

WCB Community Initiatives & Research Program

2003

Working with Our Partners to Build a Safer and Healthier Manitoba

“We’re committed to changing people’s attitudes and behaviours when it comes to safety. The CIRP provides an important instrument for our community partnerships towards reducing the pain and suffering of Manitoba’s injured workers and their families.”

— **Wally Fox-Decent**,
Chairperson, WCB Board of Directors

WCB 
Workers Compensation
Board of Manitoba
www.wcb.mb.ca



Established in 1997, the Community Initiatives and Research Program (CIRP) funds projects on accident and disease prevention, safety in the workplace, treatment of workplace injuries, services for injured workers and scientific, medical or other issues related to workers’ compensation. Up to \$1 million is provided annually by the Board of Directors to fund such projects.

In 2003 the program used two processes for receiving proposals, each with different funding priorities.

The first process focused on:

- the occupational health and safety of aboriginal people working on and off reserves
- awareness and knowledge of occupational health and safety rights and information for workers with literacy challenges
- gender issues related to workplace injuries and disease

The application process involved a two-stage approach – the first stage consisting of a Letter of Intent describing the project and its intended benefit to the WCB. Based on a review of the Letters of Intent, selected applicants were invited to submit a full proposal (Stage 2).

The second process, the Request for Proposals, called specifically for proposals focused on Occupational Health and Safety Challenges in the Agricultural Industry.

The overall objectives of the CIRP are to:

- promote, educate and increase the awareness level of injury and disease prevention issues
- achieve practical outcomes which have a positive impact on employers and workers
- apply acquired knowledge to the development of new techniques
- identify and promote effective return-to-work and rehabilitation strategies
- evaluate specific program interventions or other initiatives to assess the impact on reducing injury and disability
- promote research towards the advancement of general medical science where there is a link to workers’ compensation

Since the CIRP began, WCB has contributed approximately \$7 million to support 80 innovative Manitoba projects aimed at achieving these goals. Approximately 65 percent of the funding has supported workplace prevention, education & training initiatives. With support from the CIRP, the WCB promotes and creates a culture of safety which will enhance the understanding of workers’ compensation issues and minimize the human and financial impact of occupational injuries and disease.



**SAFE
WORK**

SPOT THE HAZARD
ASSESS THE RISK
FIND A SAFER WAY
EVERYDAY

2003 Approved Grants

SMALL BUSINESS ERGONOMIC INTERVENTION & EVALUATION PROJECT

Agency: MFL Occupational Health Centre, Inc.
Funding: \$95,000

Purpose: A case study resource book of ergonomic interventions will be developed for small businesses. The case studies will show the quantitative impact of the various solutions on risk factor reduction, worker benefits and costs.

THE KEYS TO COMMUNICATION – CLEAR AND SIMPLE LANGUAGE

Agency: Canadian Union of Postal Workers – Winnipeg Local 856
Funding: \$31,720

Purpose: This pilot project will develop a training program and materials that will be offered to workers with literacy challenges to create awareness and knowledge of workplace safety and health.

WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY STRATEGY FOR COMMUNITY-BASED CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS IN NORTHERN ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES

Agency: Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation (NCN)/InterGroup Consultants Ltd.
Funding: \$148,919

Purpose: This is a two-stage project. The first stage is the development of a model, to identify and prioritize community needs for addressing workplace health and safety issues during construction projects in northern Manitoba Aboriginal Communities. The second-stage will implement and evaluate the impact of the action plans identified in the first stage.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY CHALLENGES IN THE AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY

Agency: Deloitte Inc.
Funding: \$158,370

Purpose: To identify the challenges and solutions involved in health and safety programs for Manitoba farmers and their families, and to identify the challenges and solutions involved in providing injured farmers with income continuity and coverage for medical-related expenses. The project will include a survey of the current programs, so recommendations can be made to reduce and prevent agricultural injuries and disease.

“Together, with the support of the Community Initiatives and Research Funding, NCN and InterGroup Consultants hope to enhance workplace safety on future construction projects in Nelson House and other aboriginal communities.”

