

Problematic Substance Use Affecting the Workplace



Bottom Line Conference, Vancouver
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Purpose of the Workshop

- ▶ Provide an overview of the elements of substance use
- ▶ Provide high-level awareness of substance use in the workplace
- ▶ Bring attention to some of the health and safety statistics
- ▶ Explore actionable next steps
- ▶ Answer questions



Mental Health
Commission
of Canada

Commission de
la santé mentale
du Canada

To raise awareness of the mental health and wellness needs of Canadians, and to catalyze collaborative solutions to mental health system challenges.



Canadian Centre
on **Substance Abuse**
Centre canadien de lutte
contre les toxicomanies

Partnership. Knowledge. Change.
Collaboration. Connaissance. Changement.

A national non-profit organization with a legislated mandate to provide national leadership and advance solutions to address alcohol – and other drug-related harm.



The Conference Board of Canada
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The Conference Board of Canada is an independent, not-for-profit organization, providing highly relevant and balanced analyses of key issues facing Canada and Canadian organizations.



Substance Use

- ▶ Substance use cost the Canadian economy more than \$39.8 billion in 2002
- ▶ Close to 6 million people in Canada meet criteria for a substance use disorder at some point in their lives
- ▶ Canadian Tobacco, Alcohol and Drugs Survey (2015):
 - ▶ 77% of Canadians consumed alcoholic beverage
 - ▶ 20% of Canadians who drank exceeded Canada's alcohol drinking guidelines
 - ▶ 13% of Canadians aged 15+ used opioids
 - ▶ 12% of Canadians aged 15+ consumed marijuana
 - More than doubles to 30% for 20–24 year olds

People with a mental illness are twice as likely to have a substance use problem.

Substance Use Spectrum

The use of alcohol and other drugs can fall anywhere on a spectrum, at any point, in any industry, and at any job level



Recreational use

Frequent use

Problematic use

Big Picture Thinking

- ▶ Substance use issues are in all professions
- ▶ Mental and substance use disorders are leading causes of years lived with disability — worldwide
- ▶ Misconception: commonly thought that alcoholics are responsible for most alcohol-related workplace problems
- ▶ Addiction affects people during most productive years of life
- ▶ Addiction is **not** a moral failing or a choice. It is an illness.

Impact of Problematic Substance Use

- ▶ Fatalities
- ▶ Injuries and accidents
- ▶ Chronic diseases
- ▶ Absenteeism or presenteeism
- ▶ Cognitive impairments

By the Numbers

- ▶ 852 workplace fatalities in Canada
- ▶ 232,629 claims for lost time due to a work-related injury or disease
- ▶ Workers with alcohol problems are 2.7 times more likely than workers without drinking problems to have injury-related absences
- ▶ 35% of emergency department patients with an occupational injury were at-risk drinkers
- ▶ 20% of workers report that a coworker's on or off the job drinking jeopardized their own productivity or safety

Why it Matters

Addressing problematic substance use in the workplace can:



Employee performance



Absenteeism and turnover



Workplace safety



Benefit and disability claims



Recruitment and retention



Employee mental and physical well-being

Workplace Risk Factors

- ▶ Access to alcohol and drugs
- ▶ High stress
- ▶ Boredom
- ▶ Repetitive duties
- ▶ Isolation
- ▶ Fatigue
- ▶ Low job satisfaction
- ▶ Long hours
- ▶ Shift work
- ▶ Remote supervision
- ▶ Negative work environment
- ▶ Lack of opportunity for promotion
- ▶ Meetings with clients involving alcohol

Everyone Has a Role to Play



Take Action

1

Review your data

Use your organization's existing data to better understand the scope of the issue in your workplace.

Take Action

2

Involve employees and unions

Seek ideas and input. Truly engage staff and unions as they have insight and experience on how to achieve a healthy workplace.

Take Action

3

Raise awareness

Make information about problematic substance use available and accessible.

Provide prevention and resilience building programs.

Take Action

4

Reduce stigma and discrimination

Create an environment where employees can seek assistance without fear by speaking openly about substance use issues.

Take Action

5

Leadership commitment

Communicate about
available supports.
Leadership should
be visible and
sustained.

Take Action

6

Foster a healthy and safe environment

Create or enhance, and communicate, policies and processes related to substance use.

Develop an alcohol and drug policy tailored to your workplace's culture and specific needs.

Take Action

7

**Encourage
early treatment
and support**

Provide information
on where to get
support and services
(e.g., EAP, EFAP).

Support employees
requiring assistance.


Summary: Take Action

1. Review your data
2. Involve your employees and unions
3. Raise awareness
4. Reduce stigma and discrimination
5. Leadership commitment
6. Foster a healthy and safe environment
7. Encourage early treatment and support

Activity

1. What are some of the **barriers, challenges and pressing concerns** in addressing problematic substance use in the workplace?
2. What would **help you** to move forward or take action?
 - ▶ On your own: Jot down ideas for these two questions
 - ▶ With your table: discuss your ideas **and** record on handout
 - ▶ Whole group: report back and discuss

Resources

 The Conference Board of Canada / Le Conference Board du Canada

Problematic Substance Use and the Canadian Workplace.


At a Glance

- Problematic substance use can affect anyone at any time and has been linked to numerous negative workplace outcomes, including absenteeism, lost productivity, on-the-job accidents and injuries, and workplace violence and harassment.
- To protect and improve the health, safety, and well-being of employees, Canadian employers should implement policies and programs that address and prevent problematic substance use in their workplace.
- This briefing offers unique and timely information on the frequency, types, and characteristics of existing drug and alcohol policies and programs among Canadian employers.

BRIEFING SEPTEMBER 2016


 Mental Health Commission of Canada / Commission de la santé mentale du Canada

 Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse / Centre canadien de lutte contre les toxicomanies
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Start the Conversation

Problematic Substance Use and the Workplace



The illustration features a central green silhouette of a person. Surrounding the person are five speech bubbles, each containing a different icon: a green cross, a green recycling symbol, a blue pill, a blue glass of wine, and a green cannabis leaf.

Next Steps (CCSA)

- ▶ Environmental Scan
- ▶ Employer Guide
- ▶ Webinars
- ▶ Business Case

Save the Date / Dates à retenir

ISSUES of SUBSTANCE CONFERENCE 2017 CONGRÈS QUESTIONS de SUBSTANCE

Addiction matters • La dépendance, ça compte

November 13–15
Calgary, Alberta

Le 13 au 15 novembre
Calgary (Alberta)

Call for Abstracts Closes January 27, 2017
L'appel de résumés prendra fin le 27 janvier 2017

Thank you!

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