> (*Canadian Dental Association*)
- <http://www.oda.on.ca> (*Ontario Dental Association*)
- <http://www.cdha.ca> (*Canadian Dental Hygienists Association*)
- <http://www.odha.ca> (*Ontario Dental Hygienists Association*)
- <http://www.dentalhealth.org.uk> (*British Dental Health Foundation*)
- <http://www.umanitoba.ca/outreach/wisdomtooth> (*The Wisdom Tooth*)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION/RATIONALE FOR FOCUS:

Of Canada's workers, 80% are current drinkers and 6.5% to 22% of these individuals admit to drinking at the workplace, or shortly before going to work (Prevention Source BC, 1999).¹ The cost of substance use problems to Ontario workplaces is estimated at \$1.6 billion per year in lost productivity (Shain, 1997).² Safety and performance are compromised when employees use alcohol and/or drugs on the job. Workplace alcohol and drug use have been linked with a long list of problems that include:

- Tardiness, absenteeism, increased sick days
- Needless risk taking, unsafe work practices
- Productivity/service problems
- Poor decision making
- Liability risks
- Workplace injuries
- Death
- Poor morale, frustration, stress, deteriorating work relationships and unhealthy work environment for coworkers
- Compensation claims, cost of replacing or repairing damaged property or equipment, theft and other crime, cost of replacing/retaining employees and poor public relations for managers

The implication of substance use is not limited to the workplace. Substance misuse can create stress and strain on family and the community at large.

GOALS FOR THE WORKPLACE TO STRIVE FOR:

1. To promote awareness of the risks associated with alcohol/drug use.
2. To provide a supportive and safe work environment by reducing/preventing potential harms associated with workplace alcohol/drug misuse.
3. To encourage active and supportive communication between employers and employees and assisting staff to access available supports when needed without compromising confidentiality.

GETTING STARTED:

Awareness Raising

- Utilize bulletin boards, displays and pay cheque inserts featuring resources related to substance abuse prevention (ie. Post Wellness Works flyer, fact and tip sheets, to reduce alcohol/drug related risks)
- Include short articles in an internal newsletter or staff-e-mails (check websites e.g. BCHU and local newspaper for relevant articles)

¹ Single, E. Substance Abuse and the Workplace in Canada. Report prepared for Health Canada. Ottawa: CCSA, 1998

² Ontario Health Promotion E-Bulletin #2331. November 9, 2001.

- Dedicate an accessible area to display pamphlets and resources regarding low risk drinking guidelines, addictions counselling, etc.
- Include Alcohol Policy in orientation process for new employees

Skill Building

- Offer presentations/workshops through lunch and learn sessions discussing issues of alcohol/drug related risk, low risk drinking guidelines, alcohol related liability, mocktails (non alcoholic drinks), Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD), party planning, etc.
- Provide continuing education for management and employees re: identifying potential workplace substance misuse

Creating a Supportive Environment

- Provide on going support for a workplace alcohol/drug policy (ie. Encourage staff to identify issues and respond to concerns and answer questions)
- Implement EAP program and openly encourage employees to utilize this confidential service. Offer flexible schedule to accommodate counselling appointments
- Offer incentive programs (i.e. self-help manuals, contests, rewards, etc) to encourage participation

Healthy Workplace Policy Suggestions

- Develop and implement a workplace alcohol/drug policy, involving all levels of staff
- Offer flex time/flexible scheduling policies for personal leave or to attend counselling

HELPFUL RESOURCES:

Through the Brant County Health Unit (753-4937 ext.467)

- Low Risk Drinking Guidelines Display
- Binge Drinking Display
- Party Planning Video
- Related literature, pamphlets, presentations, and videos

Community

- St. Leonard's Community Services, Addiction & Mental Health Services (754-0253)
- Alcohol Anonymous (752-5981)
- Narcotics Anonymous (759-2558)
- Al-Anon (752-5981)
- Alcohol and Drug Information Line (1-800-463-6273)
- Holmes House Withdrawal Management (1-888-999-4966)
- Fetal Alcohol Syndrome & Fetal Alcohol Effects Support Group (582-8744 or 428-1805)
- Moreland Substance Abuse Centre (1-905-521-7925)
- New Directions (Ohsweken) (445-2947 or 445-2051)
- Women for Sobriety (751-7212)

- Centre for Addictions and Mental Health Workplace Consultation (833-2396
Deleros Smith)
- *Addiction Services of Brant (754-0253)*

Web-Based

- <http://www.motherisk.org> (*Motherisk*)
- <http://www.beststart.org> (*Best Start*)
- <http://www.camh.net> (*Centre for Addiction and Mental Health*)
- <http://www.dart.on.ca> (*D.A.R.T.*)
- <http://www.canadian-health-network.ca> (*Canadian Health Network*)
- <http://www.apolnet.org> (*Apolnet*)
- <http://www.preventionsource.bc.ca> (*Prevention Source BC*)
- <http://www.ccsa.ca> (*Canadian Centre for Substance Abuse*)
- <http://www.health.org> (*National Clearinghouse on Alcohol and Drug Information*)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION/RATIONALE FOR FOCUS:

“Human sexuality is part of the total personality of an individual, beginning at birth and ending at death. It includes how a person feels about him/herself, how a person feels about being a man or a woman, and how one relates to members of the opposite or same sex. When we speak of “optimal sexual health”, we refer to a number of factors at the level of each individual: their self-awareness and comfort, their knowledge, values, beliefs, decision-making and practices as they relate to their sexual existence”.¹

The primary role of the Brant County Health Unit in promoting optimal sexual health is:

- To increase awareness and knowledge about healthy sexual relationships
- To increase access to contraception
- To reduce the number of unplanned pregnancies

GOALS FOR THE WORKPLACE TO STRIVE FOR:

1. To provide an environment that recognizes sexual health as an important component of each person’s well-being.
2. To ensure a workplace that is free of discrimination regardless of gender or sexual orientation.

