



Centre de recherche sur les politiques en matière d'invalidité professionnelle (CRPIP)
Centre for Research on Work Disability Policy (CRWDP)

CRWDP E-Alert

January – March 2020

CRWDP E-Alert is issued by the CRWDP National Office. Our contact email addresses are simam@iwh.on.ca and kpdkapayeva@iwh.on.ca.

Send us an email to see your news, event or publication in the next CRWDP E-Alert issue.

Disability and Work in Canada (DWC) Initiative

- I. We hope that you and your family are safe and well during the current COVID-19 pandemic. While this is a difficult time for many of us, our team nevertheless hopes to continue the momentum for change that resulted from the launch of the Pan-Canadian strategy on Disability and Work at the 2019 conference. We are hosting the next DWC conference in Ottawa on December 1-2, 2020. The conference will take stock of the first year of efforts to implement the pan-Canadian strategy.
- II. [La version française de la stratégie est disponible sur notre site web](#). Contactez-nous à info@crwdp.ca si vous avez des questions.
- III. Every week, we add materials from the 2019 conference, such as presentation videos and presentation slides. To date, we have published over ten speaker presentation videos from the conference. All available materials can be found on [CRWDP's webpage dedicated to the conference](#).
- IV. Throughout the spring of 2020 the DWC planning committee will be in touch with last year's conference participants who identified their interest in forming implementation groups to focus on specific initiatives in the strategy, to help them connect and start working together. We will also be in touch with our networks to learn about relevant initiatives being implemented in order to help develop the agenda for our next conference to be held December 1st & 2nd, 2020.

Resources Related to COVID-19 Pandemic

- I. On March 26, World Health Organization (WHO) published "[Disability considerations during the COVID-19 outbreak](#)." The document includes actions for people with disabilities and their households, actions for governments, for health-care workers, for disability service providers, and for the community.

- II. Rick Hansen Foundation has compiled [a variety of helpful resources for persons with disabilities during COVID-19 outbreak](#).
- III. **Advocacy groups call on government to provide supports for people with disabilities:**
 - Multiple advocacy groups and disability support organizations developed ["COVID-19 and Disability: Recommendations to the Canadian Government from Disability Related Organizations in Canada"](#) (Source: ARCH Disability Law Centre)
 - Advocacy groups call on BC government for additional support for people who receive income assistance and disability assistance during the COVID-19 crisis. [Read the letter to Minister Shane Simpson](#)
- IV. **Community Legal Education Ontario (CLEO)** is working to provide practical answers to the important questions that people are asking about the law relating to the COVID-19 situation. They are also sharing updates about changes to government programs and court services. [Visit CLEO website for more information](#).
- V. **InclusionNL** is available to virtually support business partners/employers who need help with accessibility questions or need information on accessible strategies to support employees working remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic. [See more details here \(source: InclusionNL\)](#)
- VI. [UBC students volunteer their time to fight against COVID-19](#)
- VII. The Government of Ontario's Office of the Fire Marshal and Emergency Management in partnership with the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario prepared an **Emergency Preparedness Guide for People with Disabilities / Special Needs**. This guide provides special emergency preparedness considerations and advice for Ontarians with disabilities and/or special needs, including seniors with special needs.

CRWDP Publications, Resources and Opportunities

- I. [The Benefits of Inclusion: Disability and Work in the 21st Century; Special issue call for papers from Equality, Diversity and Inclusion](#) guest edited by [Emile Tompa](#), [Dan Samosh](#) and Alecia Santuzzi. This special issue is focused on innovative, international research that contributes to the conceptualization and application of inclusion and accessibility, with a focus on the public policy and workplace systems levels. All contributions will be double-blind peer-reviewed before consideration for publication and submissions from a diversity of research perspectives that use different methods (e.g., conceptual, qualitative, and quantitative) are welcome. **Deadline to submit manuscripts has been extended to June 1, 2020.** [Fore more information, visit Equality, Diversity and Inclusion website](#).
- II. **Report from CRWDP Seed Grant project** "Work disability programs in Newfoundland & Labrador and New Brunswick: Mapping eligibility criteria and identifying barriers for the employment of selected disability populations" was recently updated. The report is authored by [Stephen Bornstein](#) (Nominated PI), [Kathy Hawkins](#) (Co-PI), [Barbara Neis](#),

[Rose Ricciardelli](#), Emily Christy, Susan Tobin (Co-Investigators), [and Aleksandra Stefanovic-Chafe](#) (Researcher). In this study, provincial work disability policies and relevant provincial programs were explored and compared in order to identify red flags for employment for people with disabilities. Specifically, work disability supports for people, and especially youth, who identify as having mental health issues and/or being diagnosed with autism, their experience in accessing support programs, and the challenges in successfully participating in the local labour market is examined in this research. Key insights from the report:

