

Nova Scotia Health and Safety Leadership Charter

Lunch and Learn

Updated for employer use

JANUARY 23, 2024



**WORK SAFE.
FOR LIFE.**

WORKERS' COMPENSATION BOARD OF NOVA SCOTIA

Gradual Onset Stress

A service preview

Shelly Dauphinee

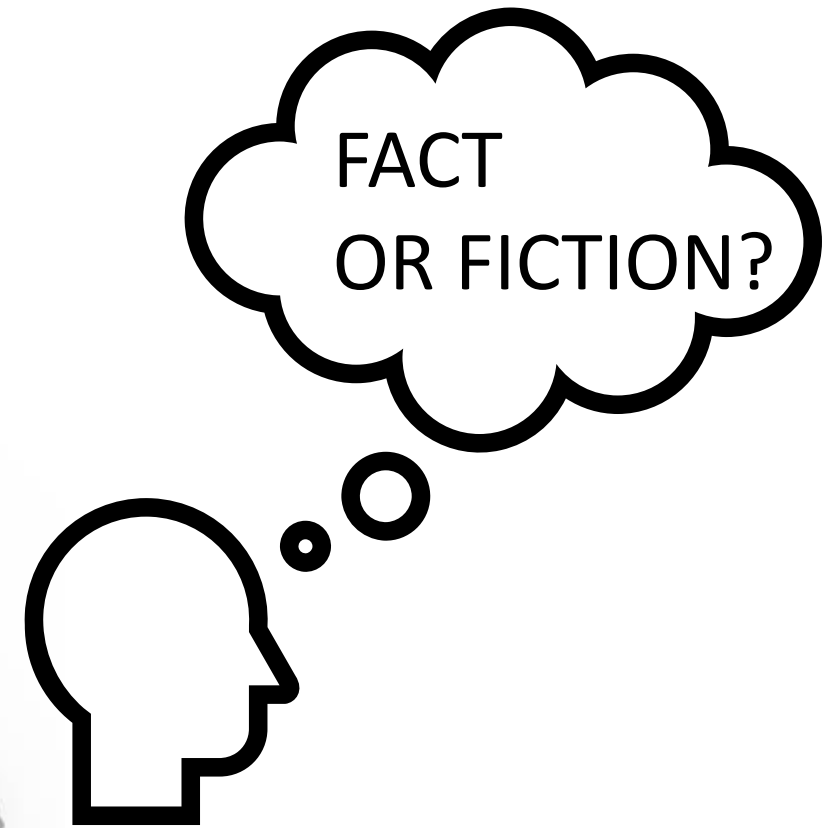
AVP, Psychological Injury

WCB Nova Scotia



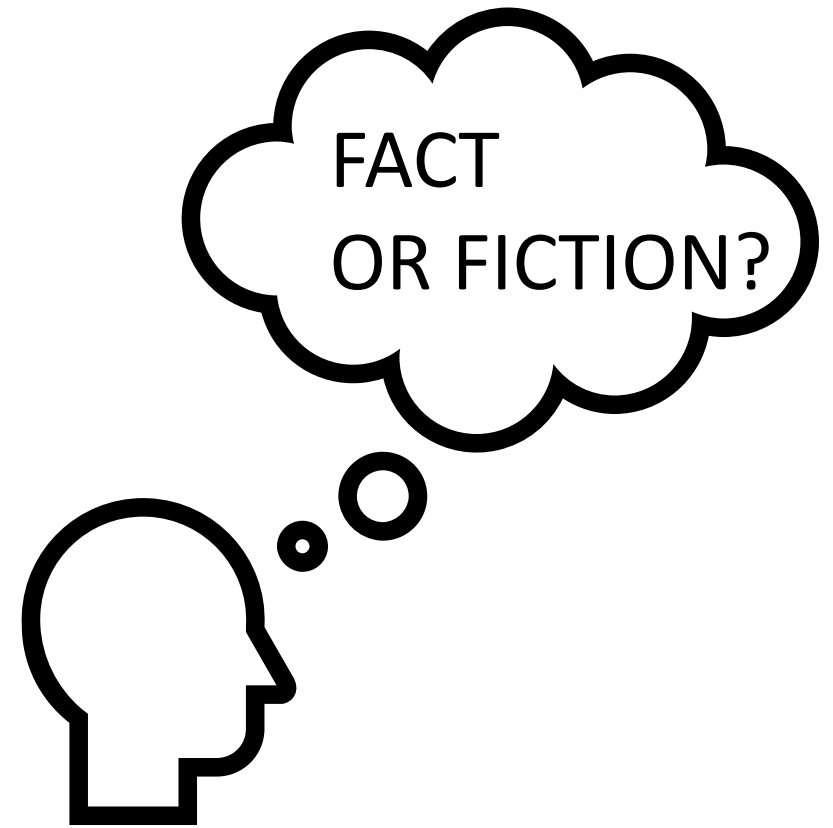
IF FACT OR
FLECTION?





