

Federal Government Funding Announcement hosted at Pacific Coast University for Workplace Health Sciences – April 9, 2015



L to R: Honourable John Duncan, Minister of State and Chief Government Whip and Member of Parliament for Vancouver Island North; Honourable Dr. K. Kellie Leitch, Minister of Labour and Minister of Status of Women; Wolfgang Zimmermann, Executive Director of NIDMAR and President of Pacific Coast University for Workplace Health Sciences; Ray Sim and Gordon Dick, local First Nations artists who carved the totem pole in the picture.



News Release

For Immediate Release

Harper Government helps employees with disabilities return to work

April 9, 2015 Port Alberni, British Columbia Employment and Social Development Canada

Today, the Honourable Dr. K. Kellie Leitch, Minister of Labour and Minister of Status of Women, along with the Honourable John Duncan, Minister of State and Chief Government Whip and Member of Parliament for Vancouver Island North, announced support to help employees return to work following a disabling injury or health issue.

Under the Workplace Opportunities: Removing Barriers to Equity (WORBE) program, the National Institute for Disability Management and Research (NIDMAR) will receive \$125,000 for a project that will improve return-to-work and disability management programs in federally regulated private-sector industries.

WORBE is providing up to \$500,000 annually for projects that aim to improve the representation of people with disabilities, women, Aboriginal peoples and members of visible minorities in federally regulated workplaces.

Quick Facts

- While the representation of employees with disabilities has more than doubled since 1987, they remain under-represented in the workforce. There are approximately 800,000 working-aged Canadians with disabilities who are not working, but whose disability does not prevent them from doing so. Almost half have post-secondary education.
- Through Canada's Economic Action Plan, the Government of Canada is helping under-represented groups, such as people with disabilities, succeed in the workplace. For example, the Enabling Accessibility Fund has been extended on an ongoing basis at \$15 million per year to improve accessibility across Canada in facilities such as workplaces, and the Opportunities Fund, with an increase in funding to \$40 million annually, is being reformed to provide more demand-driven training for people with disabilities.
- Through a new generation of Labour Market Agreements for Persons with Disabilities (LMAPDs), the Government invests \$222 million per year, which allows the provinces and territories to determine how to best address the needs of Canadians with disabilities, while helping Canadian businesses benefit from their skills and talent. Under the LMAPDs, approximately 300,000 interventions are provided annually for persons with disabilities through over 100 programs across the country.

Quotes

"In Canada, we depend on the skills of our workers to keep our economy strong. When everyone has the opportunity to achieve their full potential in the workforce, we all benefit. This funding will provide employers with the tools they need to support employees with a disability as they reintegrate into the workforce."

– The Honourable Dr. K. Kellie Leitch, Minister of Labour and Minister of Status of Women

"To support long-term prosperity, Canada needs qualified people to participate in the labour market. We are proud to support projects like NIDMAR's because they help ensure that every Canadian who wants to work has the support to do so, and enable employers to benefit from their skills and talents."

– The Honourable John Duncan, Minister of State and Chief Government Whip and Member of Parliament for Vancouver Island North

"Providing stable employment for workers who acquire a mental or physical impairment is essential to them maintaining their independence and participating fully in their community. The IDMSC Return-to-Work/Disability Management program assessment is a tool currently being used successfully in many countries around the world. Thanks to the Government of Canada's support, Canadian employers will now be able use this tool to enhance their current RTW/DM programs, policies and practices."

– Wolfgang Zimmermann, Executive Director for the National Institute for Disability Management and Research



Associated Links

[Workplace Opportunities Funding
Labour Program](#)
[National Institute of Disability Management and Research
Pacific Coast University for Workplace Health Sciences
EAP](#)

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Backgrounder

The *Employment Equity Act* aims to achieve equality in the workplace so that no one is denied opportunities for reasons unrelated to ability, and to address workplace disadvantages faced by the four designated groups: people with disabilities, women, Aboriginal peoples and members of visible minorities.

The Labour Program ensures that federally regulated private-sector employers and Crown corporations report annually on the representation of these designated groups in their workplaces and on the steps they have taken to achieve full representation through the Legislated Employment Equity Program. Employment equity must be included in the employment plans and practices of all federally regulated businesses with 100 or more employees.

There have been varying degrees of progress in improving the representation of the designated groups toward achieving equity. However, under-representation persists in a number of occupational groups and industries.

Workplace Opportunities: Removing Barriers to Equity is a new grant and contribution program designed to support employers subject to the *Employment Equity Act* in their efforts to improve designated group representation in areas of low representation through partnerships and industry-tailored strategies.