— **Dennis Linklater,**
NCN Housing Authority Chair



**SAFE
WORK**

SPOT THE HAZARD
ASSESS THE RISK
FIND A SAFER WAY
EVERYDAY

ABORIGINAL WORKERS EDUCATION AND OUTREACH PROJECT

Agency: MFL Occupational Health Centre, Inc.
Funding: \$182,870

Purpose: The aim of this initiative is to build on the results of a survey that identified how to increase aboriginal workers' awareness on workplace health and safety issues. The project will develop and implement a unified strategy to equate the traditional seven Aboriginal teachings with the issues of workplace health and safety for Aboriginal workers.

INJURED AND DISABLED WORKERS' CENTRE

Agency: Injured Workers Association of Manitoba Inc.
Funding: \$81,112

Purpose: The Centre supports injured workers following the termination of WCB benefits, or following the decision that an accident is not compensable. The Centre assists injured workers and their families to understand, cope and adapt to injuries and post injury issues, which can be physical and psychological. The assistance includes client counseling and referrals to appropriate community programs. The Centre also assists those injured workers who wish to appeal the WCB's decision, including the presentation of their own appeals. The Centre helps injured workers make informed decisions, take control of their situation and foster a healthier return to work. Ultimately, these services aim to improve an injured worker's sense of healing and self-worth.

FIRE FIGHTER RESEARCH

Funding: \$60,000

Purpose: The Workers Compensation Act of Manitoba was amended in May 2002 to include a rebuttable presumption of compensation for full-time fire fighters who are regularly exposed to the hazards of a fire scene (other than a forest fire) for a minimum period and who contract primary site brain, bladder or kidney cancer, primary non-Hodgkin's lymphoma or primary leukemia. The WCB will be conducting original research to determine whether these five specific cancers are occupational diseases of part-time or volunteer fire fighters.



MINERVA MANITOBA

Agency: Workplace Safety and Health Division,
Manitoba Labour

Funding: \$50,000

Purpose: Working with Manitoba's post secondary institutions, this initiative aims to increase youth awareness of workplace safety and health issues. The program's goal is for young workers to incorporate safety and health practices as they progress through their careers, and to understand their roles and responsibilities as future managers and supervisors.

SAFE WORKERS OF TOMORROW SAFETY AND HEALTH 2003/2004 CAMPAIGN

Agency: Workers of Tomorrow Safety Centre Inc.

Funding: \$129,627

Purpose: The primary focus of this Campaign is to educate students and young workers on their rights as Manitoba workers and to improve their capabilities to assess risk and recognize hazard symbols so that they can implement measures to reduce and prevent workplace accidents. Through the campaign, presentations will be made to thousands of students in high schools, post-secondary educational facilities and training programs. Presentations are made by a volunteer speaker bureau (consisting of both health and safety experts as well as young workers who have survived workplace accidents).



**SAFE
WORK**

SPOT THE HAZARD
ASSESS THE RISK
FIND A SAFER WAY
EVERYDAY

Previously Approved Projects

Previously Approved Grants **IN PROGRESS**

SAFETY IN THE WORKPLACE

Agency: Keewatin Community College (KCC)
 Funding: \$93,000

Purpose: This occupational health and safety curriculum is being developed by KCC, a northern Manitoba community college, for inclusion in the various trades programs. These include Facilities Technician, Heavy Duty Mechanic, Heavy Equipment Operator, Automotive Technician, Carpentry, Electrical, Welding, Millwright, Commercial Cooking, and Plumbing. Approximately 200 students enroll in these trade programs annually, offered in two northern locations. As this project evolves the curriculum may also be integrated into other program areas. The occupational health and safety curriculum under development will be piloted and integrated into the various trades at KCC by the end of 2005.

THE OWNERSHIP OF A CULTURE – PUTTING STUDENTS FIRST

Agency: The Technical and Vocational High School (Tec Voc)
 Funding: \$118,100

Purpose: Tec Voc has developed and designed a health and safety curriculum to be taught at the various programs offered at their technical-vocational high school. The annual enrolment at Tec Voc is close to 1,300 students from a variety of ethnic and cultural backgrounds. The programs offered at Tec Voc allow students to select courses, which develop marketable job skills and assist them in obtaining employment in a trade or industry. The completed health and safety curriculum is being piloted at Tec Voc during the 2003-2004 school year.





