

Institute for Work & Health Strategic Plan 2018-2022



Institute
for Work &
Health

Research Excellence
Advancing Employee
Health

About this report

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Our Mission

The Institute for Work & Health promotes, protects and improves the safety and health of working people by conducting actionable research that is valued by employers, workers and policy-makers.

Strategic Plan 2018-2022
Institute for Work & Health

About the Institute

The Institute for Work & Health (IWH) is an independent, not-for-profit research organization. Our mission is to promote, protect and improve the safety and health of working people by conducting actionable research that is valued by employers, workers and policy-makers.

What we do

Since 1990, we have been providing research results and producing evidence-based products to inform those involved in preventing, treating and managing work-related injury and illness. We also train and mentor the next generation of work and health researchers.

How we share our knowledge

Along with research, knowledge transfer and exchange is core to the work of the Institute. IWH commits significant resources to enable our research findings to be used by our key audiences. We achieve this through an exchange of information and ongoing dialogue with our audiences. This approach ensures that research information is both relevant and applicable to their decision-making.

How we are funded

Our primary funder until 2012 was the Ontario Workplace Safety and Insurance Board. As of 2013, our primary funder is the Province of Ontario. Our scientists also receive substantial external peer-reviewed research grant funding.

Our community ties

The Institute has formal affiliations with four universities: McMaster University, University of Toronto, University of Waterloo and York University. Through our association with the university community, plus our access to key data sources, IWH has become a widely respected advanced training centre. We routinely host international scientists. In addition, graduate students from Canada and abroad associate with IWH to receive guidance and mentoring from scientific staff, and participate in projects, giving them first-hand experience and vital connections to the work and health research community.

Strategic Plan 2018-2022

Opportunities and Challenges Ahead

In the fall of 2018, there is strength in the Ontario economy and employment gains are strong. With the June 2018 election of the Conservative government in Ontario, there will be adjustments to public policy priorities. While the specific priorities of the current government in the area of worker health protection will emerge in time, we expect the strong record of tripartite governance of occupational health and safety in Ontario to continue.

In September 2018, the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) announced the elimination of a \$14B unfunded liability and reduced the average WSIB premium rate by 30% (from \$2.35 to \$1.65 per \$100 of insurable payroll). Employer premium reductions are estimated at \$1.45 billion in 2019. Within the WSIB, there is a renewed confidence and a strong focus on strengthening the quality of service delivery. Over the past two years, the WSIB has initiated a research funding program and has strengthened collaborations with the Institute. We expect this momentum to continue.

In this context, the Institute will continue a focus on our two overarching research priorities: Work as a Determinant of Health and Health as a Determinant of Work. Within each priority the Institute will focus its research on themes related to workers, workplaces and public policy that are relevant to the needs of Ontarians and other Canadians both today and in the future. Our research will be underpinned by a recognition that workplace parties seek practical evidence-based solutions to their occupational health and safety and disability management challenges. Integral to our activities is our commitment to independent and impartial research aligned to the needs of workers, workplaces and public institutions. We will be leaders in innovative knowledge transfer and exchange activities and will be committed to integrating the engagement of stakeholders into our applied research activities.

In the fall of 2020, the Institute will host the World Congress on Safety and Health at Work, welcoming more than 3,500 delegates from around the world to Toronto. The Congress will be the signature activity of the 2018-2022 period, and we anticipate a legacy of a strengthened global reputation for Canadian leadership in worker health protection.

Over the five-year period of the current Strategic Plan, the Institute will be vigilant in recruiting and retaining high-calibre information management and analytic talent in a very competitive local labour market. As a small organization, we will be nimble and imaginative in ensuring our organization infrastructure is fit for purpose. And over the five-year period of the current Strategic Plan, the Institute will renew key members of the organization's senior leadership.

Strategic Direction 1

High-Impact Research

The Institute will conduct research of excellence and relevance that impacts the safety and health of working people.

In 2022, the Institute for Work & Health will be known as a global leader in multidisciplinary research on the prevention of work-related injury and illness and the prevention of work disability. IWH researchers will be recognized as innovative for the problems we study, the methodologies we use, and for the applications of our research. Stakeholders will seek expert advice from IWH researchers to address challenges in protecting the safety and health of working people.

Excellence: Be leaders in research on the prevention of occupational injury and illness and on the prevention of work disability. We will demonstrate excellence and innovation by delivering research that expands knowledge and methods to improve the safety and health of working people.

Relevance: Conduct research that is valued by our stakeholders. We will engage with employers, workers and policy-makers to identify and carry out relevant research with actionable findings.

