

# Implementing Policies and Practices for the Prevention of Work Disability

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Tegan Slot & Dwayne Van Eerd

# About us

- We are Ontario's trusted public sector health and safety association, supporting healthcare, education, government, and public safety
- We support safer workplaces across the province with:



Expert training



Specialized consulting



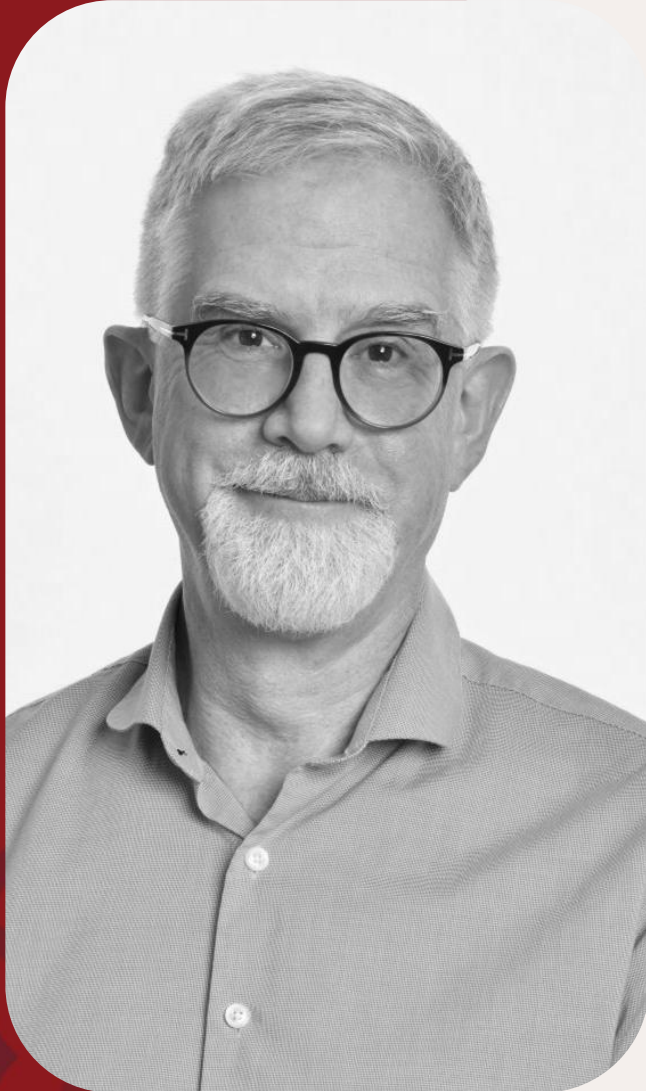
Practical digital products



# Tegan Slot

## Director, Workplace Wellbeing

Tegan brings over 20 years of experience in occupational health, safety and wellbeing. She is recognized for developing innovative tools like a job-based psychosocial risk assessment and for advancing prevention-focused strategies that integrate physical, psychological, and organizational health.



# Dwayne Van Eerd

Scientist, Institute for Work and Health

Dwayne is a work & health researcher with over 25 years of experience. His research focuses on the prevention of work-related injuries, as well as on the implementation of programs/practices to prevent work disability related to physical and mental health.

He lives in Hamilton with a retired partner.

He listens to music to stay grounded.

# Objectives

- Review best practices for prevention of PTSI-related work disability in PSP
- Explore research findings on implementation of workplace policies and practices for the prevention of work disability in PSP
- Discover practical approaches for implementation in your Service



# Health and Safety Program Framework

## Prevention

- Roles & Responsibilities
- Hazard Control
- Emergency Preparedness
- Health Promotion
- Built Environment
- Job Design

Proactive measures to create a healthy work environment and reduce risk of harm

## Intervention

- Incident Response
- Incident Reporting
- Incident Investigation

Measures to decrease harm and prevent recurrence post-incident

## Recovery & RTW

- Stay at Work
- Return to Work
- Reintegration

Interventions to reduce impact of injury and support work reintegration

# Post-Traumatic Stress Injury (PTSI) Prevention Framework

Foundational strategies to create a healthy work environment and protect PSP from potential impacts of traumatic exposures.