“I would like to thank the WCB and its Community Initiatives and Research program for the support and participation it has given to us. It is with this support that we are able to take steps towards creating a cultural shift towards safety awareness among our future young workers.”

— Julius Grosz,
Curriculum Developer, Tec Voc High School

MINERVA MANITOBA

Agency: Workplace Safety and Health Division (WSH)
Funding: \$50,000 (over two years)

Purpose: The goal of Minerva Manitoba is to introduce more safety and health information into the curriculum of Manitoba’s post-secondary institutions. The anticipated outcome is to increase youths’ knowledge and awareness of workplace hazards and to have young workers incorporate safety and health practices as they progress through their careers. Through this initiative, a Minerva SAFE Manitoba Award has been established at Red River College and at the University of Manitoba. The University of Manitoba, supported through Minerva Manitoba, has also produced health and safety modules, currently in use in the Faculty of Agriculture and Engineering.

FOODSERVICE INDUSTRY SAFETY AND HEALTH MULTIMEDIA SERIES

Agency: Manitoba Restaurant Association (MRA)
Funding: \$53,750

Purpose: This multimedia series includes videos and written material on occupational health and safety for foodservice operators and foodservice workers, including the safe operation of foodservice equipment. The Manitoba restaurant industry employs about 35,000 people, of which 75% are between the ages of 16 and 25. As the restaurant industry is the most common “first” employer for young workers, it is critical that they educate youth in safe work practices so they are knowledgeable about the risks apparent in performing their job. These videos will provide a valuable occupational health and safety educational resource for employers and their staff in the foodservice industry. The videos and print information developed from this project will be translated into French and will also be close-captioned. These resources will be distributed to every foodservice establishment in Manitoba (approximately 2,800).

BUILDING RESPECTFUL WORKPLACES

Agency: United Steelworkers of America
Funding: \$25,000 (over three years)

Purpose: This is a joint union-management approach to informing workers how to promote and build respectful workplaces in Manitoba. Materials deal with the human dynamics workers need to respect when building respectful relationships in the workplace. These include individual race, gender, disability, and other human rights.

COMMUNITY FARM SAFETY PROJECT

Agency: Manitoba Agriculture and Food
 Funding: \$107,900 (over three years)

Purpose: This project will facilitate increased coordination and effectiveness among community-based organizations or programs currently offering farm safety educational resources to Manitoba communities. Volunteers will be trained to deliver a consistent farm safety message, to provide leadership and community development, to enhance program evaluation and to identify and coordinate inter-agency resources. Through the coordination of this project, community-based farm safety programs will be better positioned to coordinate the delivery of their services aimed at reducing Manitoba farm injuries and fatalities, and to increase wellness.

ERGONOMIST PROJECT – IMPROVING ACCESS TO OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH SERVICES AND EDUCATION

Agency: MFL Occupational Health Centre, Inc.
 Funding: \$137,496

Purpose: To provide expert ergonomic knowledge and skill in problem-solving and consultation services to individuals, workplaces, and joint health and safety committees. As well, the project provides ergonomic resources to employers and workers in rural and northern communities, small employers, immigrant workers and non-unionized workers.

WORKPLACE HEALTH & SAFETY COUNCIL “PROTECTING PRESERVING PROMOTING”

Agency: Winnipeg Regional Health Authority (WRHA)
 Funding: \$405,037 (over two years)

Purpose: The funding for this project supports the early development of the Workplace Health & Safety Council, consisting of the WRHA/Manitoba Council of Health Care Unions. The Council’s mandate is to prevent injury in 27,000 health care workers and to decrease their resulting personal and financial costs. The Council will utilize and implement the Project Disability Prevention and Management Guidelines that were produced from a WRHA needs assessment, which was completed in 2003.

