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www.crwdp.ca



workers' stories on our site

CRWDP National Launch is Tuesday, February 4, 2014

Save the Date!

On Tuesday, February 4, we celebrate the national launch of the Centre for Research on Work Disability Policy (CRWDP). The Centre is funded by a grant from the federal Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC). CRWDP is a transdisciplinary initiative on the future of work disability policy in Canada. Our members and champions will speak at the launch about why we need policy change and how things might better work to support Canadians who can, want to and need to work. Our virtual launch will join our clusters in British Columbia, Ontario, Quebec and Newfoundland and Labrador. We will hear from people across the country about their hopes and goals for the Centre. Together we have the potential to change our out-of-date work disability policy system in Canada.



Centre de
recherche sur les politiques en
matière d'invalidité professionnelle



Centre for
Research on
Work Disability Policy

Improving Canadian work disability policy to help all people access employment



CRWDP's Guiding Framework is Human Rights

We recognise the entitlement of all people in Canada, including those with disabilities, to have equal access to basic rights and fundamental freedoms, including employment and education.

What We Mean By

Work Disability Policy

By work disability policy, we mean policy related to any federal, provincial or territorial program in Canada that shapes income security and labour-market engagement for work-disabled individuals, such as workers' compensation, Canada and Quebec Pension Plan Disability, social assistance for people with disabilities, disability tax credits, Employment Insurance Sickness Benefits, Veterans Benefits, various private disability pension plans, motor vehicle accident insurance and compensation for victims of crime. We also include employers in the disability policy system as they play an important role in shaping opportunities for work-disabled individuals and have specific obligations under some programs and legislations.

Our Primary Activities

CRWDP activities include: 1) providing a forum for within- and cross-provincial and national dialogue on challenges and opportunities for improving the Canadian work disability policy system; 2) identifying problems and challenges associated with program coordination and complexity; 3) identifying relevant and favourable alternative approaches to system design and service provision through select comparisons with other countries and small-scale trials; 4) mobilizing knowledge developed within and outside of the initiative in order to inform policy; and 5) building capacity for research and knowledge mobilization on the topic of work disability policy and labour-market engagement of individuals with disabilities.



CRWDP Champions

Promoting Inclusion

To achieve social change, we need more than research evidence. We need people in positions of authority and leadership to speak up about the relevance of problems and the need for change. Champions are a critical part of the CRWDP. Alec Farquhar, Director of the Office of the Worker Adviser in Ontario, leads our Champions group, which to date includes political and labour leaders.

Champion Profile

Mayor Mike Bradley, Sarnia, Ontario



Mike Bradley is not only the mayor of Sarnia, Ontario, but also the city's longest-serving mayor. Bradley has received national honours for his work on accessibility issues, and is the originator of the "Mayor's Challenge to Hire Persons with a Disability." Leading by example, Sarnia has put forward a new employment accessibility policy that emphasizes the city's duties to ensure accommodations for its employees and potential hires with disabilities. Strategies include training city supervisors to know the difference between performance and disability-related issues, and accommodating job candidates through the hiring process, such as providing the right equipment and extra time for testing. Bradley is pioneering a new local program that rates and recognizes accessible businesses in the community. While the proposed program is currently under discussion in the Sarnia Lambton Chamber of Commerce, it would be the first-of-its kind in the Province of Ontario. The program is focused on presenting accessibility as an opportunity for local businesses.

Our Objective

To identify how people, when disabled, can be better retained and integrated into the Canadian labour market





Partnership in Action

CRWDP brings together over 50 academics and 40 partners from across Canada and funds graduate students and post doctoral researchers. Our coordinated and trans disciplinary applied research effort is a new approach to addressing the complex challenge of work disability policy.

Partner Profile

Ontario Network of Injured Workers Groups (ONIWG)

ONIWG is one of CRWDP's 46 partners. ONIWG is a network of 21 (and growing) groups made up of workers who have been injured or made sick on the job, and their family members. They seek to improve and preserve the public workers' compensation system for all workers with a return to the founding principles established in 1913: a no-fault compensation system in which workers, in exchange for guaranteed compensation, gave up the right to sue employers (known as "the historic compromise"). Activities of ONIWG's groups include offering peer support, providing information about the compensation system, and providing a forum for injured workers to advocate for system reform. ONIWG's current campaigns include: bringing in full cost-of-living protection for all injured workers' benefits; eliminating the deeming system; and ensuring coverage for all workers and employers. For more information visit injuredworkersonline.org or contact ONIWG by email at oniwg1990@gmail.com.