## Prevention

- Supportive leadership and organizational policies
- Mental health awareness
- Anti-stigma
- Resiliency building

## Early Detection and Intervention

- Self-assessment and monitoring
- Family engagement
- Incident reporting
- Incident response
- Access to supports

Measures to identify the earliest stages of PTSI allowing for timely intervention to improve outcomes.

Measures to minimize the impact of persistent PTSI symptoms through formal and specialized supports.

## Symptom Management

- Coordination and access to specialized supports and resources

## Recovery and Return to Work

- Return-to-work
- Reintegration

Measures to support transition back to work after PTSI recovery, with the aim of gradual reintegration and successful retention.

*An integrated, holistic approach to PTSI prevention and management within an organization's occupational health and safety management system, aimed at supporting stay-at-work.*

# Program Components

- Employee mental health, anti-stigma and PTSI prevention initiatives
- Family engagement and support
- Collaboration across all Service levels and groups



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**Prevention**



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Early Detection  
Intervention



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Recovery and  
RTW



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Symptom  
Management

# Program Components

- Tools, training and resources to recognize signs of PTSI
- Reporting and investigation process for psychological exposures, incidents and injuries



Prevention



Early Detection  
Intervention



Recovery and  
RTW



Symptom  
Management



# Program Components

- Critical incident stress debriefing process
- Intervention measures and leadership response to PTSI-related incidents
- Identification and communication of external support



Prevention



Early Detection  
Intervention



**Recovery  
and RTW**



Symptom  
Management

# Program Components

- Formal RTW policies and procedures in place & communicated
- Established internal and external partnerships to support RTW
- Leaders trained on RTW R&R and supportive practices
- Job demands identified to support worker reintegration
- Flexible work arrangements available



Prevention

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Early Detection  
Intervention

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Recovery and  
RTW

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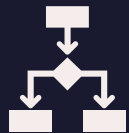
**Symptom  
Management**

# Identify the gap

*What is **one** prevention, early intervention, or RTW practice in your Service that exists “on paper” but breaks down in practice?*



Use the PTSI prevention program checklist to identify a gap (5 min)



Share your findings with your group (5 min)





# PTSI-related work disability prevention programs

## Five recommendations for improvement

1. Apply streamlined processes
2. Continue to reduce stigma about PTSI
3. Provide better resources
4. Provide specialized programs, services, and training
5. Engage in partnerships with experts

# Program Implementation

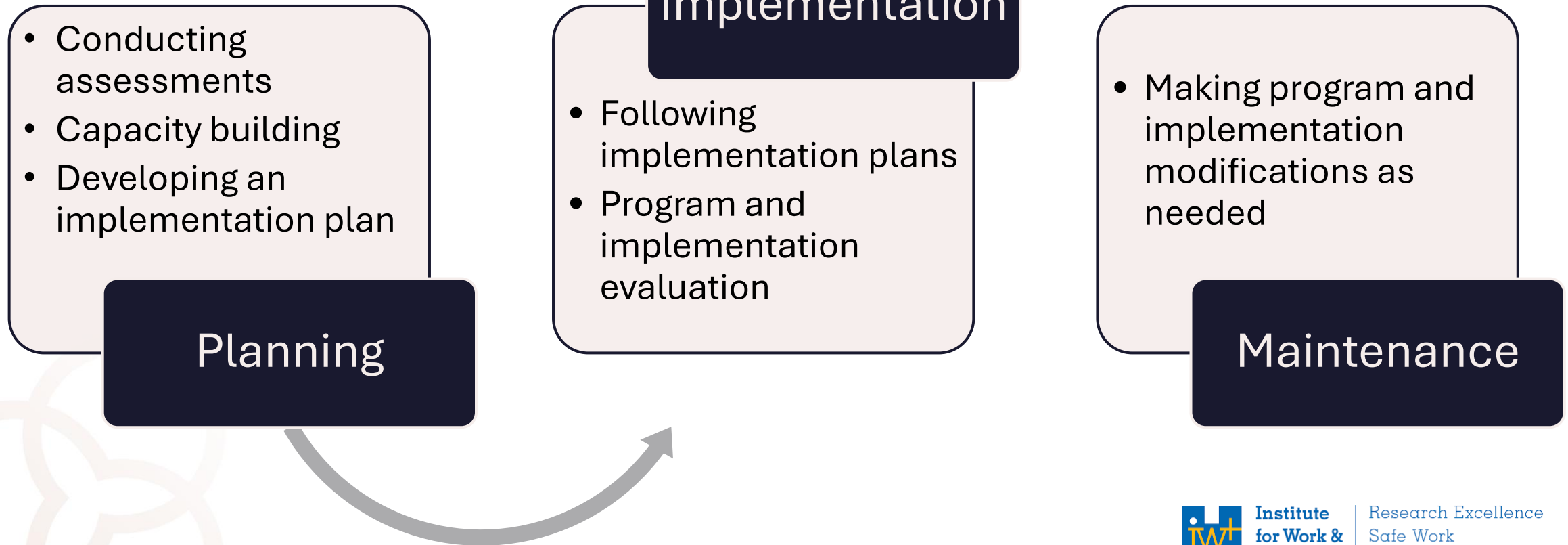
## Insights from Alberta: Six key themes