GETTING STARTED:

Awareness Raising

- Utilize bulletin boards, displays and pay cheque inserts featuring resources (ie. Post Wellness Works flyer and fact and tip sheet)
- Include short articles in an internal newsletter or staff-e-mails (check websites e.g. BCHU and local newspaper for relevant articles)
- Dedicate an accessible area to display pamphlets, news articles, current legislation and information regarding local sexual health clinics and community groups/organizations

Skill Building

- Offer presentations/workshops to employees
- Provide ongoing training for managers and Joint Occupational Health & Safety (JOHS) committee members

Creating a Supportive Environment

- The employer/manager model and encourages *sex positive* attitudes
- The employer and employees foster a safe and tolerant workplace

¹ Sexual Health in Brant County, Community Health Status Report Brant County Health Unit, March 2000

Healthy Workplace Policy Suggestions

- Develop and implement an anti-harassment policy for the workplace
- Ensure that policies are followed and enforced
- Share the cost of health benefits e.g. prescriptions for contraception

HELPFUL RESOURCES:

Through the Brant County Health Unit (753-4937 ext. 471)

- Teaching kits and videos
 - Set up displays
 - Provides pamphlets
 - Presents workshops e.g. “Talking with your kids about sex” for parents
- In addition, the Brant County Health Unit provides confidential clinical services to individuals/couples. *These services include:*
 - Family planning information
 - Birth control methods
 - Emergency contraception
 - Pregnancy testing and options counselling
 - Testing and treatment for sexually transmitted infections
 - Individuals who have sexual health concerns should consult with their family physician. *For those without a family physician, these are other possible options:*
 - Aboriginal Health Centre (752-4340)
 - Nurse Practitioner (NP) clinic at The Early Years Centre (759-3833)
 - Pine Tree Native Friendship Centre (752-5132)
 - VON NP clinic at Slovak Village
 - Walk in clinics – see yellow pages

Community

- Your child’s school can help you to familiarize yourself with the sexual health lesson plans in the public or separate school curriculum. The local public library has listed recommended books regarding healthy sexuality for children, teens and adults

Web-Based

- <http://www.sexualityandu.ca> (*up to date information about everything from puberty to pregnancy*)
- <http://www.bchu.org> (*provides links to recommended web sites*)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION/RATIONALE FOR FOCUS:

“In Canada, women make up over 50% of the workforce, 91% of these women are in their prime childbearing years. Eight out of ten women will become pregnant during their working years. Most of these women continue to work during pregnancy and plan to return to work after their baby is born”.¹ Paternal factors also play a role in perinatal outcomes – biological concerns around fertility and sperm quality exist, and there is no limit to the ways in which a male can support his partners’ health and ultimate reproductive outcome.² Other reproductive health concerns also exist across the lifespan for both men and women. Reducing risk of illness, protecting sexual health, supporting people through physical and emotional life changes, and early detection of cancer of the reproductive organs (cervical, uterine, ovarian, prostate, and testicular) are major components of public health promotion.

GOALS FOR THE WORKPLACE TO STRIVE FOR:

1. To provide a supportive and safe working environment to promote healthy lifestyles including reproductive health, preconceptional health, and healthy pregnancies
2. To recognize and reduce potential health risks or health hazards within the work environment, which may adversely affect reproductive health
3. To encourage active and supportive communication between employees and employers who may be planning a pregnancy or who are pregnant, while maintaining confidentiality

GETTING STARTED:

Awareness Raising

- Utilize bulletin boards and displays featuring resources for healthy pregnancy, information about reproductive health (preconception), and ovarian/cervical/breast/prostate cancer
- Dedicate an accessible area to display pamphlets and resources regarding healthy lifestyle issues, cancer prevention/early detection, preconceptional health promotion, healthy pregnancy
- Provide employees with a list of videos available through the Health Unit and Local Library
- Include short articles in an internal newsletter or staff-e-mails (check websites e.g. BCHU and local newspaper for relevant articles)
- Post information for employees related to paternal and maternity leaves, benefits, etc.

¹ Best Start, 2001, p. 2

² OHPE Bulletin 254.1, April 2001

Skill Building

- Offer presentations/workshops based on employee interest through lunch and learn sessions discussing issues of preconception and prenatal health, sexual health, early cancer detection/prevention
- Provide employees with the opportunity to attend training courses/workshops related to reproductive health/healthy pregnancies

Creating a Supportive Environment

- Provide a quiet room/environment for pregnant mothers to rest during breaks
- Offer preferred parking spaces for pregnant employees
- Offer flexible work scheduling, allowing employees to attend prenatal appointments
- Have available free pagers on loan for expectant fathers
- Provide ongoing education for management and employees related to healthy pregnancies, and reproductive health

Healthy Workplace Policy Suggestions

- Develop flex time/flexible scheduling policies for employees to attend medical appointments
- Implement a smoke-free workplace policy
- Create a maternity/paternity Leave policy, including flexible options and financial top-ups
- Adhere to WHMIS/MDS policy, with regular in-services for employees on organizational safety guidelines

HELPFUL RESOURCES:

Through the Brant County Health Unit (753-4937 ext. 259)

- Preconception Display
- Preconception/Prenatal/Healthy Pregnancy/Lifestyle literature
- Preconception/Prenatal Health Presentations
- Prenatal Classes (Series I)
- Healthy Babies/Healthy Children program – pre/postnatal visits
- Displays, literature and presentations re: early cancer detection

Community

- Canadian Cancer Society
- Brantford Public Library (752-6660)
- Brant Community Health Care System (Brantford General Hospital) for Prenatal Series II

Web-Based

- <http://www.bchu.org> (*Brant County Health Unit*)
- <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca> (*Health Canada*)
- <http://www.canadian-health-network.ca>
- <http://www.ccohs.ca> (*Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety*)
- <http://www.canadabenefits.gc.ca> (*Maternity/Paternal Leave Benefits Information*)
- <http://www.motherisk.org> (*Information on reducing complications during pregnancy*)

– <http://www.beststart.org>

BACKGROUND INFORMATION/RATIONALE FOR FOCUS:

Breast cancer is the most commonly diagnosed female cancer and is the second leading cause of cancer death in women. In the next year, it is estimated that 8,000 Ontario women will be diagnosed with breast cancer and that 2,000 women will die from the disease. Early detection of breast cancer by regular screening has been shown to reduce deaths by 30%.¹ A comprehensive screening program, such as the Ontario Breast Screening Program (OBSP), provides mammography, a clinical breast examination and information about breast self-examination. Because increasing age is a known risk for breast cancer, OBSP targets women over 50 years of age. The goal of OBSP, supported by the Brant County Health Unit, is to screen 70% of the Ontario women age 50-69 who should undergo breast screening every two years.²

Unlike other cancers, cervical cancer is largely preventable. Regular Pap tests can prevent up to 90% of cervical cancer cases³. By regular screening, changes on the Pap test are found early - in the pre-cancer stage - and with proper treatment those changes will not develop into cancer. Women should continue having Pap tests at least every two years until age 70.

For both breast and cervical cancers, early detection can save lives!

GOALS FOR THE WORKPLACE TO STRIVE FOR:

1. To promote awareness of risks for breast and cervical cancer.
2. To educate employees about screening strategies to reduce incidence of breast and cervical cancer.

