



## **SUMMER INSTITUTE 2013** **JULY 23-25, 2013**

**HOSTED AT THE PORT ALBERNI CAMPUS OF THE  
PACIFIC COAST UNIVERSITY FOR WORKPLACE HEALTH SCIENCES (PCU-WHS)  
IN COLLABORATION WITH THE  
CANADIAN CENTRE FOR OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY (CCOHS)  
AND THE  
MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION OF CANADA (MHCC)**

### **PRELIMINARY PROGRAMME**

**THE KEY TO UNLOCKING THE POTENTIAL OF OLDER WORKERS:  
CREATING A MORE INTEGRATED WORKPLACE HEALTH RESPONSE TO AGE, DISABILITY,  
JOB RETENTION AND RETURN TO WORK**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

This year, the NIDMAR Summer Institute explores the potential for Disability Management to provide sustainable and cost effective solutions to the increasing social and economic challenges created by an aging workforce.

In all developed economies, the number of workers aged 35 to 44 is declining while the proportion of the workforce between 45 and 64 years is increasing rapidly<sup>1</sup>. The proportion of people with disabilities in the 50 to 64 year age is between 25 and 30 percent, which is double the disability rate for people aged between 35 and 44 years<sup>2</sup>. Economic inactivity rates for people over the age of 45 years are almost 40 percent higher than for those within the 35 to 44 year age group<sup>3</sup>.

The social and economic implications of increasingly unfavourable age dependency ratios are felt at all levels of society.

Occupational Health and Safety, Human Resources and Disability Management professionals are on the front line in responding to these individual and system challenges which arise when age and disability intersect to threaten a person's working life. A systematic DM approach to policy and practice can maintain people in employment for longer<sup>4</sup>, reduce unsustainable increases in social protection costs<sup>5</sup> and minimize the impact of the costs of absence on the productivity of industry<sup>6</sup>.

The NIDMAR Summer Institute aims to provide participants with key insights into the role that DM approaches can play in extending the healthy working life of older workers.

<sup>1</sup> Bruyère, S. (2006). Disability management: Key concepts and techniques for an aging workforce. *International Journal of Disability Management Research*, 1, 149-158

<sup>2</sup> Grammenos, S. (2003). *Illness, disability and social inclusion*, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg

<sup>3</sup> Prevalence percentages of disability by activity status, sex and age group Eurostat (updated 17/05/11)  
[http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/product\\_details/dataset?p\\_product\\_code=HLTH\\_DB\\_EMACAG](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/product_details/dataset?p_product_code=HLTH_DB_EMACAG) =

<sup>4</sup> European Commission. (2008). *Growth and Jobs: Re-launch of the Lisbon strategy*. Retrieved from  
<http://www.euractiv.com/en/innovation/growth-jobs-relaunch-lisbon-strategy/article-131891>

<sup>5</sup> EUROSTAT (2008). Social protection expenditure and receipts data 1997-2005, European social statistics. Available at  
[http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY\\_OFFPUB/KS-SF-08-046/EN/KS-SF-08-046-EN.PDF](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_OFFPUB/KS-SF-08-046/EN/KS-SF-08-046-EN.PDF)

<sup>6</sup> Confederation of British Industry. (2008). *Sickies and Long-Term Absence give Employers a Headache* - CBI / AXA SURVEY. Retrieved from  
<http://www.cbi.org.uk/ndbs/press.nsf/0363c1f07c6ca12a8025671c00381cc7/90ab71d2f4d981da8025744200523b87?OpenDocument>

## DAY 1 : TUESDAY, JULY 23

8:00 – 8:30 am      **Registration**

### SECTION 1 – INTRODUCING THE ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

8:30 – 9:00 am      **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION**  
*Wolfgang Zimmermann, Executive Director, NIDMAR and President, PCU-WHS*

9:00 – 10:00 am    **AGE AND DISABILITY IN THE WORKPLACE: AN OVERVIEW OF THEMES AND ASPIRATIONS**  
*Dr. Donal McAnaney, Research Chair, International Disability Management Standards Council*

10:00 – 10:30 am    **Break**

### SECTION 2 – UNDERSTANDING THE CONTEXT

10:30 – 12:00 pm    **MAPPING THE SCOPE AND SCALE OF THE CHALLENGES**  
*Professor Susanne Bruyere, Director of Employment and Disability Institute, Industrial Labour Relations, Cornell University*  
 This session provides an overview of the emerging issues and challenges inherent in the demographics of the workforce in most developed economies. It explores the economic long term impact on companies and governments, and the social and individual consequences of disability, economic inactivity and poverty for older workers who acquire or develop health conditions which threaten their employability.