1. getting buy-in
2. collaboration and program champions
3. continue awareness building
4. adequate resources
5. importance of planning
6. one-size does not fit all



# Program Implementation

## Key Phases



# Plan

Identify the goals and outcomes of program implementation at the workplace, as well as the steps to achieve these goals.

- **Conduct Assessments**
  - Consider current needs and capacity for program implementation
  - Consider program fit for the workplace
- **Build Capacity**
  - Get buy in from leadership and members
  - Recruit and train staff to deliver the program
- **Develop an implementation plan**
  - Determine staffing needs and roles
  - Consider additional needs and logistics for implementation

# Implement (program delivery)

Deliver the program to members. Effective implementation increases the likelihood of positive results

- **Follow the implementation plan**
  - Share the implementation plan
  - Consider ongoing support for program delivery
- **Evaluate the program and program implementation**
  - Create and regularly review an evaluation plan

# Maintain

Monitor and adapt the program to ensure it continues to be delivered effectively and meets the future member and workplace needs

- **Prepare for program or implementation modifications**
  - Consider whether program or implementation modifications are required based on evaluation
  - Ensure that the successful program is maintained over time
  - If unsuccessful, modify the program and re-evaluate

# Pinpoint the Breakdown

*For the **one** gap you identified, identify where the breakdown is happening*



As a group, place the gap in one **dominant phase**:

- Planning (buy-in, role clarity, fit, readiness)
- Implementation (delivery, consistency, resources)
- Maintenance (evaluation, adaptation, sustainability) (5 min)