GETTING STARTED:

Awareness Raising

- Utilize bulletin boards and displays featuring information about cancer risks and breast and cervical screening
- Dedicate an accessible area to display pamphlets, resources or videos
- Include short articles in an internal newsletter or staff-e-mails (check websites e.g. BCHU and local newspaper for relevant articles)

Skill Building

- Offer presentations/workshops through lunch and learn sessions for management and employees on reducing known and possible cancer risks and following current screening guidelines
- Provide support for screening programs from key workplace leaders

¹ Ontario Breast Screening Program, Background, October 2, 2003

² Central West Breast Screening Education Campaign, A collaborative process: Implications for Practice, April 2003

³ Ontario Cervical Screening Program, *Pap Presentation*, April 2003

Creating a Supportive Environment

- Flexible work hours to accommodate medical appointments
- Cafeteria or vending machines stocked with healthy food choices
- Space for exercise group at lunch or start a walking group
- Smoking cessation programs – Educate employees about risk factors.

Healthy Workplace Policy Suggestions

- Smoke-free workplace policy
- WHMIS/MDS policies (to reduce environmental hazards exposure)

HELPFUL RESOURCES:

Through the Brant County Health Unit (753-4937 ext.459)

- Posters promoting screening from OBSP
- Pamphlets and bookmarks promoting breast and/or cervical screening
- Display about breast and cervical cancer risks and screening guidelines
- Presentations to groups by Public Health Nurses

Community

- Family Physician – women should discuss their personal risk factors
- Ontario Breast Screening Program, Hamilton Centre (1-905-389-0101)
- Canadian Cancer Society, Brant-Norfolk Unit (753-2566)
- Breast Cancer Support Group meets monthly at Red Cross (753-4189)
- Women's Cancer Support Group, Brant Community Cancer Clinic (751-5585)
- Brantford Public Library (756-2220)

Web-Based

- <http://www.cancercare.on.ca> (*Cancer Care Ontario*)
- <http://www.cancercare.on.ca/obsp/> (*Ontario Breast Screening Program*)
- <http://www.cancercare.on.ca/cervical/home.html> (*Ontario Cervical Screening Program*)
- <http://www.cancer.ca> (*Canadian Cancer Society*)
- <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca> (*Health Canada*)
- <http://www.stopcancer.org> (*Breast Cancer Prevention Coalition*)



Health & Safety

BACKGROUND INFORMATION/RATIONALE FOR FOCUS:

Cigarette smoking is the number one cause of preventable illness and death in Canada. According to the Canadian Tobacco Use Monitoring survey (2001).¹ 22% of Canadians and 20% of Ontarians aged 15 and older were current (daily or occasional) smokers. The proportion of daily smokers was statistically significantly higher in Brant-Haldimand Norfolk (25%) than Ontario (21%) in 1996.² Among adults aged 25 and older who were still current smokers in 2001, a slight majority (54%) were either contemplating quitting within the next six months (38%) or preparing to quit in the very near future (16%).³

Second-hand smoke contains more hazardous substances than inhaled smoke and contains 2.7 times as much nicotine, 70% times more tar and 2.5 times greater carbon monoxide levels. There is no known safe level of exposure to second hand smoke.⁴ Second-hand smoke is one of Canada's major public health hazards.⁵

An eight-hour day of exposure to second-hand smoke is the same as smoking at least two to three cigarettes.⁶ Only 10% of Canadian workers report a workplace where there are no restrictions on smoking. A strong majority of Canadian workers (82%) report being protected from second-hand smoke at work, either by a complete ban (61%) or by having designated areas for smoking (21%). A smoke-free workplace helps to significantly reduce smoking and help people successfully quit smoking by removing triggers for people who may be tempted to smoke.

Employers who protect the health and safety of their employees project a positive image in the community. Workplaces that restrict smoking and help employees change their smoking behaviours also receive a financial benefit. The costs associated with employee smoking are significant. According to the Conference Board of Canada (1997), conservative estimates show annual costs per smoking employee can be up to \$2,565 per year. Studies also show that smoke-free policies reduce the costs for cleaning and fire insurance, and there is less damage to equipment and furniture.⁷

GOALS FOR THE WORKPLACE TO STRIVE FOR:

- To provide a safe work environment by eliminating exposure to second-hand smoke through a smoke-free workplace policy.
- To provide a supportive environment that encourages employees to quit smoking.

¹ Canadian Tobacco Use Monitoring Survey (CTUMS), 2001 Health Canada

² Brant Haldimand-Norfolk Community Health Status Report, 2001

³ Canadian Tobacco Use Monitoring Survey (CTUMS), 2002 Health Canada

⁴ U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare. Smoking and Health: A Report of the Surgeon General. Rockville, Maryland: U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Public Health Service, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health, Office on Smoking and Health, 1979.

⁵ Heart and Stroke Foundation. *Environmental Tobacco Smoke: Behind the Smoke Screen* (Fact Sheet). Cat. 34099512.

⁶ Council for a Tobacco-Free Waterloo Region (1996) & Saskatchewan Health/Ottawa Carelton Health Region (1996). *Second Hand Smoke Affects Children*.

⁷ Towards A Healthier Workplace: A Guidebook on Tobacco Control Policies, 2003

GETTING STARTED:

Awareness Raising

- Utilize bulletin boards and displays featuring tips and resources on quitting smoking
- Dedicate an accessible area to display pamphlets and resources regarding quitting smoking, second-hand smoke, benefits of quitting
- Promote National Non-Smoking Week (3rd week in January) and World No Tobacco Day (May 31st) as an opportunity to encourage employees to quit
- Promote company's health benefit plan to employees (i.e. coverage of smoking cessation medications)
- Raise awareness and comply with current legislation (i.e. Smoking in the Workplace Act and the Brantford Clean Air Bylaw)

Skill Building

- Offer presentations/workshops based on employee interest through lunch and learn sessions discussing smoking cessation
- Encourage employees to participate in provincial *Quit Smoking Contest* or organize your own internal quit smoking contest

Creating a Supportive Environment

- Provide incentives, support and/or resources to employees who want to quit smoking
- Offer a workplace quit smoking support program

Healthy Workplace Policy Suggestions

- Implement a smoke-free workplace policy

HELPFUL RESOURCES:

Through the Brant County Health Unit (753-4937 ext. 456)

- Towards a Healthier Workplace: A Guide on Tobacco Control Policies
- Quitting Smoking Display
- Second Hand Smoke Display
- Brantford Clean Air Bylaw Display
- Smoking Cessation Workplace Presentation
- A variety of resources and pamphlets on quitting smoking, second hand smoke, Brantford Clean Air Bylaw