- Information about the programs and supports for outlining pathways to meaningful employment and income is difficult to find, access and/or understand.
- Employment, or the lack there of, is often seen as separate from addressing the essential, life-preserving issues, such as homelessness or food security, and is considered a secondary problem.
- The eligibility criteria for existing employment support programs does not offer the flexibility necessary for the self-disclosed, episodic, and unpredictable nature of some mental health conditions. The expected program outcomes are often rigid and not articulated in a meaningful way.
- Outcome measurements for many employment support programs focus on getting a job and finding a job. Positive outcomes in finding employment then guarantee future funding for these programs. However, it is believed that individuals with complex needs would be better served if the measured outcomes were focused on individual growth and potential. Revising the framework for evaluating the validity of these employment interventions may maximize the conditions for individual success.
- Valuable research on work disability policies and employment of people with disabilities in NL and NB is lacking.

III. **Check the articles recently published by CRWDP members:**

- [Samosh D. **The three-legged stool: synthesizing and extending our understanding of the career advancement facilitators of persons with disabilities in leadership positions**](#). Business & Society. 2020; [epub ahead of print]. In this article Dan Samosh examines the career advancement facilitators of persons with disabilities via the insights of 21 leaders with disabilities. Findings point to the role of strong and weak ties in developing leaders' career self-management strategies as well as their access to core stakeholder positions. [Article abstract and full article \(subscription based\), is available here](#).
- [Tomba E, Samosh D, and Boucher N. **Skills gaps, underemployment, and equity of labour-market opportunities for persons with disabilities in Canada**](#). The Public Policy Forum; The Future Skills Centre; The Diversity Institute; 2020. While people with disabilities can achieve socially integrated, financially independent lives through secure, well-paid employment, they are often trapped in low-skill jobs at high risk of automation. The report underscores the importance of training opportunities that are well aligned with the skills likely to be in high demand in future. [Full report is available here](#).

- Macpherson RA, Amick BC 3rd, Collie A, Hogg-Johnson S, Koehoorn M, Smith PM, McLeod CB. Urban-rural Differences in the Duration of Injury-related Work Disability in Six Canadian Provinces. J Occup Environ Med. 2020 Mar 5. doi: 10.1097/JOM.0000000000001850. [Epub ahead of print]. [Abstract of the article by and full article \(subscription based\) is available here.](#)
 - Choi K, Maas ET, Koehoorn M, McLeod CB. Time to return to work following workplace violence among direct healthcare and social workers. Occupational and Environmental Medicine 2020;77: 160-167. [Full article is available here.](#)
- IV. **A funding award was recently received by a team lead by [Normand Boucher](#)** to evaluate a new mechanism of work integration and retention of persons with intellectual disabilities, autism and mental health. The project involves a new partner Regroupement des organismes spécialisés pour l'emploi des personnes handicapées (ROSEPH).
- [Boucher N](#), Milot E, Caouette M, St-Onge M, Regroupement des organismes spécialisés pour l'emploi des personnes handicapées. Le rôle des agents d'intégration auprès de trois populations prioritaires ayant des incapacités : Analyse de nouvelles pratiques de soutien en emploi. Conseil de recherches en sciences humaine, bénéficiaires des subventions d'engagement partenarial – Concours de juin 2019.

Upcoming CRWDP and Partners' Events

- I. **SafetyNet** is in the initial stages of organizing two events to communicate and continue to build momentum for the Pan Canadian Strategy on Work & Disability, the Disability and Work in Canada 2019 Conference, and the New Canadian standard proposed for work disability prevention management systems (CSA Z1011).
 - **DWC 2019 Feedback – Atlantic Region Webinar (virtual)** is being planned for late Spring, 2020. We are working with members of the CRWDP-NL Cluster to populate an invitation list of key stakeholders throughout the Atlantic region, work with CRWDP to secure DWC materials to circulate, and identify key topics to highlight/promote at the event.
 - **CRWDP NL Cluster meeting / Roundtable on Inclusion (including DIG-MUN)** is being planned for Fall, 2020 to determine next steps, priorities, future activities, and potential ways to fund future activities.
- II. **CRWDP Webinar Series** – Webinar #14 will be held on May 25, 2020 at 12:00 PM EST. This webinar will be presented by [Amy Sheppard](#). Amy is a PhD Candidate in the Faculty of Sociology at Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador. She is a practising Social Worker at a non-profit working with women in the criminal justice system. Her research and clinical interests focus on gender, criminalized women, trauma-informed practises as well as critical obesity/fat studies. This presentation will discuss the intersection of mental health disability and a criminal record and the impacts on employment. [Register in advance for this free webinar.](#)