On September 1, 2024,
Nova Scotia will become the first
province in Canada to allow WCB
coverage for psychological injuries
that occur over time.

FICTION

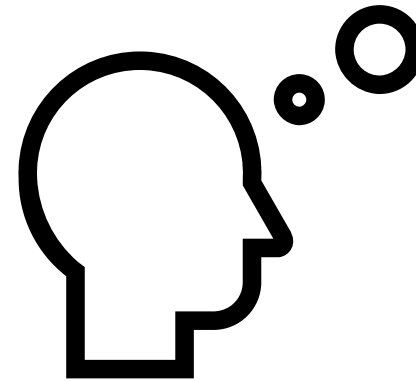


In other jurisdictions, research shows us that these claims take longer to adjudicate than physical injuries.

FACT



FACT
OR FICTION?

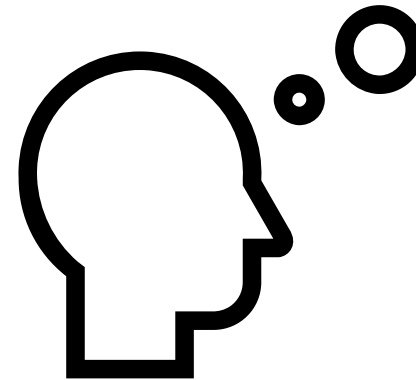


In other jurisdictions, most psychological injury claims happen in retail or manufacturing.

FICTION

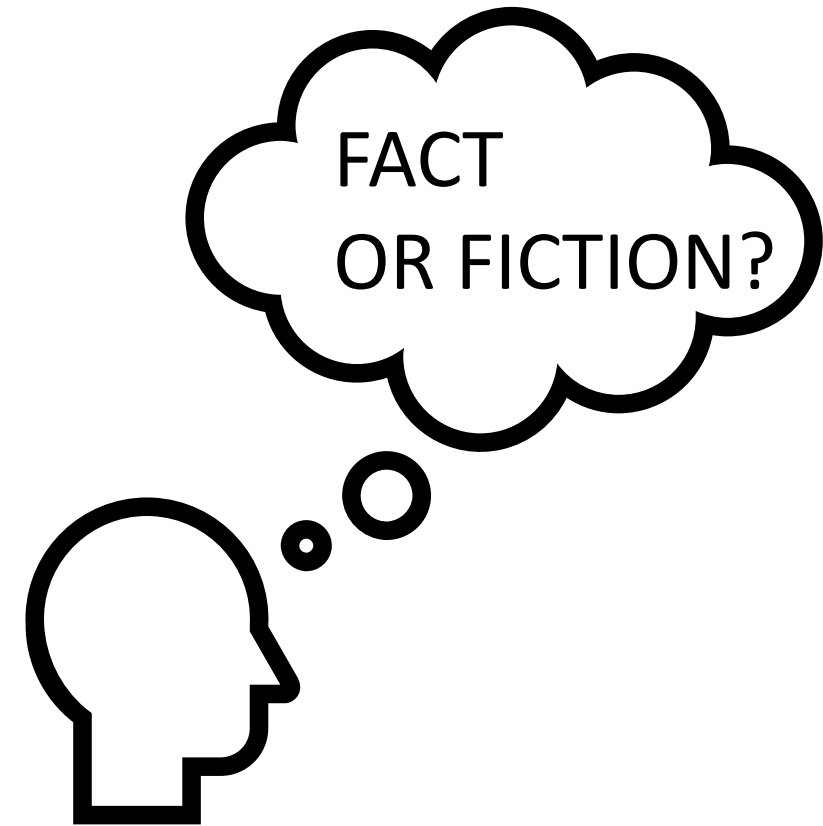


FACT
OR FICTION?



Based on our research we expect thousands of claims in Nova Scotia for gradual onset stress.

FICTION



Workers with psychological injuries get back to work faster when they have a supportive supervisor.

FACT

Prevention and Psychological Injury

Dennita Fitzpatrick

VP, Prevention and Return to Work

WCB Nova Scotia

Safety Management is Safety Management!

The
8 elements
you already
know about
physical
safety!