Community

- Smokers Helpline (1-877-513-5333)
- St. Leonard Society of Brant – Addiction Divisions (Free 4 week program led by a professional counsellor) (754-0253)
- Brant County Health Unit Health Information Line (753-4937 ext. 259)
- Dell Pharmacy Smoking Cessation Assistance (756-6363)

Web-Based

- www.bchu.org (*Brant County Health Unit*)
- www.ccohs.ca (*Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety – CCOHS*)
- www.gov.on.ca (*A Guide to Smoking in the Workplace Act*)
- www.health.gov.sk.ca (*Saskatchewan Health - Smoke-Free Policy at Work*)
- www.hc-sc.gc.ca (*Health Canada*)
- www.on.lung.ca (*The Lung Association*)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION/RATIONALE FOR FOCUS:

Travelling by motor vehicles is an integral aspect of life in Brantford and the County of Brant. Unfortunately, we are reminded all too often that motor vehicle collisions (MVC) do occur. These collisions can have a significant impact on employees and the employer. According to the Ontario Road Safety Annual Reports for 1996-2000 inclusive, there was between 1568-1858 MVCs annually on Brantford roadways.¹ MVC result in 400-500 seriously injured persons and a number of fatalities per year.²

GOALS FOR THE WORKPLACE TO STRIVE FOR:

1. To provide a supportive and safe working environment to reduce the number of motor vehicle accidents and employee related injuries.
2. To recognize and reduce potential health risks or health hazards within the work environment in relation to motor vehicles.
3. To encourage active and supportive educational opportunities and ongoing safety assessments of motor vehicle use, knowledge and learning needs.

GETTING STARTED:

Awareness Raising

- Utilize bulletin boards and displays featuring resources related to motor vehicle safety and accident prevention
- Dedicate an accessible area to display pamphlets and resources regarding operating motor vehicles safely, license requirements, legislation and accident prevention
- Include short articles in an internal newsletter or staff-e-mails (check websites e.g. BCHU and local newspaper for relevant articles)

Skill Building

- Incorporate presentations/workshops discussing issues of motor vehicle safety and driver/passenger responsibilities, based on employee interest and identified needs, through lunch and learn sessions or training workshops
- Provide employees reimbursement/paid time off, allowing employees/Wellness Committee/Health & Safety Committee members to attend training courses related to motor vehicle safety/injury prevention

¹ Forbes, G. (2003) Intus Road Safety Engineering Inc.

² Brantford Transportation Safety Committee

Creating a Supportive Environment

- Provide on-going education for management and employees related to motor vehicle safety
- Reinforce motor vehicle safety as a primary focus within the work environment
- Maintain up to date environmental checks and develop reporting system for employees to report concerns

Healthy Workplace Policy Suggestions

- Follow Health & Safety Legislative Policy (mandatory)
- Ensure that WHIMIS/MDS policies are in place, with regular servicing for affected employees and those dealing with motor vehicles on a regular basis
- Allow flex-time/flexible scheduling policies for personal leave to attend personal car service appointments
- Develop further healthy workplace policies based on available information as necessary

HELPFUL RESOURCES:

Through the Brant County Health Unit (753-49837 ext. 259)

- Car Seat Display
- Car Seat Clinics (753-4937 ext. 259 to arrange an appointment)
- Several pamphlets/flyers/brochures/videos on car seat safety and child safety

Community

- Brantford Police Services (756-7050)
- Brant County OPP (753-4161)
- Grand Erie District School Board – Bus Safety (751-7532)
- City of Brantford Transportation Services (759-4150)
- Active and Safe Routes to School
- CN Rail (1-888-888-5909)
- Various videos at local libraries

Web-Based

- <http://www.city.brantford.on.ca> (City of Brantford)
- <http://www.smartrisk.ca> (Smartrisk)
- <http://www.safekidscanada.ca> (Safe Kids Canada)
- http://www.tc.gc.ca/roadsafety/childsafecindex_e.htm (Transport Canada)
- <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/english> (Health Canada)
- <http://www.bchu.org> (Brant County Health Unit)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION/RATIONALE FOR FOCUS:

Most parents are not aware that the majority of deaths and serious injuries to children caused by motor vehicle crashes can be prevented with the correct use of child restraint systems.¹ According to Transport Canada (1999), a correctly used car seat will reduce the likelihood of a child being injured or killed in a collision by 70 and 90 percent respectively. Also, results from the 2000 Ontario Road Safety Annual Report show injuries and deaths to be higher among children age 5-9 years old than for those age four and under, highlighting the benefits from regular use of booster seats.

Unfortunately, in Brant County, as in the rest of Ontario, the majority of child restraints (over 80%) continue to be used incorrectly!² Often these errors are serious and put young children at great risk should a crash occur.

Car seats must be precisely installed according to manufacturer's instructions. This not only provides the child with the safest ride possible, but also meets requirements of the law. Child restraint violations are subject to a fine of \$130.00 and the loss of two demerit points.

GOALS FOR THE WORKPLACE TO STRIVE FOR:

1. To provide a supportive and educational environment to promote child safety including car seat safety.
2. To encourage active and supportive learning opportunities within the workplace in relation to motor vehicle safety, including child restraints and car seats.

GETTING STARTED:

Awareness Raising

- Utilize bulletin boards and displays featuring tips for proper installment and maintenance of child safety seats
- Dedicate an accessible area to display pamphlets and resources regarding child safety promotion, car seat education and recall information
- Videos – list of videos available from the Health Unit and local library
- Short Articles – included in internal newsletter and/or intranet site Include short articles in an internal newsletter or staff-e-mails (check websites e.g. BCHU and local newspaper for relevant articles)
- Promote awareness of current car seat legislation (i.e. fines and penalties)

¹ Infant and Toddler Association

² Brant County Health Unit Car Seat Check, 2003

Skill Building

- Offer presentations/workshops based on employee interest through lunch and learn sessions discussing issues of child safety, car seat safety, and injury prevention

Creating a Supportive Environment

- Provide car seat checks for employees at work from a knowledgeable individual
- Offer flexible break time / working hours for employees to attend local car seat clinics

Healthy Workplace Policy Suggestions

- Develop and implement a Child Safety/Injury Prevention Policy
- Develop and implement a Car Seat/Child Restraint Policy (if applicable)

HELPFUL RESOURCES:

Through the Brant County Health Unit (753-4937 ext. 259)

- Car Seat Displays
- Car Seat Clinics (753-4937 ext. 259 to arrange an appointment)
- Presentation by BCHU staff upon request