Impact: Our research will influence the development of regulatory standards and the adoption of optimal workplace practices to improve the safety and health of working people. We will document these impacts.

Our indicators of success

Consistent achievement of a minimum **35% success rate in peer-reviewed grant funding competitions**: double the national success rate of 15% in CIHR grant competitions.

Publish a minimum of **30 peer-reviewed research papers annually**.

Document **25 case studies of the impact of our research** over the period 2018-2022.

Strategic Direction 2

Effective Knowledge Transfer

The Institute will strengthen and extend its knowledge transfer and exchange activities to ensure that IWH research findings are valued and translated into action.

In 2022, the Institute will be seen by its stakeholders as a leading source of research on work and health through effective knowledge transfer and exchange (KTE). Stakeholders will report that they have strong relationships with IWH and its researchers, that they are engaged in our research and KTE processes, that our findings are accessible and relevant, and that our research is used to inform policy and practice. IWH researchers will continue to integrate KTE into their research plans and projects.

Relationships: Strengthen stakeholder relationships. We will enhance the scope and quality of our interactions with stakeholders by engaging them in the research process and in the application of research findings.

Reach: Expand our audiences and support their access to and use of research evidence. We will innovate in the use of new technologies and methods to increase the dissemination of research evidence.

Products: Develop evidence-based guides, tools and information products to support efforts to improve the safety and health of working people.

Our indicators of success

Between 2018 and 2022, we will **increase the number of OHS and DM professionals who subscribe to our information products from 5,000 to 7,500.**

In annual surveys, a minimum of **50% of our stakeholders will report using IWH information products** in the past 12 months.

In annual surveys, a minimum of **50% of our stakeholders will report sharing an IWH information product with a professional colleague** in the past 12 months.

Strategic Direction 3

Organizational Excellence

The Institute will achieve organizational excellence through the right people, management practices, business processes, tools and technology.

In 2022, the Institute will be recognized for its organizational excellence – an emphatic commitment to staff engagement, an effective infrastructure, transparent and clear management practices and outstanding stewardship of resources.

The best people: Attract, retain and develop talented people. We will maintain policies and practices to recruit, retain, and develop staff who reflect our core values, advance our mission, complement our existing knowledge and skills, and contribute to organizational excellence.

Wellbeing: Be a healthy, safe and engaging workplace. We will maintain a work environment that is health-promoting and that supports a healthy work/life balance. We will continue initiatives to promote health and wellbeing.

Effective infrastructure: Continually improve our infrastructure and our management practices. We will have sound management systems that are developed and implemented in a participatory and consultative manner. We will provide the infrastructure, technology and processes that support staff and enable the Institute to be successful and productive.

Accountability: Ensure sound accountability and reporting mechanisms. We will continually evaluate our operations and functions, and enhance internal reporting systems that measure the effectiveness and efficiency of our operations. We will work with our funders, Board of Directors and stakeholders to identify performance metrics to support the monitoring of the Institute's progress and productivity with an objective to continually improve.

Our indicators of success

An annual voluntary **separation rate less than 5%**.

More than **80% of Institute staff will participate in a minimum of 100 hours of staff training and development** annually.

Staff perceptions of the **quality of employment will exceed 75% of benchmarks** for 16 norms for North American employers.

Strategic Direction 4

Sustaining the Future

The Institute will strengthen its financial and strategic position to ensure a sustainable future.

In 2022, the Institute will continue to be a successful, not-for-profit, applied research and knowledge transfer organization in an increasingly competitive environment – a global leader in the field of work and health research. The Institute will have a valued international reputation, strong institutional affiliations nationally and a diversified resource base.

The next generation: Train the next generation of researchers. We will invest in Ontario's future by providing unique opportunities for research trainees to engage with workplace stakeholders and to be competent in multidisciplinary research that produces actionable findings.

Funding: Increase and diversify financial sources. We will identify funding revenue targets and seek out additional provincial and federal funding sources to support large-scale initiatives aligned to our mission.

Vigilance: Manage our risks. We will be vigilant in ensuring that our actions protect the Institute's reputation as an impartial, independent and aligned research organization. We will monitor and mitigate risks, demonstrate the highest standards in privacy protection practices, and work to strengthen research data infrastructure in the field of worker health protection.

Our indicators of success

We will **annually invest in the training of a minimum of six trainees** at the doctoral and post-doctoral level.

An **increase in funding support of 25%** by 2022.

Between 2018 and 2022, we will have a **deficit-free performance in monitoring and controlling risk:** financial, operational and reputational.