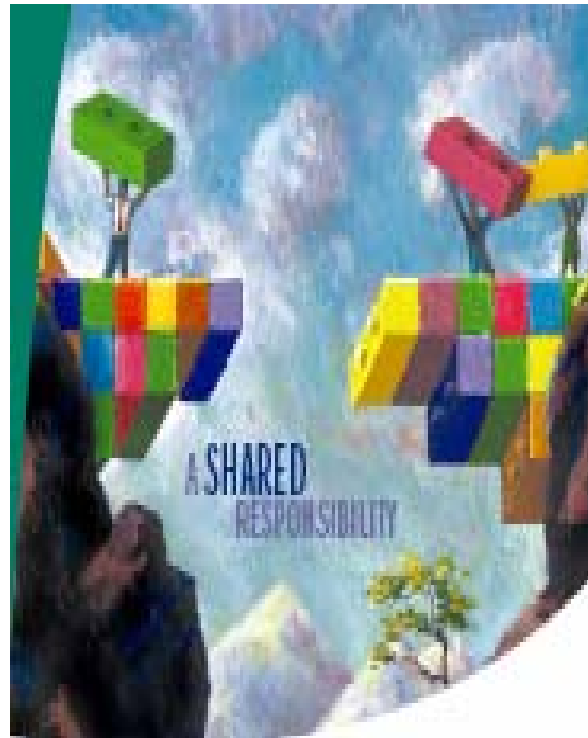


# Return to Work



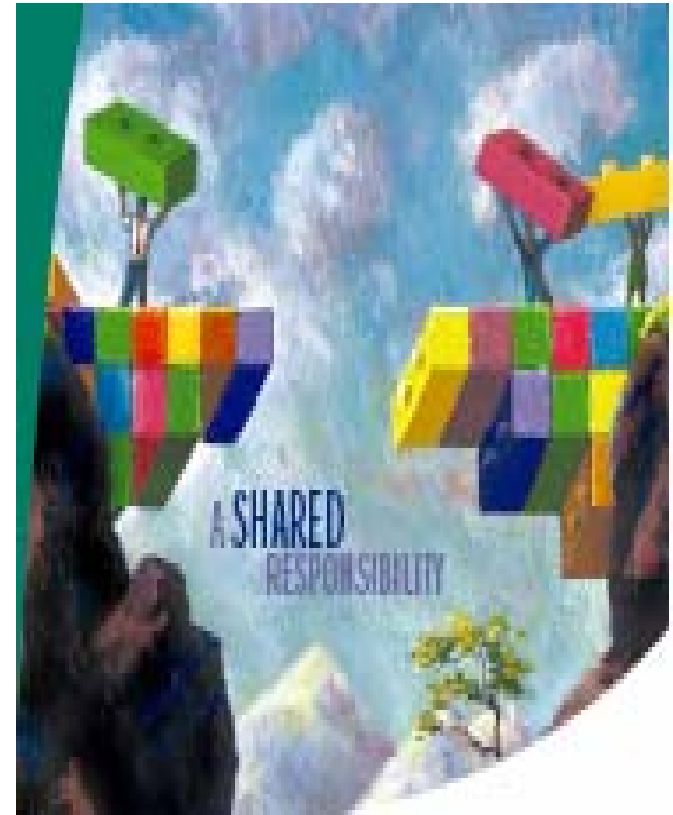
May 30, 2007

# Agenda

- Health and Safety (H&S) and Safe Return to Work (RTW)
- RTW Legislative Requirements
- RTW Roles and Responsibilities
- RTW Programs and RTW Plans
- RTW Good Practices and Outcomes

# Context...

- Preventing workplace injuries and illness is everyone's responsibility.
- When injuries or illness occur, there is a need to minimize the human and financial impacts by focusing on getting the worker back to **safe and productive work**.
- Successful RTW is also everyone's responsibility



# Why Should We Care About Workplace Health and Safety in Ontario?

- In Ontario, about two people die from preventable work-related incidents every week.
- Every week, 1,800 employees lose time from work due to injuries on the job.
- Every year, the WSIB pays out almost \$3 billion in compensation for workplace injuries, illnesses and fatalities.
- The human pain and hardship extend beyond the workplace, reaching the family and into the community.

# Why Should We Care About Safe Return to Work?

- The costs of long-lasting disability from workplace injuries are staggering; most WSIB benefits payments are made on “legacy” claims.
- Twenty per cent of injured workers are off work more than 68 days. These claims account for 80 % of total claims costs.
- An injured worker who has been off work for 6 months to 1 year has only a 50% chance of returning to work. After 2 years, the chances are only 1 in 10.
- The social, personal and economic impacts of not working can be even more devastating than the actual injury.