Brochures/Flyers

- Done Up Right!
- Shopping for Baby's First Car Seat
- Infant Car Seats, Convertible Car Seats
- Booster Seats
- Keep Kids Safe: Car Time 1-2-3-4
- What You Should Know About Air Bags
- When Buying a Second Hand Car Seat
- Auto Garage Tether Installation Centres
- Vehicle and Car Seat Manufacturer Contacts
- Ten Reasons to Never Leave Your Child Alone in a Car

Community

- Brantford Police Services (756-7050)
- Brant OPP (753-4161)

Web-Based

- <http://www.safekidscanada.ca> (Safe Kids Canada)
- <http://www.tc.gc.ca> (Transport Canada)
- <http://www.sickkids.on.ca> (Hospital for Sick Kids)
- <http://www.bchu.org> (Brant County Health Unit)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION/RATIONALE FOR FOCUS:

The majority of outdoor workers (62%) spend more than two hours per day, on average, working in the sun.¹ The risks associated with excessive ultraviolet radiation (UVR) from the sun include skin cancer, eye damage, weakening of the immune system and premature aging of the skin.² Skin cancer, the most common form of all cancers in Canada, is easily preventable. Despite this, fewer than half of outdoor workers in Ontario report engaging in most of the recommended sun avoidance and protective behaviours.³ Young males are heavily represented among outdoor workers and may present special challenges when promoting sun safety in the workplace.

Few outdoor workers identify their employers as sources of information about sun safety.³ Worksite interventions, including safety policies and exposure guidelines should be developed and incorporated into existing occupational health and safety programs. The Ontario Ministry of Labour provides guidelines in the document "Ultraviolet Radiation in the Workplace".

GOALS FOR THE WORKPLACE TO STRIVE FOR:

1. To promote awareness of the health risks associated with excessive UVR exposure.
2. To provide education about sun avoidance and protective practices to reduce these risks.
3. To create a supportive environment that enables employees to practise sun protective behaviours.

GETTING STARTED:

Awareness Raising

- Utilize bulletin boards and displays featuring sun safety in high traffic areas, at wellness events, or during health and safety training sessions
- Dedicate an accessible area to display pamphlets and resources
- Include short articles in an internal newsletter, staff-e-mails or pay cheque inserts (check websites e.g. BCHU and local newspaper for relevant articles)
- Post Ministry of Labour workplace guidelines (i.e. "Ultraviolet Radiation in the Workplace")

Skill Building

- Provide continuing education for management and employees about implementing and enforcing sun safety guidelines, including risks, workplace policies and worker responsibility

¹ Ontario Sun Safety Working Group. *Sun Exposure and Protective Behaviours: Ontario Report 1998*. Toronto:

² Canadian Cancer Society (Ontario Division), 1998.

³ Toronto Public Health. *Sun Safety When Employees Work Outdoors: A Health and Safety Manual 1999*

- Provide orientation to new workers and seasonal employees regarding sun safety policies/guidelines
- Distribute risk assessment surveys to outdoor workers to determine: level of exposure, use of avoidance and protective behaviours, and need for education and support

Creating a Supportive Environment

- Organize work routines around the peak UV period (11:00 am – 4:00 pm), to limit employee exposure
- Rotate workers and their shifts to reduce each worker's total UV exposure
- Move jobs indoors, into shaded areas or create shade (i.e. tents, umbrellas, and canopies) in order to limit exposure
- Provide personal protective equipment such as hats, clothing, sunglasses, sunscreen, etc.

Healthy Workplace Policy Suggestions

- Implement a written sun safety policy, which clearly states the workplace's expectations, regulations, and actions to address health and safety issues related to sun exposure (Base the policy on the Ministry of Labour's guidelines "Ultraviolet Radiation in the Workplace")
- Outline training and education requirements

HELPFUL RESOURCES:

Through the Brant County Health Unit (753-4937 ext. 459)

- Displays – "Fake Bake. Think Twice." (Artificial Tanning Risks)
"Sunsense". (Sun Safety for Families)
- Bookmark – "Safety under the Sun"
- Manual – "Sun Safety When Employees Work Outdoors"
- Pamphlets and Fact Sheets (also available at the Canadian Cancer Society)

Community

- Canadian Cancer Society, Brant-Norfolk Unit, (pamphlets and videos) (753-2566)

Web-Based

- <http://www.cancer.ca> (Canadian Cancer Society)
- <http://www.ccohs.ca> (Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety)
- <http://www.dermatology.ca> (Canadian Dermatology Association)
- <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca> (Health Canada)
- <http://www.sunsmart.com.au> (The Cancer Council Victoria)
- <http://www.msc.ec.gc.ca/uv.html> (Environment Canada UV Index)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION/RATIONALE FOR FOCUS:

Different occupations pose different risks of infection for the workers. For example, workers that handle raw meat are at risk for acquiring infection from E.coli or Campylobacter. Health care workers are at risk from a number of infectious agents, blood borne such as HIV and Hepatitis B virus (HBV), as well as others such as Tuberculosis (TB), influenza and SARS to name a few. Workers in other occupations may have infection risks as well such as animal hyde workers or wool handlers are at risk for Q fever. Each workplace has potential risks of infection and must take the necessary steps to prevent them.

GOALS FOR THE WORKPLACE TO STRIVE FOR:

1. Identify potential infection risks associated with employment and the workplace setting.
2. Encourage employee feedback regarding safety issues and concerns.
3. Use vaccines, education, protective equipment and available resources to reduce the risk of exposure to infectious diseases.

GETTING STARTED:

Awareness Raising

- Utilize bulletin boards and displays featuring information related to infection control, such as promoting the flu shot, proper handling of waste and sharp objects, etc
- Dedicate an accessible area to display pamphlets, literature and resources (i.e. employee lounge)
- Allow employees the opportunity to view infection control videos and pamphlets on communicable diseases (available at the Brant County Health Unit)

Skill Building

- Offer presentations/workshops, allowing employees to discuss related infection control issues and topics.
- Utilize *Infection Control Guidelines'* document (Health Canada) as part of employee training
- Provide appropriate training for OHS team members regarding infection control

Creating a Supportive Environment

- Provide sick days so that employees will not work when ill and potentially infectious to others
- Encourage employees to get the flu shot; hold clinic at workplace; post information
- Provide adequate facilities for hand-washing or showering if required
- Provide necessary protective equipment i.e. gloves, goggles, masks, etc
- Ensure proper cleaning of washroom facilities
- Ensure proper air exchange

- Involve employees in planning and decision making about prevention of infections

Healthy Workplace Policy Suggestions

- Hand-washing policy
- Health and Safety Legislative policy (Mandatory)
- Exposure to Dangerous/Infectious Materials Policy

HELPFUL RESOURCES:

Through the Brant County Health Unit (753-49367 ext. 259)

