



WSIB adopts consensus based DM audit tool



The Workplace Safety and Insurance Board of Ontario (WSIB) will use NIDMAR's consensus based disability management audit tool as it works with companies that are seeking to improve their return to work and disability management approach.

TORONTO: The Workplace Safety and Insurance Board of Ontario (WSIB) has joined the growing number of organizations that have adopted NIDMAR's consensus based disability management audit tool (CBDMA) to support the return to work of injured and disabled workers.

The federation of workers' compensation boards in Germany and Employers Mutual in New South Wales, Australia adopted the tool last year, as did the Canadian federal government and the workers' compensation board of Newfoundland and Labrador.

"From my perspective, the CBDMA provides a quality assurance approach that a company can use to benchmark its current (or planned) program," says Frances Share, Director, Return to Work/Labour Market ReEntry Program Branch. "To my knowledge, it's the only objective and statistically reliable tool that incorporates good practices that support both prevention and return to work. The results are then translated into clear elements that a company can take action on."

Those clear elements form a blueprint of how an organization can effectively create the appropriate workplace structure which will assist both companies and unions in ensuring that injured workers have greater opportunities to stay on the job.

Developed as a collaborative initiative between employers and workers, the CBDMA is grounded in international best practice research, and incorporates the core value components of the International Labour Organization's *Code of practice on managing disability in the workplace*.

"The realization is emerging that there is a strong connection between consensus based disability management with standards, and health and safety in the workplace," says Andrew King, national safety, health and environment coordinator, United Steelworkers Canadian National Office. "The same barriers in the workplace for people with disabilities are often sources of injury and illness for all workers."

For the WSIB, adoption of the tool marks the beginning of a period of assessment.

"We are very interested in exploring whether a resource such as NIDMAR's consensus based disability management audit tool has a measurable impact on improving return to work outcomes in Ontario workplaces," says Share. "For that reason, we've certified a number of our staff and managers and over the next two years will be working with companies that are looking for ways to launch or improve their approach to return to work and disability management." ■