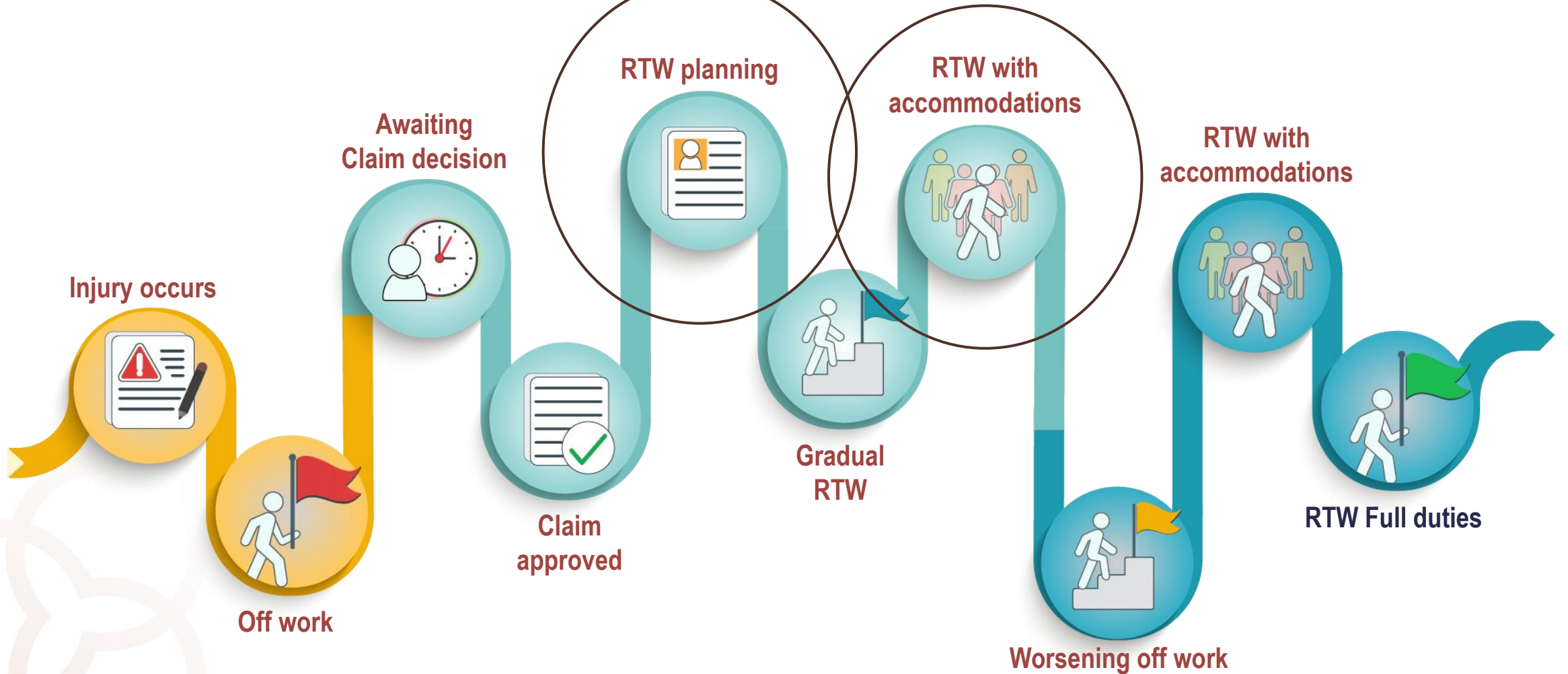


**Identify:**

- The biggest **barrier** (people/process/culture/resources)
- One existing **enabler** you could leverage (5 min)

## MONITORING & SUPPORT

### FUNCTIONAL ASSESSMENT & TREATMENT



# Commit to action

*In the next 60-90 days, we will strengthen our PTSD prevention program by...*



## Identify:

1. One concrete action (specific and doable)
2. Who owns it (role, not a job title)
3. How they'll know it worked (simple, observable signal) (10 min)

## Avoid

- 'Improve culture'
- 'Raise awareness'
- 'Fix the system'

## Instead, aim for

- 'Pilot a supervisor RTW check-in tool'
- 'Formalize one program champion role'
- 'Simplify and re-launch psychological incident reporting'

# Resources

## Building your toolkit

- **NEW** - First Responders First website
- **NEW** – Without Stigma: Empowering Mental Health in the Workplace
- **NEW** - Digital job demands and accommodation Tool
- **NEW** – Psychological Health & Safety for Committees
- **LEADING PRACTICES** - Radius
- **LEADING PRACTICES** - Occupational Stress Injury Resilience Tool



**Stronger, Together.  
Strength Doesn't  
Mean Silence.**

DRAFT



# Resources



TIP SHEET

## Tips for Managing Burn-out

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ASSESSMENT FORM

## Stress Assessment Tool

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TIP SHEET

## Returning to Work

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Explore More Resources

# Psychological Health and Safety (PHS) for Committees

**Workshop A:** Introduction to Workplace

Psychological Health and Safety

**Workshop B:** Managing Workplace

Psychosocial Factors

Stigma Poor organizational culture

Overwhelming content

Lack of

Resources

Knowledge

Champions

Awareness

Formalized legislation

# Barriers to a Psychologically Healthy and Safe Workplace

What barriers exist in your workplace that could make it psychologically unsafe?





# Without Stigma: Empowering Mental Health in the Workplace

Funded by the  
Government of Ontario



**PSHSA.ca**

Public Services Health  
& Safety Association

# Workshop 3: Supporting MH SAW & RTW

The workshop objectives for this course are to:

- Explain the fundamentals of SAW/RTW programs, the leading practices and tools for successful reintegration
- Highlight evidence-based outcomes for early and safe Return to Work (RTW)
- Describe legislative requirements – duty to accommodate and the law
- Identify the roles and responsibilities for supporting Mental Health Stay at Work (SAW)/RTW
- Explain barriers and facilitators for returning to work
- Bringing it back to the workplace





Job Description



Job Tasks



Related Equipment



Physical Demands



Environmental Demands



Cognitive Demands



Review & Complete



Generate Report

## Job Details

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### Job Title

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Job Title (required)