- Healthy Workplaces: A Manual for Infection Control (A resource manual for workplaces, please contact a Wellness Works representative for a free copy)
- Childhood Infections – A Guide for Caregivers
- Cryptosporidiosis
- Current Infection Control Guidelines
- E.Coli
- Germs Make Me Sick (Book & Audio kit for children)
- Giardiasis
- Hand, Foot & Mouth Disease
- Handwashing
- Handwashing Effectiveness Demonstration Kit
- Have you Washed Your Hands? Sign
- Hepatitis A
- Infection Risk for Residents of Long-Term Care Facilities
- Legionellosis
- Lyme Disease in Ontario
- M.R.S.A. – Methicillian Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (fact sheets & info)
- Norwalk Virus
- Overhead presentation
- Pinworm Disease
- Psittacosis – A Disease People Get from Birds
- Puppet & Book – William Won't You Wash Your Hands
- Rabies – Protect Your Pets Now
- Roundworms, Pets and your Child's Health
- Scabies
- Shiegllosis
- Toys in the Waiting Room
- Vancomycin Resistant Enterococci (V.R.E.)

Community Based Resources

- Brantford Public Library (752-6660)

Web-Based

- <http://www.bchu.org> (Brant County Health Unit)
- <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca> (Health Canada)
- <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hpb/lcdc> (Infection Control Guidelines)
- <http://www.chica.org> (Community & Hospital Infection Control Association Canada)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION/RATIONALE FOR FOCUS:

Health promotion and illness prevention practices are vital to the health of employees within a workplace. Obtaining regular and up to date vaccinations on a regular basis can improve and protect employees from many communicable disease and related complications. Certain sectors of the workforce may be at greater risk of exposure and development of these illness and their related symptoms. Influenza (flu) may result in serious complications and significant workplace absences. Vaccination for flu has been shown to be effective in reducing sick leave from work by 40%.¹ The flu vaccine is required annually. Other immunizations available are those for pneumococcal pneumonia, measles, polio, rubella, mumps, hepatitis A, tetanus, diphtheria and hepatitis B. Prevention and education about communicable disease and available prevention against illness development can contribute to a decrease in absenteeism due to illness as well as a healthier workplace environment.²

GOALS FOR THE WORKPLACE TO STRIVE FOR:

1. To increase employee awareness of the benefits (and risks) of immunization against certain communicable diseases.
2. To decrease the number of sick day absences (related to communicable diseases, e.g. influenza) during susceptible periods of exposure.
3. Decrease transmission of disease to family members and close contacts. (co-workers)

GETTING STARTED:

Awareness Raising

- Utilize bulletin boards and displays featuring information and tips for immunization, and contraindications for receiving vaccines
- Dedicate an accessible area to display pamphlets and resources relating to adult and child vaccination, local clinics and services available by local Health Unit or physician's office
- Include short articles in an internal newsletter or staff-e-mails (check websites e.g. BCHU and local newspaper for relevant articles)

Skill Building

- Offer presentations/workshops based on employee interest through lunch and learn sessions discussing issues surrounding benefits and risks of immunizations and illness prevention

¹ Nichol et al. the Effectiveness of Vaccination against Influenza in Healthy Working Adults. New England Journal of Medicine, 1995; 333:889-93

² Region of Ottawa – Carleton. 1997 Policy – The Key to a Healthy Workplace. A Guide to Making your Organization Healthier

- Provide training for those employees, Occupational Health & Safety nurses, who may be able to administer vaccine for a particular illness within the work environment. Include such topics as obtaining informed consent for vaccinations

Creating a Supportive Environment

- Offer, if possible, at work vaccination clinics during lunch hour or at break times to increase employee compliance with vaccination/immunization program
- Provide financial assistance to cover cost of travel counselling and cost of vaccine for employees traveling for work purposes
- Include in benefit package full or partial coverage for certain vaccinations, not covered by OHIP, that are a great cost to employees
- Maintain good hygiene policies, such as hand washing and standard precautions, which may deter and stop the spread of communicable disease within the workplace
- Provide ongoing education about risk factors for specific vaccinations and the benefits of being immunized against certain communicable diseases
- Offer flexible break time/hours for employees to attend local immunization clinics or to attend appointment at their physicians' office for vaccinations

Healthy Workplace Policy Suggestions

- Develop and implement a Travel Health Policy
- Develop and implement workplace Hygiene Policies
- Decide whether a corporate policy should exist relating to employee compliance with vaccination protocol

HELPFUL RESOURCES:

Through the Brant County Health Unit (753-4937 ext. 259)

- Monthly Immunization Clinics (*by appointment only ext. 449*)
- Travel Health Clinics, Counselling & Immunizations (*by appointment only ext 453*)

Community

Web-Based

- <https://www.bchu.org> (*Brant County Health Unit*)
- <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/pphb-dgspssp/dird-dimr/index.html> (*Health Canada*)
- <http://www.caringforkids.cps.ca/immunization/index.htm> (*Caring For Kids*)
- <http://www.fightflu.com/> (*Ministry of Health*)
- <http://www.influenza.cpha.ca/> (*Canadian Public Health Association*)
- <http://www.cdc.gov/nip/vacsafe/> (*Centre For Disease Control*)
- <http://www.vaccinesafety.edu/> (*John Hopkins University*)
- <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/english/> (*Health Canada*)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION/RATIONALE FOR FOCUS:

Hepatitis B is a serious liver disease caused by the Hepatitis B virus (HBV). The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that “more than 2 billion persons (including 350 million who are chronically infected) have been infected with HBV. Each year about a million persons die as a result of HBV infections and over 4 million new acute clinical cases occur.¹ The HBV virus is “about 100 times more infectious and 200 times more common than HIV, the virus that causes AIDS” (Huston, P. Perception of risk, Canadian Medical Association Journal 1993; 149 (10): 1367).

Hepatitis C is an infectious virus that is carried in the blood and affects the liver. Although only first identified in 1989, the hepatitis C virus (HCV) previously known as non A, non B Hepatitis has been around for a long time.² Unfortunately, 70% of the people infected don't know it. Worldwide, it is estimated that 150 million people (3%) have Hepatitis C.³

GOALS FOR THE WORKPLACE TO STRIVE FOR:

1. To encourage and provide Hepatitis B vaccine to individuals at risk of body fluid exposure within the work environment.
2. To educate individuals about Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C including routes of transmission and available treatments.
3. To promote the use of universal precautions and good hygiene within the workplace.
4. To maintain confidentiality and support to those employees and their families who may be affected by Hepatitis B/C or related illnesses.