CRWDP and Partners' Past Events

- I. **You can find recordings of all 13 CRWDP Webinars hosted to-date** on the [CRWDP Webinar Series page](#). This includes the most recent webinar by [Ololade Adedoyin Animashaun](#) presented on January 30th, 2020.
- II. **Bancroft Institute for Studies on Workers' Compensation and Work Injury** hosted a session on Injured Workers, Human Rights and the United Nations on March 12, 2020. This session explored the strategy and background of raising workers compensation issues as disability issues under international human rights law. One of the presenters at this session was [Steve Mantis](#), the Chair of the Research Action Committee of the Ontario Network of Injured Workers Groups (ONIWG) and a CRWDP Executive Committee member. Steve underlined the importance of raising awareness and understanding of the human rights principles, especially given that some of the policies and systems in place, such as workers' compensation system, pre-date the international human rights standards and treaties. "We need to develop our public policies and programs within the human rights lens, and see how the current policies need to be changed to be better "synchronized" with the human rights principles," he said.
In September 2019, [ONIWG presented a submission to the United Nations that the practice of "deeming,"](#) described as Phantom Jobs by some advocates, in Canadian workers' compensation systems is a violation of human rights under the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. ONIWG members continue to explore the different aspects of the process and legal strategies to develop comprehensive submissions to the UN Committee. "I'm pleased to see that the interest in human rights is growing among the disability community," noted Steve. You can watch the video of the presentation by Jeffrey Hillgert; [links to two parts of the video are available here](#).

Students and New Researchers News

- I. **The CRWDP Webinar Series** is a great way for students, and new and established researchers to promote their research, receive feedback from those in the CRWDP network and beyond, and for those just starting up with the centre, to build connections with peers and partners across Canada. Contact [Dan Samosh](#) at dsamosh@iwh.on.ca to schedule your presentation!
- II. **Callout to Students/New Researchers: Send us your story!** Share details of how your participation in CRWDP has helped you build your networks, advance your research or other work disability policy activities, and start your career. Send us your story in writing or as a short video to be published on the CRWDP website.
- III. In January 2020, [Shannon Dinan](#) began her postdoctoral fellowship under the direction of [Normand Boucher](#) at CIRRI. She obtained her PhD in Political Science with [Alain Noel](#) at Université de Montréal in September 2019. Her dissertation was about activation policies: Youth Employment Incentives: Activation in Denmark, France and

the United Kingdom (2008-2016.). During her fellowship, she will work on the assessment of the mechanisms of access to support services in Canada for persons with disabilities and will compare this mechanism with the situation in other countries such as UK, Sweden, Australia and Netherland.

IV. **CRWDP NL Provincial Cluster Student and New Researcher Highlights**

- [Dr. Howse's](#) postdoctoral fellowship with CRWDP formally ended in September 2019. Her postdoctoral research examined the ways work disability policies and programs support and/or hinder 'work mobility' – travel to and in the course of work - among people with physical disabilities, including injured workers. In September 2019, Dr. Howse transitioned to a new, postdoctoral fellowship position also based at Memorial funded through Katherine Lippel's new CIHR/SSHRC Partnership grant, Policy and Practice and Return to Work. In this position, she retained her focus on work mobility, including policy, but with a focus on RTW among injured/ill workers engaged in extended/complex mobility for work in the construction sector. In January 2020 she took a full-time position with the Primary Healthcare Research Unit in Memorial's Faculty of Medicine. Dr. Howse will be giving a presentation of her CRWDP Postdoctoral Study Findings at one of the upcoming CRWDP Webinars. She is also preparing manuscripts from her postdoctoral research for publication, including a manuscript highlighting the results of her scoping review and 1-2 manuscripts focused on key findings from phase two for consideration in the International Journal of Disability Management, Policy and Practice in Health and Safety, and the Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation.
- [Amy Sheppard](#), a CRWDP student fellow, is focusing her CRWDP fellowship research on how the intersection of a criminal record and mental illness disability impact abilities to access employment. Her research focuses on women exiting prisons and how their experiences with mental health issues, as well as criminal histories, impact employment. This research includes reviewing policies that influence mental health and disability and how these policies may intersect with policy and practice regarding prisoner re-entry into the world of work.
- [Aleksandra Stefanovic](#) was awarded a CRWDP (PhD) Fellowship in Spring 2019. She also received a 2-year Mitacs eAccelerate grant (2019). She continues to develop a scoping review of evaluations of employment programs and supports for people with mental health issues and Autism Spectrum for her PhD dissertation. As a part of her PhD work, Aleksandra is finalizing a draft of a scoping review that will examine what is known about the effectiveness of existing models of supportive employment programs for individuals with mental health issues and Autism Spectrum Disorder and the ways in which the effectiveness is evaluated. The scoping review encompasses common models of supportive employment – such as Individualized Placement and Support Model (IPS) and social enterprise. While the IPS model has been extensively evaluated, there is a paucity of research, and specifically evaluations, focusing on social enterprise and mental health conditions.

