

SUDBURY AREA OFFICE

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May 14, 2024

MEMORANDUM

To: Ontario Region Staff- All locals

From: Andréane Chénier, Jean-Louis Hébert and Paul Sylvestre-National Health and Safety Representatives

Copy: Mona Staples, Jo-Ann Breton, Jacqueline Lancaster, Darcie McEathron, Robin McKenna, Andrew Hunter

Date: May 14, 2024

Re: IWH Research Opioids

The Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development thinks the opioid epidemic is only an issue for construction workers. The MLITSD fails to examine the contribution of poor occupational health and safety programs that lead to injuries, illnesses, and fatalities.

The opioid epidemic has impacts in our work, from self-medication due to an underfunded health care system that largely ignores mental wellbeing and poorly manages pain in individuals, to responding to opioid overdoses in our libraries, community-outreach work, and public spaces.

These articles are written in plain language and provide an excellent summary of the research. **This information can be shared with Locals but is only available in English.**

Examining work-related injuries and the risk of opioid harms

Do work-related injuries play a role in the risk of opioid harms? In a recent study by the Institute for Work & Health (IWH) and the Occupational Cancer Research Centre (OCRC), researchers examined how opioid harms in a large group of formerly injured Ontario workers

MARK HANCOCK
National President/Président national

CANDACE RENNICK
National Secretary-Treasurer/Secrétaire-trésorière nationale

PATRICK GLOUTNEY, FRED HAHN, JUDY HENLEY, SHERRY HILLIER, KAREN RANALLETTA
General Vice-Presidents/Vice-présidences générales

compared to harms in the general Ontario population. They found that the formerly injured workers had higher risks of emergency department visits and hospitalizations for opioid-related harms. This pattern was seen across most occupations and industries in this group of workers.

<https://iwh.us10.list-manage.com/track/click?u=3d76b588a505ef2edb530981a&id=cd49b53d38&e=e484c54a66>

Finding solutions to prevent opioid harms among workers

With the recognition that workplaces can play a part in responding to North America's opioid crisis, the OCRC and IWH held a workshop in March to discuss how to prevent opioid harms among workers. Presentations, panel discussions and breakout sessions provided a lot of food for thought about the way forward.

<https://iwh.us10.list-manage.com/track/click?u=3d76b588a505ef2edb530981a&id=c0bda8591c&e=e484c54a66>