# Defining Return to Work

RTW is:

- an outcome-oriented process to help injured/ill/disabled workers return to safe and productive work
- a partnership between all parties, aimed at reaching a common goal of return to work
- designed to minimize the total impact of workplace injuries and illness -- human *and* financial



# Connecting RTW with Health & Safety

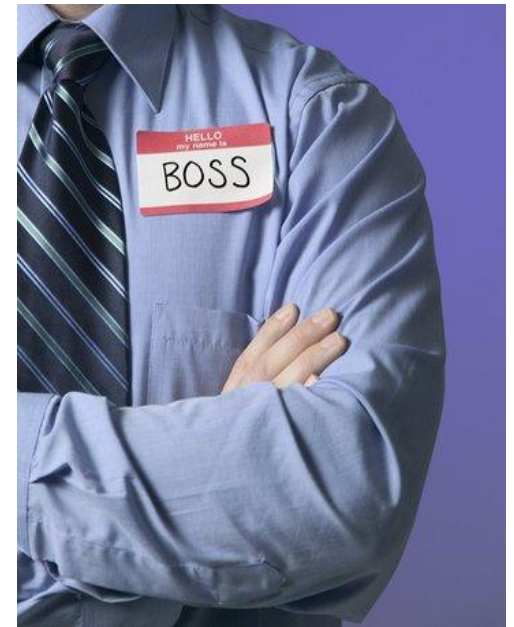
- Workplace H&S includes prevention of injury and illness
- Returning workers need a safe workplace with the risk of re-injury eliminated
- Occupational H&S and Prevention is essential for a recovering worker to prevent re-injury
- Incorporating RTW into a OHS Program is a strong message to support employee morale and demonstrate care

# Legislative Context for RTW

<b>1. Internal Responsibility System</b>	<b><i>Occupational Health and Safety Act</i></b> <i>Section 8,9 25, 27,28</i>
<b>2. Joint Health and Safety Committee</b>	<b><i>Occupational Health and Safety Act</i></b> <i>Section 9</i>
<b>3. Shared responsibility for return to work</b>	<b><i>Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997</i></b> <i>Section 40</i>
<b>4. Re-employment obligations</b>	<b><i>Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997</i></b> <i>Section 41</i>

# RTW Roles: Employer Responsibilities

- Report injury to the WSIB
- Contact worker as soon as possible after the injury
- Maintain communication throughout recovery and return to work
- Attempt to provide **suitable work**
- Provide WSIB with information requested about the worker's return to work
- Offer to re-employ workers who are medically fit



# RTW Roles: Worker Responsibilities

- Get proper medical treatment immediately
- Report their injury to their supervisor
- Maintain communication with the employer throughout recovery and return to work
- Provide the WSIB with information as requested
- Help identify suitable work



# RTW Roles: Health Care Provider Responsibilities

- Complete functional abilities form (FAF)
- Provide clinical information
- Identify most appropriate treatment and ensure it is timely
- Ensure return to work is discussed throughout recovery



# RTW Roles: WSIB Responsibilities

- Provide education to workers and employers
- Monitor activities and progress
- Provide dispute resolution
- Ensure compliance with co-operation and re-employment obligations
- Provide labour market re-entry services

# RTW - Workplace Components

## RTW Program

A company-wide organized, structured approach that outlines the policy and process/procedures by which an employee that is injured or ill and off the job will return to work

## RTW Plan

A detailed and individualized short-term arrangement between the employer and the worker aimed at a common goal and early and safe return to work

# Five Steps to Building a RTW Program

1. Set Standards	<i>The rules – policy, procedure</i>
2. Communicate	<i>Everyone needs to know about the program and their role in advance</i>
3. Train	<i>What to do and how to do it</i>
4. Evaluate	<i>How are we doing?</i>
5. Acknowledge success – make improvements	<i>Did it work well? What can we improve?</i>

# Developing a RTW Plan

## Consideration should be given to:

- Personal circumstances of worker that might impact suitable work
- Worksite issues, i.e. seniority
- Workload impact on co-workers
- The plan needs to be ***time-limited, monitored closely and adjusted*** as the worker recovers.

## The plan should include:

- Agreement on purpose of the suitable work
- Job title and location
- Supervisor information
- Hours/days to be worked
- Duties and restrictions
- Wages
- Start date, length of time and review dates
- Arrangements to attend health care appointments.

# RTW: Good Practices

1. Include the worker and immediate supervisor in planning RTW
2. Cooperate and share information with health care providers
3. Ensure specialized help in finding transitional or accommodated work
4. Ensure that **everyone** knows what to expect



# RTW: Good Practices

5. Contact workers to communicate what accommodations can be made
6. Focus on the workplace getting ready for the returning worker
7. Designate someone as RTW coordinator



# Factors Contributing to Positive RTW Outcomes

**RTW is multi-factorial and can be complex – needs a ‘systems thinking’ approach**

- Workplaces with good workplace occupational H&S practices
- Good relationship, rapport and trust between the worker and employer
- Effective channels of communication between all parties
- Availability of accommodated work

# RTW – Next Steps

- To obtain assistance with RTW matters, contact your Account Manager in your local community WSIB office
- The local WSIB office will identify the Account Manager for your company



- Look in the WSIB website for information:
- [www.wsib.on.ca](http://www.wsib.on.ca)