GETTING STARTED:

Awareness Raising

- Utilize bulletin boards and displays featuring resources related Hepatitis B/C exposure testing and prevention
- Dedicate an accessible area to display pamphlets and resources regarding Hepatitis B/C
- Include short articles in an internal newsletter or staff-e-mails (check websites e.g. BCHU and local newspaper for relevant articles)

¹ Chin, James (editor). Control of Communicable Diseases Manual. 17th edition. American Public Health Association. 2000. p. 245.

² Canadian Liver Foundation National Hepatitis C Education Program. Hepatitis C Medical Information Update. October 1999.

³ Interview with Robert Fingernote, MD (no author listed) Parkhurst Exchange, Feb 2003, p. 123

Skill Building

- Offer presentations/workshops based on employee interest through lunch and learn sessions discussing issues surrounding prevention of Hepatitis B/C and education sessions about the treatment of the diseases
- Offer Health Fairs to employees to promote Hepatitis B/C vaccination

Creating a Supportive Environment

- Ensure adequate hand-washing stations; post hand-washing stations
- Reduce possible exposure to body fluids by providing protective equipment including gloves, gowns, and sharp containers as needed
- Provide Hepatitis B vaccines to staff at risk of body fluid exposures or who have more than one sex partner
- Ongoing education for management and staff regarding routine precautions

Healthy Workplace Policy Suggestions

- Development of policies and procedures promoting routine precautions and post exposure follow-up
- Decide whether a corporate policy should exist relating to employee compliance with vaccination to Hepatitis B

HELPFUL RESOURCES:

Through the Brant County Health Unit (753-4937 ext.492)

Pamphlets

- Hep B: you are better off knowing
- Hep B is about 100 times more infectious
- 200 times more common than HIV
- Immunization: Your Best Protection
- Hep C: You are better off knowing
- Hep C: Get the Facts
- Hep C: The Silent Epidemic
- Hep C: Inside the Walls

Books

- Living with Hepatitis C: A Survivor's Guide
- Your Personal Health Series: Hepatitis C
- Hepatitis C: Practical
- Medical and Spiritual Guidelines for Daily Living with HCV

Videos

- Hepatitis C: The Silent Scourge
- Clean Points: Tips on Hepatitis C
- Hepatitis C: Living the Rest of Your Life
- Taking Charge of Hepatitis C with Rebetron
- Hepatitis C: The Silent Epidemic

Community

- Brantford Public Library (756-2220)
- Hepatitis C Support Group - Aboriginal Health Centre (752-5132)

Web-Based

- <http://www.liver.ca> (*Canadian Liver Foundation*)
- [http:// www.hepnet.ca](http://www.hepnet.ca) (*The Hepatitis Information Network*)
- <http://www.hepatitiscsociety.com> (*Hepatitis C Society of Canada*)
- <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca> (*Health Canada*)
- <http://www.health.gov.on.ca> (*Ministry of Health and Long Term Care*)
- <http://www.immunize.org> (*Immunization Action Coalition*)
- <http://www.cdc.gov> (*Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION/RATIONALE FOR FOCUS:

In 1993, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared tuberculosis (TB) a global emergency. With the emergence of drug resistant strains and the increasing incidence of co-infection with Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), the global impact of TB is unmistakable. One-third of the world's population is infected with TB, which is a leading cause of death worldwide.¹ According to the WHO, "it is estimated that between 2002-2020, approximately one billion people will get sick and 36 million will die of TB – if control is not further strengthened".¹ Although Canada currently has one of the lowest reported incidence rates of TB in the world, we cannot afford to ignore this deadly disease.²

GOALS FOR THE WORKPLACE TO STRIVE FOR:

1. To promote awareness regarding TB within the workplace environment.

GETTING STARTED:

Awareness Raising

- Utilize bulletin boards and displays featuring resources and information about TB exposure, testing and World TB day
- Dedicate an accessible area to display pamphlets and resources regarding TB
- Include short articles in an internal newsletter or staff-e-mails (check websites e.g. BCHU and local newspaper for relevant articles)

Skill Building

- Presentations/Workshops – based on employee interest, discussing issues surrounding TB prevention, exposure and available treatment

Creating a Supportive Environment

- Offer, if possible, at work testing clinics, during lunch hour break times to increase employee compliance with communicable disease prevention program
- Inform employees of publicly funded services for medication and treatment
- Maintain good hygiene policies, such as hand washing which may deter spread of communicable diseases
- Provide ongoing education about risk factors for specific communicable diseases

Healthy Workplace Policy

- Decide whether a corporate policy should exist relating to employee compliance with testing and reporting of TB to appropriate community services

¹ Fact sheet #104, 2002.

² Canadian Tuberculosis Standards, 5th Edition 2000 (pg 3)

HELPFUL RESOURCES:

Through the Brant County Health Unit (753-4937 ext. 259)

Pamphlets

- TB Facts
- Exposure to TB
- You can prevent TB
- TB & HIV
- The TB Skin Test
- TB can be cured

Factsheets

- Health Fact Tuberculosis
- Isoniazid
- Rifampin
- Pyrazinamide
- Streptomycin
- Ethambutol
- What is TB?

Video

- Tuberculosis: Key Issues for Health Care Providers

Community

- Brantford Public Library (756-2220)

Web Based

- <http://www.who.int/gtb> (*World Health Organization TB Prevention and Control*)
- <http://www.stoptb.org> (*The Stop TB Initiative*)
- <http://www.lung.ca> (*Canadian Lung Association*)
- <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca> (*Health Canada*)
- <http://www.cdc.gov/nchstp/tb> (*Centres for Disease Control and Prevention*)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION/RATIONALE FOR FOCUS:

Currently, more than 50,000 Canadians are living with HIV and each year another 2,000 Canadians are diagnosed with it.¹ Most of those are between 25 – 50 years of age – prime working years. Because of improvements in treatments, more HIV positive people are staying well and continuing to work.

The benefits of a HIV friendly workplace include:²

- a more caring, compassionate workplace
- less disruption in the workplace
- greater productivity
- better informed managers and employees

The Brant County Health Unit is mandated to reduce the incidence of and complications from Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI's) - including HIV/AIDS. The Health Unit supports schools, workplace settings and parent groups in efforts to prevent the transmission of HIV. Assistance is available to workplaces related to developing general policies regarding sexual health and HIV/AIDS. Specialized settings e.g. health care facilities, establish more specific policies and procedures for their employees.

GOALS FOR THE WORKPLACE TO STRIVE FOR:

1. To provide your employees with information about HIV/AIDS prevention that will reduce their risk of infection.
2. To prevent discrimination in the workplace by reducing the stigma and fear associated with HIV/AIDS.
3. To ensure employees with HIV receive the same treatment and benefits as employees with other illnesses.