1. Management leadership and commitment
2. Safe work procedures and written instructions
3. Health and safety training and instruction
4. Identifying hazards and managing risk
5. Inspection of premises, equipment, workplaces & work practices
6. Investigation of incidents
7. Joint health and safety committee & representatives or Safety Reps
8. Occupational health and safety programs/IRS

The Next Frontier...Psychological Safety

1. Organizational culture
2. Clear leadership and expectations
3. Civility and respect
4. Psychological job demands
5. Growth and development
6. Recognition and reward
7. Involvement and influence
8. Workload management
9. Engagement
10. Work/life balance
11. Psychological protection from violence, bullying and harassment
12. Protection of physical safety
13. Protection of psychological safety

There are
13 elements
of a
psychologically
healthy & safe
workplace

Connecting the dots...to existing systems



Where from here?

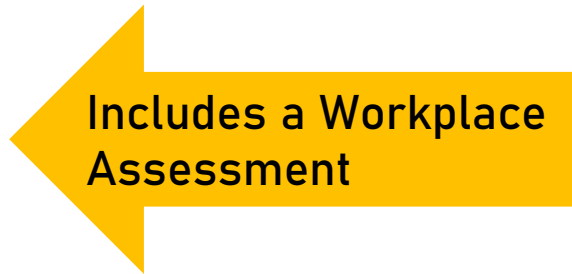
More info is included here. This is just the beginning of WCB's work to build a Psychological Injury Prevention/Safe & Healthy Workplace resource hub.

[Psychologically Healthy Workplaces \(worksafeforlife.ca\)](https://worksafeforlife.ca)



We are impressed with the work done by WCB Saskatchewan (who are leaders on this topic). Here's the link to that resource center:

[Psychological Health & Safety Resource Centre | WorkSafe Saskatchewan](#)



| | |
|-----------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Plan | Conduct hazard identification |
| 2. Do | Train your people |
| 3. Check | Implement controls and monitor |
| 4. Act | Continuously improve |

A word on Return to Work

Nova Scotia can't lose a single worker from our valued workforce!

Whether physical or psychological injury, the best option is early, safe accommodation based on what the worker can do safely, starting right away.





Workplace Wellness Program

Construction Reality

Male dominated industry; physically demanding; *feelings*.

Suicide is **5x** more prevalent in construction than national average.

#1 drug category: anxiety, depression, and sleep disorders.

40% increase: counselling, psychologist, and psychotherapist.

1% utilization: Employee Assistance Program .

We cannot ignore psychological injury.

Market Scan



“MERIT Workplace Wellness”

12 Monthly
Themes

- Stigma
- Respectful Workplaces
- Physical Health
- Pain Avoidance and Addictions
- Suicide Prevention
- Diversity and Inclusion
- Depression and Anxiety
- Emotional Intelligence
- Psychological Safety in the Workplace
- Cancer Awareness
- Financial Fitness
- Reflection

Site Posters

Home Video Learning

Education Flyers

Interactive Tests

Wellness Champion

- ✓ Owner/senior leadership supports Wellness Champions.
- ✓ Supported by our Wellness Team and access our dedicated site to download/print all the monthly materials.
- ✓ Wellness Champions: passionate about making a difference to mental health in the construction industry; willing to be the ones who start the tough conversations in an industry that typically has shied away from them.



MERIT NOVA SCOTIA WORKPLACE WELLNESS PROGRAM CHAMPIONS

Implementing the Workplace Wellness Program

The MERIT Nova Scotia Workplace Wellness Program is designed to be easy to implement by construction companies of all sizes. Most month's content will include a self-paced course that employees will access online, and all other materials will be made available in printable and easy-to-distribute PDF formats.

Each participating company will designate one or more **Wellness Champions**, who will dedicate a small number of hours each month to program implementation, with the ongoing support of the MERIT Nova Scotia Wellness Team.



Wellness Champion Qualifications

Companies with dedicated human resources and safety staff may want to designate such individuals as their Wellness Champions. But the role requires no special qualifications – just an enthusiasm for helping promote a healthy workplace culture.

The Wellness Champion Role

- **Meet** with the MERIT Nova Scotia Wellness Team for an onboarding session, including an overview of the program and of the monthly theme-specific materials.
- **Distribute** all monthly theme-specific materials to employees either electronically or in hard copy in lunchrooms and at job sites, whichever method will be most effective for your people.
- **Identify and use** existing company communication channels (newsletters and bulletins, employee townhalls, etc.) to promote ongoing awareness of the program, with support from the MERIT Nova Scotia Wellness Team on messaging.
- **Respond** to employee inquiries, with support from the MERIT Nova Scotia Wellness Team.