President - Michelle McSweeney

Secretary - Catherine Fenech

Treasurer - Eugene LeFrancois



"In unity there is strength"



Student Fellow Profile

Cameron Crawford, York University



Cameron Crawford is the Director of Research at the Institute for Research and Development on Inclusion and Society (IRIS). He is interested in disability issues in the context of public policy, human rights and social inclusion. Crawford is a fifth-year PhD student in Critical Disability Studies at York University. His thesis is on the employment of people with disabilities, with a focus on the policy, program and socio-demographic factors associated with successful employment outcomes. He joined CRWDP because it brings together many of the country's most knowledgeable people on issues of employment, disability and public policy. He sees it as an opportunity to help improve the employment of people with

disabilities at a time when the system is undergoing significant pressure and change.

Academic Profile

Normand Boucher, Université Laval



Normand Boucher leads CRWDP's Law, Policy and Program Analysis Theme. Boucher obtained his PhD in Sociology in 2001 at Université Laval. Since 1994, he has been doing research with the International Network on Disability Creation Process on issues related to disability and citizenship of people with disabilities in post-industrial society. He also undertook post-doctoral studies in the Centre for Disability Studies at the University of Leeds in the UK. Since 2003, he has been developing his research program on social policy, disability and citizenship at the Centre for Interdisciplinary Research in Rehabilitation and Social Integration (CIRRI) and as Adjunct Professor in the School of Social Work at Uni-

versité Laval. He is particularly interested in work and employment, as well as housing, transportation and social support services. Over the last 10 years, he has also been involved in the disability movement in Québec and he is a member of international and national research teams.

Work Disability Policy is for Everyone

Work disability touches most people during their lifetime—whether the health condition is physical or mental, acute or chronic, temporary or episodic, comes early or late in life, is caused by work exposures or some other source.





Our Three Key Questions

1. How well does the Canadian disability policy system serve the current and emerging needs of working-age individuals when disabled in terms of employment support and opportunities?
2. For which individuals and in what labour-market contexts does our disability policy system work well/not work well and why?
3. What are the key opportunities for policy and program improvement in both the short and long runs?

Research Highlights

Recent Publications by Our Researchers

1. L'accompagnement vers l'emploi dans les carrefours jeunesse-emploi; la politique d'insertion à l'épreuve du terrain, *Regards sur le travail*, volume 9, numéro 2 – printemps 2013, 1-14. Par Ysabel Provencher, PhD, Professeure agrégée à l'École de service social de l'Université Laval.

Cet article résume les résultats d'une recherche portant sur les professionnels du réseau québécois des carrefours jeunesse-emploi au sujet de leur pratique professionnelle et des conditions qui, de leur point de vue, limitent ou, au contraire facilitent l'accompagnement des jeunes en difficulté d'insertion au marché du travail.

2. *Handbook of Work Disability: Prevention and Management*, Springer, New York, 2013 . ISBN 978-4614-6213-2 ISBN 978-4614-6214-9 (eBook)
Edited by Patrick Loisel, Dalla Lana School of Public Health, University of Toronto, Canada & Johannes R. Anema, Department of Public and Occupational Health, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, The Netherlands.



Meet the Co-directors

Collaboration at the Foundation of CRWDP Leadership



Emile Tompa
Associate Professor,
Department of Eco-
nomics, McMaster
University
Senior Scientist, Insti-
tute for Work & Health

As an economist, I have always been interested in how environment, in conjunction with individual characteristics, shape people's engagement in society over the life course. My work generally relates to two broad areas of research: the changing nature of work, and the interaction between workers, systems and program design. These interests led me directly to the research questions at the heart of CRWDP. Some of the seeds for this partnership were planted during a community-university research alliance on the consequences of work injury, where I was the academic lead. At the closing symposium of that six-year initiative, a group of like-minded researchers and advocates from across the country came together to explore the possibility of expanding the scope of our efforts. From there to here has been an amazing journey, and we are only beginning. I look forward to many new and exciting collaborations over the next seven years.



Ellen MacEachen
Associate Professor,
Dalla Lana School of
Public Health, Universi-
ty of Toronto
Senior Scientist, Insti-
tute for Work & Health

In the context of a fast changing world of work, it can be difficult for policymakers to design programs and policies that stay current. As well, when planners are creating standards and structures for us to live by, the tough conditions faced by some people aren't always seen or considered. And even when great work disability policies and programs are designed, their implementation can be different than intended. These are issues that have driven my work as a sociologist who uses qualitative methods to explore system design and logic. As former president of the Canadian Association for Research on Work and Health and a leader with the CIHR Training Program in Work Disability Prevention, I have observed work disability policy challenges locally and internationally. I am excited to work with this excellent group of CRWDP researchers and partners.





We would like to extend our sincere appreciation to all of our partners. Together, we have the potential to improve the work disability policy system in Canada.