ERGONOMICS PROJECT

Agency: Canadian Auto Workers (CAW)
 Funding: \$193,727

Purpose: This project will provide workplace education and training to increase awareness of strain and sprain injuries, including back injuries and repetitive strain injuries. Through this training workers will learn what steps need to be taken to avoid these types of injuries and to identify symptoms in the early stages before problems become chronic and require long term absences from the workplace. The training will also provide the fundamentals of ergonomics which seek to change the tools, workstations and workplace in order to avoid injury.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Agency: Day Nursery Centre
 Funding: \$10,000

Purpose: The project will create a pilot program for Early Childhood Education Centres which will promote health, wellness and safety awareness on the risk of injuries and stress in their workplace, and will provide information and guidance to help decrease or avoid personal injuries at work and in their personal lives.

EMPLOYER DISABILITY AWARENESS TRAINING AND “BEST PRACTICES” IDENTIFICATION OF JOB REDESIGN AND ACCOMMODATION

Agency: Manitoba League of Persons with Disabilities Inc.
 Funding: \$80,000

Purpose: The aim of this project is to help remove the link between disability and unemployability, through the delivery of disability awareness training, to small and medium sized organizations in Manitoba. Best practices in accommodation and job redesign will be identified and shared with a community resource list. Training modules will also be developed. The project will establish community links and address the transition of youth from school to work.

MESSAGE THERAPY PROMOTES A HEALTHY WORKPLACE

Agency: Riverview Health Centre
 Funding: \$28,120

Purpose: To evaluate whether access to onsite massage therapy prevents work related time loss injuries and promotes health, healing and a reduction of workers' compensation costs.

MAXIMIZING ABILITIES IN THE WORKPLACE

Agency: SMD AbiTech Inc.
 Funding: \$162,000

Purpose: To develop, implement and evaluate a best practice model that can be used to promote workplaces that maximize abilities. A workplace that maximizes abilities is designed to (1) prevent injuries; (2) promote efficiency; and (3) enable aging employees to remain in the workplace.

GETTING THE PERSON WITH APHASIA BACK TO WORK

Agency: Speechworks
 Funding: \$22,734

Purpose: To evaluate the effectiveness of a new technology-based treatment, and to demonstrate that this new intervention can assist people with aphasia (loss of ability to communicate after a stroke or head injury) gain an improved quality of life.



DISABILITY MANAGEMENT WORKS

Agency: Reaching E-Quality Employment Services Inc.
 Funding: \$158,223

Purpose: To develop, test & implement workplace prevention & disability management programs that will be helpful to small business employers in Winnipeg, using research on “best practices/benchmarks.” From this knowledge and experience an interactive and renewable resource guide on Disability Management will be developed, tested and implemented to improve the human, business and other costs related to absenteeism, accident and illness and disability management for small employers in Winnipeg (<50 employees).

POWER MECHANICS SAFETY AND HEALTH

Agency: Dauphin Regional Comprehensive Secondary School (DRCSS)
 Funding: \$44,250

Purpose: This health and safety curriculum was developed and designed by DRCSS for use in Manitoba schools which provide instruction in Power Mechanics. It is envisioned that all 20 high school power mechanics programs in the province will integrate the safety curriculum in their programs.

WORKING SAFELY FOR LIFE SERIES

Agency: Anokiwiin Training Institute
 Funding: \$100,000

Purpose: Anokiwiin Training Institute developed a health and safety curriculum for traditional and online delivery. This curriculum package provides culturally relevant and reality-based training for Aboriginal youth and other workers entering the workforce for the first time. The program is delivered through seven coordinated workshops (either delivered as a package or as individual workshops). The Working Safely for Life series of workshops include:

- i) Teaming Up For Safety – Safety and Health Roles and Responsibilities
- ii) Preventing and Protecting – Working Safely With Hazards
- iii) Putting First Things First – Preventing Accidents at the Workplace
- iv) Recognizing Problems and Solutions – Using WHMIS
- v) Working With and For Workers – How Workers’ Compensation Works
- vi) Taking It All Back Home – Working Safely in the Community
- vii) Seeing the Big Picture – Connecting Health and Safety and the Environment

Program materials include: participant manuals, participant workbooks with learner exercises and assessments, and facilitator guides.

