

Mental Health
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du Canada

Substance Use and the Workplace: Understanding Impairment

March 27th, 2019 12:00pm-1:00pm E.T

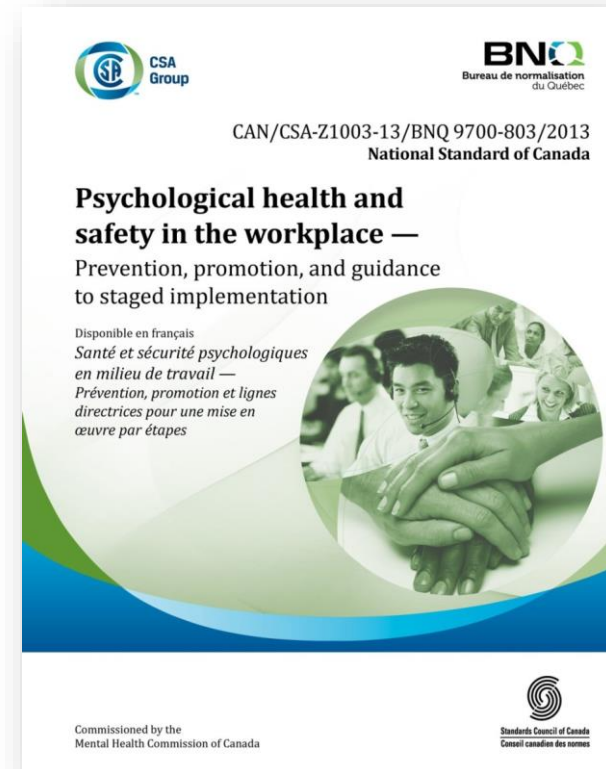


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Substance Use and the Workplace: Understanding Impairment

60%
waking hours
at work



Substance Use and the Workplace: Understanding Impairment



- Illness
- Physical and psychological health and safety

Fit-for-Duty (FFD)



Canadian Centre
on Substance Use
and Addiction

Evidence. Engagement. Impact.

Centre canadien sur
les dépendances et
l'usage de substances

Données. Engagement. Résultats.



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Substance Use and the Workplace: Understanding Impairment

Mental Health Commission of Canada

Shawna Meister and Bryce Barker

Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction

March 27, 2019

Agenda



- Background
 - State of Employer Policies, Substance Use Risks, Fitness-for-Duty and Impairment
- Policy Components
 - Comprehensive policy, substance use, impairment observation, organizational culture, legal
- Putting Cannabis into Perspective
- Resources

About CCSA



- **Vision:** A healthier Canadian society where evidence transforms approaches to substance use
- **Mission:** To address issues of substance use in Canada by providing national leadership and harnessing the power of evidence to generate coordinated action
- **Value Proposition:** Provide national leadership to address substance use in Canada. A trusted counsel, we provide guidance to decision makers by harnessing the power of research, curating knowledge and bringing together diverse perspectives.
- National non-profit organization with a pan-Canadian and international role

Strategic Core Functions

Providing National Leadership

Create a common focus and purpose to achieve collective impact

Building Strategic Partnerships

Bring people and knowledge together to develop collective responses and coordinated action

Advancing Research

Synthesize and generate timely evidence to inform practice and policies

Mobilizing Knowledge

Expand the reach and adoption of new and emerging practices

CCSA's National Priorities



Cannabis

**Children &
Youth**

**Substance
Use & Mental
Health**

**Indigenous
Peoples of
Canada**

**Workforce
Development**

**National
Treatment
Strategy**

**Impaired
Driving**

**National
Alcohol
Strategy**

**Opioids &
Prescription
Drugs**

Stigma



Background

State of Employer Policies



- Minimal research on substance use and the workplace
- Overall lack of comprehensive substance use policies (CCSA, 2017; Meister, 2018)
- Absence of review and evaluation of policies
- Lost productivity to businesses in 2014 was recently estimated at \$15.7 billion dollars (Canadian Substance Use Costs and Harms Scientific Working Group, 2018)

Substance Use: Impact & Risk Factors

Impact

- Absenteeism or presenteeism
- Cognitive impairments
- Chronic diseases
- Employee morale
- Injuries and accidents
- Fatalities
- Legal

Work-related Risk Factors

- Access to alcohol and drugs
- High stress
- Repetitive duties
- Shift work
- Fatigue
- Negative work environment
- Meetings with clients involving alcohol

Poll Question



Which type of employee impairment at work concerns you the most?