Contact & Customer Support

MERIT NOVA SCOTIA WELLNESS TEAM
wellness@meritns.com
meritns.com/wellness

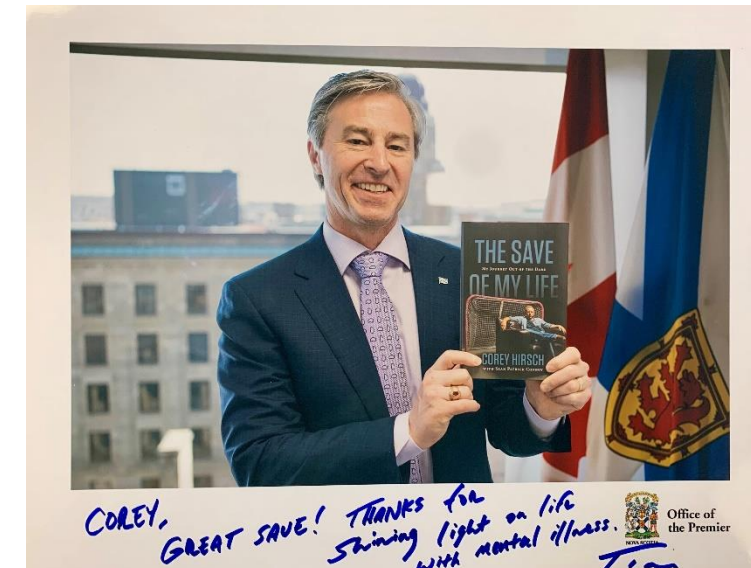
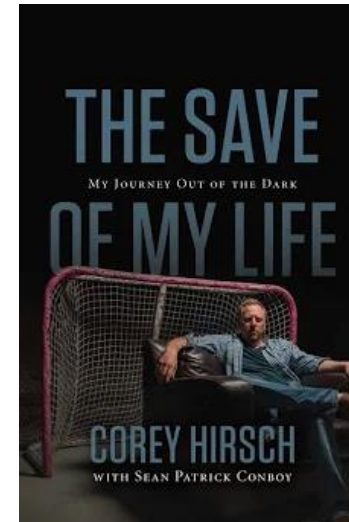
Results

Participants

- ✓ 36% grew to 73% = feel they could talk openly about mental health in their workplace.
- ✓ 41% grew to 72% = felt they understood how to find support for their mental health challenges.

Wellness Champions

- ✓ 33% grew to 100% = felt comfortable talking with a co-worker about their mental health.
- ✓ 67% grew to 100% = disagreed that mental health illness/condition was a sign of weakness.



Thank You

Paul Dubé, President

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Emergency Medical Care

- The number and length of psychological leaves was increasing
- Even though we had longstanding supports in place, such as PEER, EFAP, TWM/R2MR, we recognized the need to do more and focus efforts on improving workplace PH&S.
- Started building the required foundation
 - Additional resources for Health & Wellness department
 - Dedicated manager, addition of a third Employee H&W Specialist, an Administrator and an Occupational Health Nurse
 - Collaborating with our internal partners (HR, Benefits, Operations), looking at our policies and processes to ensure gaps are closed, provide consistency, effectiveness and efficiencies
 - Improved tools, such as JSA, modified duties checklists, implemented an APS

Connect & Recover

- EMC's Early and Safe Stay/Return to Work Program
- Objective is to provide modified or alternate work to help facilitate the return-to-work process and to eventually resume their pre-injury/illness duties, safely and efficiently.
- When an employee is ready to participate in return RTW, Connect & Recover offers short term work placements within and outside of EMC
 - Internal to EMC in an alternate occupation
 - Internal to EMC in their own occupation with modifications to the role or hours of work
 - External to EMC with a Community Partner.
- Currently have placement agreements with 22 Community Partners
- An average of 30 employees are engaged in Connect & Recover each month

Improving Partnerships

- Work closely with WCB Specialized Adjudication to improve processes, sharing of information, communication.
 - Regular meetings, action plan completed
 - Positive feedback from our teams
- WCB teams came into our workplace for tours, to better understand what the employee experienced during RTW
- Regular meetings with our internal partners
- Educational sessions for Management team

It's An Organizational Effort

- Support of our Executive and Senior Leadership teams
- Contracted an external PH&S Advisor to provide mental health expertise, support and education to the organization regarding the development, implementation and evaluation of a strategic framework that is in alignment with the Canadian psychological health and safety standards
- Established a PH&S Core team to make recommendations on organizational process, initiatives, etc. relating to improving the workplace
- Multiple initiatives across the organization are supporting the PH&S of employees, such as reduction of violence in the workplace initiative, establishing Employee Advisory Councils, reducing drive times of paramedics

Successes & Lessons Learned

- More staff participating in return-to-work activities and on modified duties
- Number of new leaves and length of leaves is trending down
- Seeing a change in organizational culture
- Positive feedback from employees and other partners
- As with any change, there were growing pains and resistance
 - Small steps
 - Educate and communicate
 - Persevere
 - Still more to be done
 - Preparation and Resilience training