

Workplace Health and Well-being

Workplace Health and Well-being Promotion - Getting Started

On this page

[How do you address workplace health and well-being in the workplace?](#)

[Should a separate committee/team be established?](#)

[What are some key elements of a workplace health and well-being program?](#)

[How do you implement your program?](#)
[What are the steps?](#)

How do you address workplace health and well-being in the workplace?

Workplace health and well-being should be a part of the overall company strategy for a healthy workplace. The purpose of a workplace health and well-being program is to offer personal health resources and services for all employees. When setting up any program, remember to include training and other support and choices where possible (e.g., setting aside time for staff to attend sessions).

Remember that for health and safety programs, there are specific laws and regulations that must be complied with. Workplace health programs are different from traditional health and safety programs because there is not always a legislative mandate. However, it is important to remember that employees may be exposed to a wide variety of health hazards at work on a regular basis. As such, it is impossible to deal with health and safety issues in isolation from workplace health and well-being, and vice versa.

Another strategy to address workplace health and well-being is to create and implement a [Comprehensive Workplace Health and Safety \(CWHS\) Program](#). This program is a series of strategies and related activities, initiatives and policies to improve or maintain the quality of working life, health, and the well-being of the workforce. These activities are developed as part of a continual improvement process to improve the work environment (physical, psychosocial, organizational, economic), and to increase personal empowerment and personal growth.

What are some key elements of a workplace health and well-being program?

When planning the workplace health program, remember to be clear about your:

- Objectives: know what you want to see happen as a result of your efforts.
- Target audience: who is the program for? All staff? Only certain groups?
- Type of program or campaign: what tone will your program have? Informative? Fun? Fearful?

Should a separate committee/team be established?

Generally, a joint labour/management workplace health and well-being committee is recommended. A committee has the advantage of being able to work with key groups at your organization, including the health and safety committee. Depending on the size and needs of the organization, these committees may be separate, or the health and well-being work can be led by the health and safety committee.

How do you implement your program?

There are a few steps that an organization should follow when developing a workplace health and well-being program. When planning to implement your program, one should recognize that every organization is different and therefore everyone's needs may vary too.

What are the steps?

Step 1: Take ownership and leadership and get support from the "top".

Establish who will take ownership and be the contact point of the health and well-being program. This leadership can come from someone who has demonstrated their interest in this area or a new or established joint labour/management committee.

Like any policy, it will not be successful without support from senior management. Help the leaders of your organization recognize that a workplace health and well-being program is a positive investment in building a healthy workplace. Formally introducing corporate policies that state the importance of the workplace health and well-being program is an essential step to demonstrate your organization's commitment.

Step 2: Get support from everyone.

Talk to as many people or groups as you can. The following groups can help gather support:

- Union / worker representative(s),
- Management,
- Health and safety professional(s),
- Human resources professional(s),
- Your employee assistance program (EAP) provider,
- Medical or occupational health staff, and
- Local groups from your community, including:
 - Public Health,
 - Canadian Cancer Society, and
 - Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada.

Step 3: Acknowledge current activities and collect baseline data.

There may be groups or initiatives already established in your organization that can form the basis for your workplace's health and well-being initiatives. Acknowledging existing activities (for example, a group of people who regularly goes for walks together at lunch) may encourage new ideas for your program, like a 'walkers mileage club'. Whenever possible, encourage participation at all levels of your organization and make sure participation is possible across all abilities.

Collecting data on how your organization is doing now, or baseline data, can also help you determine the effectiveness of your initiatives later on.

Step 4: Identify the key needs and expectations of the workplace.

You want to find out the employees' needs, attitudes, and preferences regarding specific aspects of implementing a workplace health and well-being program. You can survey employees with:

- a full-length survey (can be confidential),
- open one-to-one interviews,
- a mini-survey, or
- physical or virtual suggestion boxes.

You can also collect information by:

- hosting a luncheon round table meeting,
- sending out an informal email questionnaire,
- sending a survey with pay cheque stubs, or

- hosting a survey on your organization's intranet site.

It is crucial to find out the needs of your audience before designing your program or policy. See a [sample survey](#).

Step 5: Develop a detailed plan.

Based on the information collected in steps three and four:

- Identify what needs to be done.
- Determine the priority of each need.
- Determine what resources you need for each initiative (i.e., time, money, people, etc.). Set realistic targets and timelines. Have both short-term and long-term goals.
- Plan how and when the program will be initiated.
- Plan how to maintain interest.

When delivering your program, it can be helpful to organize your activities into categories such as:

- **Education / Awareness-** providing knowledge.
- **Skill building-** getting individuals actively involved in changing their behaviour.
- **Work Environment-** changing in the workplace to support better health and well-being.

Refer to our OSH Answers [Workplace Health and Well-being – Sample Workplace Health and Well-being Program Elements](#) for additional suggestions of workplace program elements.

Step 6: Put your plan into action.

Now it is time to communicate your program to everyone. Promoting your program can be done in many ways, such as:

- posters around the workplace,
- posting on your organization's intranet site,
- posting on bulletin boards,
- encouraging managers and supervisors to tell their team about the program
- hosting demo days,
- distributing flyers / pamphlets / brochures,
- setting up kiosk(s) where all promotional material can be found,
- holding exhibition fairs, and
- sending e-mail or mail.

Step 7: Monitor, evaluate and maintain the program.

Now it is time to monitor the progress and track results of your program. Always know that there is room for change and improvement for both short-term and long-term goals.

Review and evaluate your program:

- A review of the program can help you determine what is working and what is not. Gathering the right information is essential but it does not have to be complicated. Be sure to collect data on a regular basis so you can compare them against the results of future initiatives.
- When reviewing the outcomes, remember to evaluate the program based on the aims and objectives you set in the beginning.

Determine next steps:

- Use the results of your review and evaluation to help gauge what should be maintained and what could be enhanced.

(Adapted from: [Comprehensive Workplace Health Program Guide](#), CCOHS)

Fact sheet last revised: 2022-09-29

Disclaimer

Although every effort is made to ensure the accuracy, currency and completeness of the information, CCOHS does not guarantee, warrant, represent or undertake that the information provided is correct, accurate or current. CCOHS is not liable for any loss, claim, or demand arising directly or indirectly from any use or reliance upon the information.