#### **UNDERSTANDING THE DYNAMICS OF AGE, HEALTH AND EXTENDED WORKING LIFE**

*Professor Susanne Bruyere, Director of Employment and Disability Institute, Industrial Labour Relations, Cornell University*  
 This session addresses the dynamic, and often negative, interaction that occurs when age intersects with ill-health and disability. This involves increased vulnerability to both occupational and non-occupational long term health problems and increased work absence. Further, the likelihood that older job seekers with or without disabilities will obtain employment on the open labour market is reduced as a result of many factors including vulnerability to discrimination, the relevance of occupational skills and reduced physical and mental functioning.

12:00 – 1:00 pm    **LUNCH**

1:00 – 2:30 pm      **LEGAL AND REGULATORY CONSTRAINTS ON JOB RETENTION AND RTW FOR OLDER WORKERS**  
*Professor Susanne Bruyere, Director of Employment and Disability Institute, Industrial Labour Relations, Cornell University*  
 The potential for current systems to respond to the challenges raised by age and disability is described and appraised during this session. It considers the extent to which a range of systems are fit for purpose including non-discrimination legislation, workers compensation systems, Occupational Health and Safety regulation, employment law and pension systems.

#### **Age-Sensitive DM and HR Policies and Practice**

*Professor Susanne Bruyere, Director of Employment and Disability Institute, Industrial Labour Relations, Cornell University*  
 This session examines the potential for DM and HR functions to gear up to meet the needs of older workers with and without disabilities. It considers a range of issues including the necessity to incorporate both occupational and non-occupational injuries and health conditions in the scope of DM and HR and the need for a proactive approach which is workplace based. A number of key strategies are addressed.

2:30 – 3:00 pm      **BREAK**

### SECTION 3 – ADDRESSING STAKEHOLDER CONCERNS

The economic and social implications when age intersects with ill-health, impairment and disability is of concern to all key stakeholders. Equally, each stakeholder has an important contribution to make to the maintenance of workability of older workers. This session provides an opportunity for representatives of the stakeholder groups to debate the issues and challenges.

3:00 – 4:30 pm

#### **DEVELOPING A MULTI-STAKEHOLDER APPROACH TO DM AND AGE: A PANEL DISCUSSION**

*Panel Discussion: Chair, Wolfgang Zimmermann*

- Employer perspectives on maintaining the workability and productivity of older workers – Employing organizations must avoid discrimination claims, manage workforce diversity and protect against reputational risk. It is in the interests of employers to extend the working lives of their older workers, retain their valuable experience and reduce the duration and incidence of sickness absence. Benefits include reduced insurance premiums, enhanced motivation and workforce morale, reduced staff turnover and control over long term disability costs.
- The role of worker representatives in supporting job retention and return to work in older workers – Trade Unions have responsibility for the welfare of their older members and to advocate for their rights. They have a vested interest in protecting and increasing their memberships. They have a responsibility to press for more effective DM programs, enhanced working conditions and improved employee benefits. They can also act as an important source of information, advice and support for older members whose jobs are at risk as a result of injuries or ill-health.
- Strategic imperatives in developing more effective age sensitive workers compensation programs – Workers' compensation organizations must address the needs of older, absent workers if they want to succeed in managing their long term financial viability, decrease the level of claims and reduce the duration of absences. Age-sensitive policies and processes that improve return to work outcomes and incentivize good employer practice will ultimately result in better cost-benefit ratios.
- Redesigning health and pension insurance systems to enhance active return to work for older worker – Health and pension insurers bear a substantial proportion of the costs associated with early retirement on the grounds of ill-health. It is essential that they find a solution to long term sustainability. It is in their interests to extend the healthy working lives of the insured person, manage premiums at an economic level and reduce the costs and duration of health and medical interventions. This can only be achieved by a proactive approach to protecting and promoting the health and productivity of older workers.