- V. **CRWDP ON Provincial Cluster Student and New Researcher Highlights**
- [Sabrina Hossain](#) completed her MSc in Rehabilitation Science in the fall of 2019, with funding from a graduate student stipend from the CRWDP. She is currently the lead qualitative research assistant at Mount Sinai Hospital, Department of Psychiatry, SUMMIT Trial (Scaling up Maternal Mental Healthcare by Increasing Access to Treatment).

Community and Partner News

- I. **The Bancroft Institute for Studies on Workers' Compensation and Work Injury** was recently nominated for McMaster University's President's Award for Community Engaged Research. This award was established to recognize teams of campus and community representatives who have demonstrated a commitment to initiating and supporting excellence in community-campus research initiatives. Receiving the President's Award would allow the Bancroft Institute to host a conference in the fall of 2020 on the subject of community-university research partnerships. We wholeheartedly support this nomination. Results on the submission will be available in April.

News from Our Partner, the Institute for Work & Health (IWH)

- I. **[Post-injury experiences and return to work among psychological claimants.](#)** Workers disabled by work-related psychological injuries have less desirable return-to-work (RTW) experiences than workers with physical disorders, and these experiences are associated with poorer RTW outcomes during their first eight to 11 months on workers' compensation leave. Furthermore, these poorer experiences are interconnected. This is according to 12-month follow-up study conducted by IWH in Australia. [Learn more.](#)
- II. **[Access to mental health services among workers with physical injuries.](#)** The same IWH study above found that, among workers with a compensation claim for a work-related musculoskeletal injury, 30 per cent also experience a serious mental condition. However, a minority of these workers receive treatment for their mental health conditions. [Read more.](#)
- III. **[Return-to-work interventions for workers with MSDs, pain or mental health conditions.](#)** What workplace-based interventions are effective in helping workers with musculoskeletal disorders, pain and/or mental health conditions return to work? IWH's most recent Sharing Best Evidence summarizes findings of a systematic review. [Read the summary.](#)
- IV. **[Introducing a new CSA standard on work disability management systems.](#)** On February 4, CRWDP director and IWH Senior Scientist Dr. Emile Tompa gave an IWH Speaker Series presentation on a new standard created by the CSA Group, in conjunction with CRWDP and Conestoga College. In his presentation, Tompa discussed how the Work Disability Management Systems Standard (CSA Z1011) sets out best

practices on injury/illness rehabilitation, return-to-work plans, and accommodation of workers with disabilities. [Listen to the presentation.](#)

- V. [Accommodating and Communicating about Episodic Disabilities \(ACED\) newsletter.](#) The [ACED research partnership](#), led by IWH, is developing evidence-based workplace resources to support the sustained employment of people with chronic, intermittent and often-invisible disabilities, such as depression, arthritis, HIV/AIDs, Crohn's disease, ulcerative colitis, and multiple sclerosis. The project recently launched its twice-yearly newsletter designed to keep readers abreast of its findings, tools, resources and events. [Sign up for the newsletter.](#)

Other Resources and Opportunities

- I. In the Fall of 2019, the [BC provincial government](#) held province-wide public consultations on the development of proposed accessibility legislation. [A summary report on Accessibility Legislation Consultation is now available.](#)
- II. Check [recent blog posts by John Stapleton](#) at [Open Policy Ontario](#), that include two posts on social assistance in Ontario: "[Thrown in the deep end: The strange history of Ontario's social assistance for needy 60-64 year olds](#)" from Feb 16, 2020 and "[Tales from the deep end of the poverty pool: How Ontario Works keeps ODSP from rising and what Oliver Twist might ask](#)" from Feb 23, 2020.
- III. [Policy Researcher/Analyst Opportunity at Income Security Advocacy Centre \(ISAC\).](#) Application deadline is Friday, May 1, 2020 before 5 p.m.

[Past CRWDP E-Alerts are available for download from the CRWDP website.](#)

To post your news/event in the next CRWDP E-Alert, or to unsubscribe from the distribution list, send an email to [Kathy Padkapayeva](#) at kpadkapayeva@iwh.on.ca, or [Sabrina Imam](#) at simam@iwh.on.ca.

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