Previously Approved Grants **COMPLETED IN 2003**

SAFE WORKERS OF TOMORROW 2002/2003 CAMPAIGN

Agency: Workers of Tomorrow Health & Safety Centre, Inc.
 Funding: \$115,058

Purpose: Safe Workers of Tomorrow delivered 368 presentations to 10,385 students in Manitoba at no cost to students, schools or school divisions during the 2002/2003 school year. During interactive presentations, students heard information about:

- > How to recognize workplace hazards
- > Prevention of workplace injury, illness and death
- > Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (W.H.M.I.S.)
 - working with chemicals
- > Health and safety rights of Manitoba workers
- > Use of personal protective equipment
- > Steps to take if injured in a workplace

ABORIGINAL WORKERS OUTREACH PROJECT

Agency: MFL Occupational Health Centre, Inc. (MFLOHC)
 Funding: \$19,729

Purpose: Initially a consultative survey was used to determine the type of health and safety resources currently accessible and relevant to Aboriginal workers, and to build on existing strengths of the Aboriginal community to deal with workplace health and safety issues. Challenges confronting the young workers and their families, cultural awareness for employers and workers who are reluctant to report workplace health and safety were identified through the survey as areas that need attention. It was recommended that the challenges facing these groups would be addressed by equating the traditional seven Aboriginal teachings (respect, humility, love, truth, honesty, courage and wisdom) with the rights of workers to know about workplace hazards, participate in health and safety committees and to refuse unsafe work. MFLOHC received a grant from WCB in 2003 to implement their recommendations.

INJURED AND DISABLED WORKERS' CENTRE

Agency: Injured Workers Association of Manitoba Inc.
Funding: \$80,325

Purpose: The Centre supports injured workers following the termination of WCB benefits, or following the decision that an accident is not compensable. The Centre assists injured workers and their families to understand, cope and adapt to injuries and post injury issues, which can be physical and psychological. Services include client counseling and referrals to appropriate community programs. The Centre also assists those injured workers who wish to appeal the WCB's decision, including the presentation of their own appeals. The Centre helps injured workers make informed decisions, take control of their situation and foster a healthier return to work. Ultimately, these services aim to improve an injured worker's sense of healing and self-worth.

BUILDING A REGIONAL OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH PROGRAM FOR THE HEALTH CARE SECTOR IN WINNIPEG

Agency: Winnipeg Regional Health Authority
Funding: \$286,700

Purpose: This two-year project conducted a needs assessment to assess and describe occupational health and safety programs in health care; devised methods to optimize resource sharing; compiled best practices; and began to establish the infrastructure for addressing these issues.

ADDRESSING VIOLENCE IN THE MENTAL HEALTH CARE WORKPLACE

Agency: Health Sciences Centre
Funding: \$30,076

Purpose: This project developed and mapped a comprehensive system of services to employees, which included training on early identification of violent behavior, interventions for dealing with potentially dangerous patients, and assistance for health care workers who may have been assaulted.

HEALTH EDUCATOR OUTREACH PROJECT – IMPROVING ACCESS TO OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH SERVICES AND EDUCATION

Agency: MFL Occupational Health Centre, Inc.
Funding: \$35,601

Purpose: The aim of this project was to reduce work-related injury and disease in Manitoba through the development of workplace health and safety resources and community education and outreach programs specific to immigrant, rural and northern workers and employers.

“The CIRP exists because of the need to reduce workplace injury and disease. The most effective way to reduce the human and financial toll of workplace injuries is to educate workers and employers to prevent potentially harmful situations.”

— **Doug Sexsmith,**
WCB President and CEO



Working with Our Partners to Build a Safer and Healthier Manitoba



For copies of completed reports, including those completed before 2003, contact Janice Meszaros, Manager, Community Initiatives and Research Program at **(204) 954-4650** or toll free outside Winnipeg at **1-800-362-3340** extension **4650**. Please visit the WCB Web site at www.wcb.mb.ca for information on the Community Initiatives and Research Program.

Please call 954-4760 to receive this document in large print format.

WCB 
Workers Compensation
Board of Manitoba

www.wcb.mb.ca