## DAY 2 : WEDNESDAY, JULY 24

### SECTION 4 – THE CONTRIBUTION OF OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

The OHS response to age-related risks is increasingly recognized as a significant factor in maintaining older workers in employment. An evidenced based approach is required which combines improved advice and guidance services, programs of awareness raising for employers, increased vigilance and up-skilling the knowledge base of OHS professionals.

- 8:30 – 10:00 am     **AGE RELATED OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY ISSUES AND CHALLENGES**  
*Jan Chappel, Senior Technical Specialist, Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS)*  
 Research has shown that physical and mental changes do occur as people age. This session explores how these changes affect people and the jobs they do. Building on lessons learned from research studies, the way in which these changes may manifest at the workplace is presented. A range of work and health situations (e.g. sitting/computer work, carrying heavy loads, training, etc.) are considered, using a comprehensive review of case studies from an occupational health and safety perspective.
- 10:00 – 10:30 pm     **Break**
- 10:30 – 12:00 pm     **EXTENDING HEALTHY WORKING LIVES THROUGH PREVENTION**  
*Jan Chappel, Senior Technical Specialist, Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS)*  
 This session introduces specific solutions and practices which can help prevent the changes due to aging from becoming challenges in the workplace. The possible impacts of the workplace on older workers are examined and solutions that will keep older workers, and in most cases, all workers, safe and free from injury are discussed.
- 12:00 – 1:00 pm     **Lunch**

### SECTION 5 – PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH AND SAFETY IN THE WORKPLACE

According to the WHO Global Burden of Disease reports that mental and behavioural disorders are among the top causes of disability. For example, major depressive disorder is one of the top four causes of years lived with disability in every region of the world<sup>7</sup>. The OECD Sickness, Disability and Work Study concluded that mental health problems are the biggest single cause for disability benefit claims in the majority of participating countries<sup>8</sup>. In the UK, stress has overtaken other reasons for long-term absence such as repetitive strain injury and medical conditions. Workers blame workloads and management styles as key factors<sup>9</sup>.

- 1:00 – 2:30 pm     **MENTAL HEALTH AND THE WORKABILITY OF OLDER WORKERS: THE NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH AND SAFETY IN THE WORKPLACE**  
*Maureen Shaw, Workforce Advisory Committee, Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC)*  
 A psychologically healthy workplace is one which actively works to prevent harm to workers' psychological health. This includes controlling both intentional (e.g. organizational ethos) and accidental factors (e.g. negligence or recklessness). This section introduces the recently published Canadian Standards Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace and its emphasis on prevention, promotion and guidance to the staged implementation of workplace mental health policies and procedures.

<sup>7</sup> WHO (2012) Years lived with disability (YLDs) for 1,160 sequelae of 289 diseases and injuries, 1990–2010: a systematic analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study 2010. *The Lancet*. 380:9859, pp 2163 – 2196.

<sup>8</sup> OECD (2010) Sickness, Disability and Work: Breaking the Barriers. A Synthesis of Findings across OECD Countries. OECD Publications. Available at: [http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/social-issues-migration-health/sickness-disability-and-work-breaking-the-barriers\\_9789264088856-en](http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/social-issues-migration-health/sickness-disability-and-work-breaking-the-barriers_9789264088856-en)

<sup>9</sup> CIPD (2011) Absence Management 2011: Resource Summary. Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, UK Available at: <http://www.cipd.co.uk/hr-resources/survey-reports/absence-management-2011.aspx>

2:30 – 3:00 pm

**Break**

3:00 – 4:30 pm

**IMPLEMENTING GOOD PRACTICE: AN ACTION GUIDE FOR EMPLOYERS**

*Dr. Merv Gilbert, Centre for Applied Research in Mental Health and Addictions (CARMHA), Faculty of Health Sciences, Simon Fraser University, an author of the Guide commissioned by the Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC)*

In support of the National Standards, an Action Guide for Employers has been developed which provides a logical approach to introducing the standard into an employing organization. It describes the steps in planning and implementing workplace interventions. It explains the reasons behind required changes, lists the central actions and provides access to useful resources. This session provides an overview of the Guide.

