

# Disability & Work

## A Vision for the Future

Ontario Network of Injured Workers Groups  
November 29, 2017

# Ontario Network of Injured Workers Groups (ONIWG)

- Founded in 1991
- 22 local groups from Ottawa to Thunder Bay
- Umbrella organization to support local groups and strengthen our voice with government
- Volunteer driven – annual budget \$4,000 – 12,000
- Helps bring positive changes for injured & disabled workers

# Who says fighting doesn't help?



Supreme Court Victory! Dec. 2003

# Research Action Alliance on the Consequences of Work Injury (RAACWI) 2004 - 2012

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- Injured & Disabled Workers, Advocates, Researchers
- Blue Sky Meetings with WCB/WSIB Senior Management
- Stigma, Return to Work, Tracking Outcomes

We're also bringing the issue of injured worker stigma to the forefront of our outreach initiatives and making sure that our contracted service providers understand and share our responsibility to treat injured and ill workers with courtesy, dignity and respect.

Our service commitment extends to providing fair and equal access to the programs and benefits workers are entitled to, at times and in ways that are convenient to them and that support their diverse and unique needs.

Feedback on the WSIB service experience is welcomed at [customerexperienceoffice@wsib.on.ca](mailto:customerexperienceoffice@wsib.on.ca)

We believe it's important to help make a difference — not judgments.

*"When someone is injured on the job, they need our help – not snap judgments about who they are just because they got hurt on the job. We have to do everything we can to help them recover their lives, dignity and health."*

**David Marshall,  
WSIB President and CEO**

**Getting injured on the job is nothing to be ashamed of; stigmatizing injured workers is.**

*Produced by the WSIB/RAACWI  
Stigma Working Group*

## How you can help

- ▶ Evaluate your own attitudes and behaviour towards injured workers
- ▶ Look beyond the stereotypes and value the individual
- ▶ Alert and educate people who demonstrate stigmatizing attitudes and behaviours
- ▶ Remember that not all workplace injuries are visible. Just because someone isn't using a cane or other assistive device doesn't mean that they're not injured
- ▶ Understand that healthy activity – such as walking and gardening – can be an important part of an injured worker's recovery

### Research Action Alliance in the Consequences of Work Injury

website:

[www.consequencesofworkinjury.ca](http://www.consequencesofworkinjury.ca)

email:

[coordinator@consequencesofworkinjury.ca](mailto:coordinator@consequencesofworkinjury.ca)

### Workplace Safety and Insurance Board

General Information: (416) 344-1000

Toll-free: 1-800-387-5540

TTY: 1-800-387-0050

website: [www.wsib.on.ca](http://www.wsib.on.ca)

email: [wsibcomm@wsib.on.ca](mailto:wsibcomm@wsib.on.ca)

Head Office:

200 Front Street West

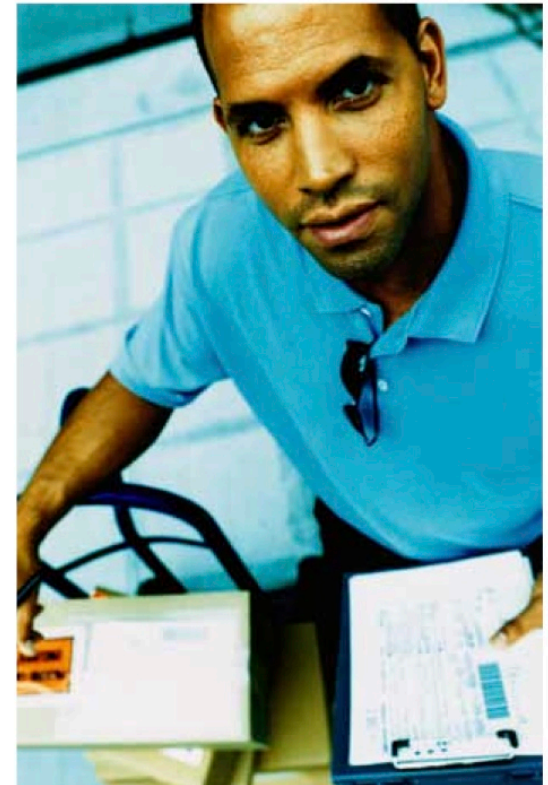
Toronto, Ontario

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## The facts about injured worker stigma

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# Workers Compensation

The first part of our social safety net –

Over 100 years old!

What lessons can we learn?

# 1915 Ontario Workmen's Compensation Act

## Meredith Principles:

Δ Compensation as long as disability lasts

Δ Collective Liability / Employer pays

Δ No fault

Δ Independent Agency

Δ Non-adversarial



**Sir William Meredith**



## Present Situation: Outcomes 3 – 5 years post injury

- 14 – 21,250 serious injuries & diseases resulting in permanent disabilities each year in Ontario
- 45% unemployed long term
- 20% in poverty + 25% in near poverty
- Only 20 % receive long term benefits from WSIB/WCB
- 45% facing mental health challenges

# Austerity/Neoliberal Agenda

- Unfunded Liability
- Corporations trump disabled workers
- 30 % reduction in benefits paid (2010 – 2014)
- Focus on reducing long term benefits
- Welfarization of Disability – John Stapleton
- Precarious Employment

# WCB Policy Proposals

- Unintended consequences of Experience Rating:  
Adversarial relationships
- Restore collective liability – Flat Rate System
- Pension vs Future Wage Loss System
- Employment Supports – Back Pack
- Health Care Benefits

# System-wide Policy Proposals

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- Income Security – Ontario Basic Income Pilot – LIM
- Employment Supports – not connected to Income Support
- Health Care & Quality of Life Supports
- Road Map for Change -  
<https://www.ontario.ca/page/income-security-reform#section-3>

# Resources

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- <http://thunderbayinjuredworkers.com>
- <https://www.crwdp.ca>
- <http://injuredworkersonline.org>
- <http://www.consequencesofworkinjury.ca>
- <http://iavgo.org/research-and-resources>

Thank you!