GETTING STARTED:

Awareness Raising

- Incorporate HIV/AIDS education material into presentations about benefits, long-term disability and workplace health and safety
- Dedicate an accessible area to display pamphlets and resources, providing employees with basics information about HIV/AIDS – how the virus is transmitted, risks in the workplace, rights of HIV positive people
- Hold a special event during AIDS Awareness Week (Nov 24th - 30th) e.g. invite a speaker for your employees and their families

¹ Canadian AIDS Society Website, December 4, 2004.

² Canadian AIDS Society, 2003

Skill Building

- Identify a leader within your organization to take charge, providing information and regular educational programs for employees
- Ensure designated “first-aiders” have additional training about routine precautions
- Provide managers with resources and training that will assist them in dealing with employee questions and concerns about HIV

Creating a Supportive Environment

- Post your AIDS workplace policy, if available
- Provide reasonable accommodation for workers with HIV e.g. flexible work schedules, time off to attend doctor’s appointments
- Protect all employee rights by ensuring medical information is kept confidential

Healthy Workplace Policy Suggestions

- Develop workplace policies that outline employer/employee rights / responsibilities in accommodating anyone with a disability
- Develop policies and procedures promoting routine precautions
- Include HIV in a general chronic illness policy – (outlining that HIV is like any other illness)
- Ensure company policies comply with current Canadian legislation on human rights, disabilities and workplace standards

HELPFUL RESOURCES:

Through the Brant County Health Unit

- Educational materials, such as videos and pamphlets
- Presentations by Public Health Nurses
- Confidential testing for HIV and other STIs

Community

- Anonymous HIV testing: Hamilton (905 - 546 3541)
Waterloo (519 - 883 2251)
- The AIDS Network: education, resources and support for communities of Brant, Haldimand, Halton, Hamilton and Norfolk
- Local libraries: access information relating to sexual health and HIV/AIDS

Web-Based

- <http://www.bchu.org> (*Brant County Health Unit website with links for resources, statistics and treatment*)
- <http://www.cdnaids.ca> (*Canadian Aids Society website*)
- <http://www.sexualityandu.ca> (*Current material for professionals, parents and teens*)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION/RATIONALE FOR FOCUS:

Falls are predictable and largely preventable. However, unintentional falls are the leading cause of admissions to Ontario acute care hospitals for people over 65 years of age, according to 86% of hospital admissions in this group.¹ In Brant County, between 1995-1999, there were 1,996 hospital admissions leading to 15,649 hospital days in the 65+ population with estimated acute care hospital costs exceeding \$10 million.² Fall prevention is most effective when the approach is multi-faceted, including educational, environmental, policy change and engineering interventions.

GOALS FOR THE WORKPLACE TO STRIVE FOR:

1. To increase the proportion of older adults and their caregivers (formal and informal) who practice fall prevention strategies by providing resources and educational opportunities within the workplace setting.

GETTING STARTED:

Awareness Raising

- Utilize bulletin boards and displays featuring tips for senior safety, home safety and medication safety
- Dedicate an accessible area to display pamphlets and resources regarding fall prevention, senior safety and senior health promotion
- Offer employees the ability to view videos related to senior safety (videos available from the Health Unit and local library)
- Include short articles in an internal newsletter or staff-e-mails (check websites e.g. BCHU and local newspaper for relevant articles)

Skill Building

- Offer presentations/workshops based on employee interest through lunch and learn sessions discussing issues of fall prevention, senior safety and “sandwich generation”

Creating a Supportive Environment

- Offer flexible break times / working hours for employees to take older family members to medical appointments
- Provide coverage in benefit package for older family members of employees (i.e. medical equipment and care provider relief/support services)
- Provide ongoing education for employees and management regarding issues related care giver burnout, time management and family-work life balance

¹ Canadian Institute for Health Information, 1999

² Heale, Joanne “Are you in Jeopardy”, Central West Trauma Prevention Council, Hamilton, ON, 2001

Healthy Workplace Policy Suggestions

- Develop and implement flex-time/flexible scheduling policies (allowing personal leave for employees to attend medical appointment with senior family members)

HELPFUL RESOURCES:

Through the Brant County Health Unit (753-4937 ext. 259)

- Display “Don’t Let a Fall Get You Down”
- Knowledge is the best medicine – resource kit including video and planning guide for safe and responsible medication use workshop
- Are you in Jeopardy? 30 minute video, seniors’ home safety test
- Presentations upon request (753-4937 ext. 259)

Brochures/Flyers

- Are You In Jeopardy?
- Home Safety Checklist
- Knowledge is the Best Medicine
- Stepping Out Safely
- Canada’s Physical Activity Guide for Older Adults
- You can prevent falls! Resource guide
- Bruno and Alice (injury prevention sheet)
- Risk Factors/Contact Information Sheet
- What to do if you Fall

Community

- Family Physicians & Pharmacists
- Community Care Access Centre (759-7752)
- Red Cross Homemakers (753-4189)
- Brantford Parks and Recreation Department (756-1500)
- Brant Community Health Care Systems – The Willett Site – Geriatric Assessment Unit, by physician referral (442-2251)
- Beckett Adult Recreation Centre (756-3261)
- Kiwanis Brant County Lifeline (753-7442)

Web-Based

- <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/seniors-aines> (Health Canada)
- <http://www.vac-acc.gc.ca> (Veterans Affairs Canada)
- <http://www.seniors.gc.ca> (Seniors Canada)
- <http://www.safety-council.org> (Canada Safety Council)
- <http://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca> (Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation)

Additional Resources for Health and Safety

According to the Institute for Work and Health, in 2000, \$5.7 billion in workers' compensation benefits were disbursed across Canada to compensate injured workers and to provide them with health-care treatment and rehabilitation.¹ Organizational support and commitment to strategies that reduce injury/illness are critical to help reduce these numbers and protect employees.

The Ontario Health and Safety Act protects employees against hazards on the job. This legislation ensures a safe environment for employees and employers, as well outlines the general rights and responsibilities of all parties within the workplace. Failure to comply with this Act can result in fines or imprisonment. To obtain a copy of the Ontario Health and Safety Act, contact the Ontario Ministry of Labour:
(<http://www.gov.on.ca/LAB/english/hs/>)

As occupational health and safety is a key factor in every workplace, this handbook includes the following booklet, ***Your Ontario Health & Safety System – Health & Safety Way***, highlighting organizations that have information on additional topics related to health and safety in the workplace.

Please note that some contact information in the following booklet may change over time. Please refer to the WSIB website for updated information. www.wsib.on.ca

¹ Institute for Work and Health, www.iwh.on.ca, 2003