- Stress
- Alcohol use
- Lack of sleep
- Cannabis use
- Mental health and well being

FFD / Impairment vs. Cannabis Policy

Many causes of impairment

Stress

Lack of sleep

Workplace conditions

Alcohol

Prescriptions or
over-the-counter drugs

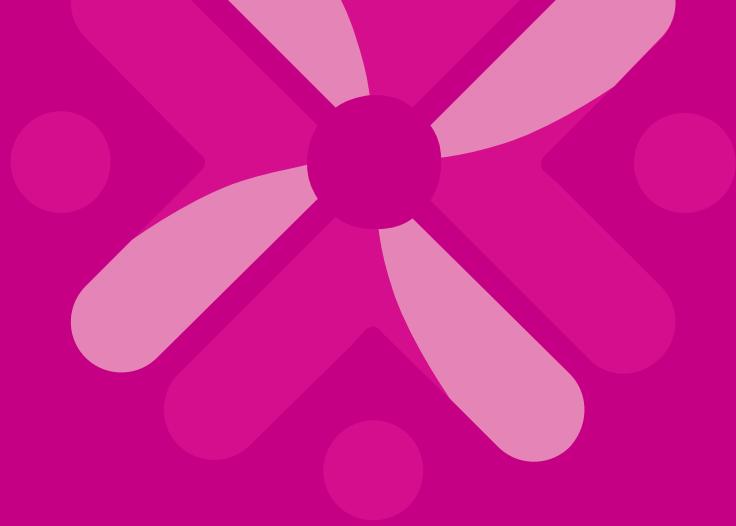
Distractions

Fatigue

Cannabis

Personal or family
crisis

Mental Health



Policy Components

Comprehensive Policy

Comprehensive fit-for-duty (FFD) / impairment policy includes:

1. Objectives and scope
2. Prevention
3. Observation and investigation
4. Support
5. Return to Duty/Work
6. Non-compliance
7. Review and evaluation
8. Meets legal requirements



Policy Considerations



Substance use policy aspects

- Address substances (e.g., alcohol, prescriptions, cannabis, illicit drugs)
- Language matters: **substance use**, misuse or abuse?
- Meet insurance company requirements
- Prevention, education, and training

Consult

Medical professional with a specialization in addictions (and a specialization in occupational health and safety if possible); individuals with lived/living experience; insurance company; prevention experts

Policy Considerations (cont'd)



Impairment observation aspects

- Employee changes (behaviour, productivity, physical, etc.)
- Approaching the employee
- Leave diagnoses to the experts
- Testing

Consult

Medical professional with a specialization in addictions (and a specialization in occupational health and safety if possible); individuals with lived/living experience; prevention experts

Policy Considerations (cont'd)



Organizational culture aspects

- Frequently reported as largest barrier to addressing substance use
- Eliminate stigma and discrimination
- Balance support measures and disciplinary measures
- Peer-to-peer programs appear to show promise

Consult

Employees; human resources; unions (if applicable); experts

Policy Considerations (cont'd)

Legal aspects

- Safe working environment and respect for human rights
 - Balance employer and employee needs
- Substance dependence is a disability
- Accommodation up to undue hardship

Consult

Lawyer; human rights expert

Putting Cannabis into Perspective



- New area for everyone; Canada is a test case.
- Alcohol is still the most used substance and presents the highest costs to society.
- Quality of research and information varies greatly.
- Medical vs. recreational use.
- Commercialization: who is supplying the information and are they unbiased?

Poll Question



How comfortable do you feel with your organization's current policy to effectively address impairment?

- Very comfortable
- Somewhat comfortable
- Neutral (neither comfortable or uncomfortable)
- Somewhat uncomfortable
- Very uncomfortable

Resources for Employers



- Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction
 - Website resources: workplace, cannabis, alcohol, children and youth, impaired driving, prescription drugs, costs of substance use, etc.
- Atlantic Canada Council on Addiction
 - Guide to creating a substance use policy
- Canadian Human Rights Commission
- Mental Health Commission of Canada
- Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety
- Institute for Work and Health
- Health Canada

Contact Information



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CCSA's Issues of Substance 2019

CCSA's **ISSUES** of
SUBSTANCE
CONFERENCE



CONGRÈS **QUESTIONS**
de **SUBSTANCE**
du CCDUS

November 25–27 | 25–27 novembre
Ottawa | Ontario

Evidence and Perspectives, Compassion and Action.

- CCSA's Issues of Substance is Canada's premier conference for the substance use and addiction field
- Registration opens March 2019
- [#CCSAConference](#)



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Questions?



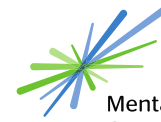
Resources and Training:

- [The National Standard for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace](#)
- [Assembling the Pieces Implementation Handbook](#)
- [Assembling the Pieces Online Toolkit](#)
- [Being a Mindful Employee: An Orientation to Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace](#)
- [13 Factors videos](#) and [customizable posters](#)

- [Mental Health First Aid](#)
- [The Working Mind](#)

How did we do?





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Thank you!

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