Department / Unit

(e.g., HR Department)



### Job Summary

Job Summary Details

Normal      **B** *I*  

 Additional notes

Notes 

Save as Draft 



Next 

# Create Job Match

Organization Name

Dashboard 



Getting started



Assign Job Demands  
Description Profile



Input Functional Abilities Form



Review  
Accommodation Form



Generate Report

DRAFT

## Employee Profile

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### Employee Information

First Name

Last Name

 First Name

 Last Name

Email Address

Claim No. (Optional)

Notes 

Save as Draft 

# Accommodation Library

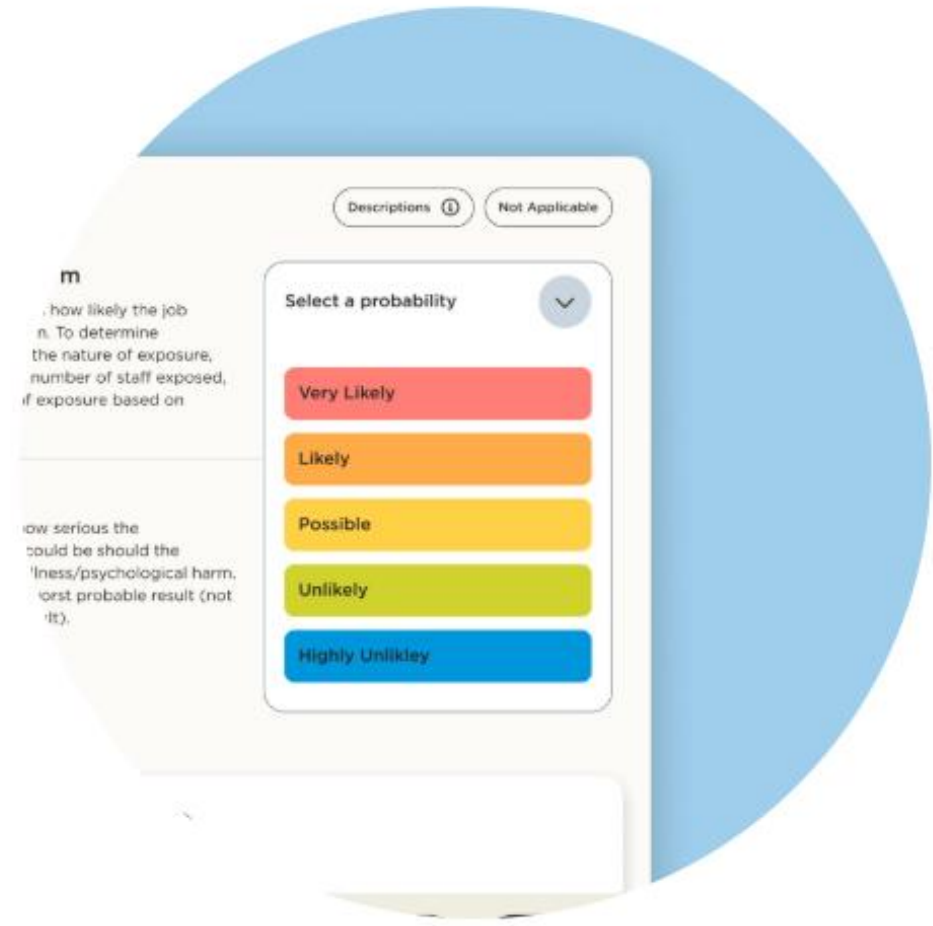
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[Add Accommodation ▶](#)

# radius by PSHSA

PSHSA's Radius is a collaborative solution for assessing risk of psychological harm on the job.

Create an account today



# Occupational Stress Injury Resiliency (OSIR) tool

Identify stress-related risks and build resiliency in the workplace.

## Using the OSIR tool

Occupational stress injuries (OSI) refer to persistent psychological difficulties experienced as a result of high-stress or traumatic experiences at work.

The OSIR tool is an assessment tool developed by our PSHSA experts and The Conference Board of Canada. It measures workplace risk for OSI by assessing four key areas in your organization: leadership, environment, supports, and resiliency behaviours.

**evaluate**

existing programs, policies, resources, and supports

**detect**

preventative approaches through evidence-informed insights

**know**

the risk of OSI in your workplace

**build**

a resilient workplace

# Thank You

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