**SECTION 6 – EFFECTIVE DM RESPONSES TO AGE, DISABILITY AND RTW**

4:30 – 5:30 pm

**HOW SHOULD THE DM COMMUNITY RESPOND TO HEALTH-RELATED ABSENCE AND WORK WITHDRAWAL OF OLDER WORKERS? – OPEN FORUM**

*Dr. Donal McAnaney, Research Chair, International Disability Management Standards Council*

This session provides participants with an opportunity to review the themes and topics that have been addressed in previous sessions from the perspective of the DM/RTW practitioner. It is aimed at compiling an inventory of the challenges faced when engaged in job retention and return work planning for older workers.

**DAY 3 : THURSDAY, JULY 25****SECTION 6 – EFFECTIVE DM RESPONSES TO AGE, DISABILITY AND RTW**

- 8:30 – 10:00 am      **AGE RELATED OCCUPATIONAL AND NON-OCCUPATIONAL INJURIES AND HEALTH CONDITIONS: THE MAINTENANCE OF WORKABILITY APPROACH**  
*Dr. Donal McAnaney, Research Chair, International Disability Management Standards Council*  
 This session locates the role of the DM/RTW practitioner within a Maintenance of Workability framework with specific reference to older workers<sup>10</sup>. The Maintenance of Workability approach is primarily focused on keeping people at work and places responsibility on both the employer and the worker to engage in activities to protect and promote health, wellbeing and productivity. Alongside the OHS and HR functions, DM has a key role to play in maintaining the workability of older employees.
- 10:00 – 10:30 am      **Break**
- 10:30 – 12:00 pm      **CASE MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES TO RESPOND TO LONG TERM ABSENT OLDER WORKERS**  
 This session considers the extent to which providing effective return to work services to older workers requires new knowledge and additional skills above and beyond the core competences of the DM /RTW practitioner. It provides insights into effective strategies for responding to the unique needs of older workers who are at risk of unemployment, early retirement or disability on the grounds of ill-health; their additional requirements for supports and interventions; and case management procedures in dealing with workers with multiple health problems. It explores the challenges facing the DM case manager in adapting procedures and in setting suitable targets and milestones for older absent employees.
- 12:00 – 12:45 pm      **Lunch**
- 12:45 – 1:45 pm      **EMPOWERING SUPERVISORS AND CO-WORKERS TO PLAY A ROLE IN THE RTW OF OLDER WORKERS**  
 This presentation addresses useful approaches to creating effective informal workplace supports for older workers experiencing reduced occupational capacity. While formal and substantive interventions are critical success factors in the initial stages, the role of supervisors and co-workers must not be underestimated in achieving sustainable employment with or without accommodations or supports. This session addresses strategies to encourage appropriate, informal workplace support by supervisors and co-workers and the dilemma inherent in providing relevant information about the returning worker and respecting the confidentiality and dignity of the older worker.
- 1:45 – 2:15 pm      **Break**
- 2:15 – 3:30 pm      **THE MULTI-DISCIPLINARY KNOWLEDGE AND SKILL REQUIREMENTS OF WORKPLACE HEALTH PROFESSIONALS WHEN DEALING WITH OLDER WORKERS**  
*Dr. Donal McAnaney, Research Chair, International Disability Management Standards Council*  
 This interactive session brings together the themes and topics addressed by seminar contributors and the professional experience of participants to explore the demands placed on DM and HR professionals when responding to the job retention and return to work needs of older workers experiencing reduced occupational capacity as a result of an injury or health condition. It is intended to generate proposals for future directions in research, innovation and professional development.
- 3:30 – 4:15 pm      **REVIEW OF LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND CONCLUDING REMARKS**  
*Dr. Donal McAnaney, Research Chair, International Disability Management Standards Council*

<sup>10</sup> McAnaney, D. (2011) European perspectives on Disability Management (1999-2009): Insights and Developments, In Thomas Geisen and Henry Harder (Eds.) Disability Management and Workplace Integration, Gower Ashgate Publishing Ltd, Wey Court East, Union Road, Farnham, Surrey, England