

Recognition and Gratitude Expressed to Disability Management / Return to Work Professionals



L to R: Donna Burns, Liz Ilczaszyn, Leah Kawa, Minister Scott Fraser, Wolfgang Zimmermann, Sybille Jackel, Lani deHeK, and Kimberley Brown



Wolfgang Zimmermann



Minister Scott Fraser



Karen Cooling

On September 22, NIDMAR hosted an event in Richmond, BC for those who were able to attend, in order to recognize individuals who can now proudly proclaim to be Certified Disability Management Professionals (CDMPs) and Certified Return to Work Coordinators (CRTWCs). A similar event was held in Toronto on September 28, jointly hosted by NIDMAR and the Workplace Safety & Insurance Board (WSIB).

The BC event was attended by a cross section of individuals representing many stakeholder groups. Each of the speakers thanked not only those who were there to receive their certificates and recognition, but *all* CDMPs and CRTWCs for their dedication and hard work making a difference in the lives of injured and disabled workers. As the Honourable Scott Fraser, BC Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation said, "These people *ALL* need to be celebrated!"

As MC for the event, Wolfgang Zimmermann, Executive Director of NIDMAR, started off by providing an overview of what went into the development of the professional certifications, a highly expensive and extensive process undertaken with the financial support of and superintended by the Occupational Standards Branch of Employment and Social Development Canada.

The process commenced with the development of Occupational Standards involving participation from all relevant stakeholders across all provinces and territories and including international support. He also explained what is involved with the examination itself, a 7-hour exam containing 300 multiple choice questions requiring an 80% pass mark. Referenced as global best practice in the International Social Security Association (ISSA) Guidelines on Return to Work and Reintegration, the professional designations have now been formally licensed in 28 jurisdictions around the world.

Keynote speakers at the event included:

The Hon. Scott Fraser, MLA for Mid Island Pacific Rim, which is home to NIDMAR and the Pacific Coast University for Workplace Health Sciences (PCU-WHS), talked about how he has become an ardent and passionate supporter of disability management since first getting to know Wolfgang Zimmermann in 2005. Minister Fraser is dedicated to seeing Canada become a world leader when it comes to doing the right thing for injured and disabled workers. His parting words of advice for everyone: patience and perseverance always pay off.

Karen Cooling, Chief of Staff for the BC Minister of Labour, former adjunct faculty member for PCU-WHS, and a former NIDMAR Board Member, also spoke. She described the high cost



Lani deHek



Trevor James

paid by injured workers and their families, as well as the socio-economic benefits of effective, jointly run return to work programs for disabled workers, their families, employers and society at large. She addressed the CDMPs and CRTWCs in the room saying, "We are so grateful to you for the work you do and the work you will do to change lives."

Lani deHek, Manager, Occupational Safety and Health and Disability Management Program, BC Nurses' Union, described the policies and practices of the Enhanced Disability Management Program (EDMP) which is now in place for the healthcare sector across British Columbia. The EDMP Program covers more than 150,000 workers across BC's healthcare sector, and involves four unions and more than 200 employers. One of the big successes of the program is that people are coming off disability claims much earlier, when appropriate, thanks to the skilled professionals who are doing such important work in the field.

Trevor James, fr. Vice President, Human Resources, CANFOR, and recently retired, long-time NIDMAR Board member talked about how the field of disability management has evolved since he got involved with NIDMAR more than 27 years ago. "We know that real success happens when the disability management model is followed and everyone works as a team."

In addition to the certificates that were presented to the 2017 candidates, recognition was made to Donna Burns, Manager, Claimant Services for the Yukon Workers Compensation Health and Safety Board who received a 10-year pin for maintaining her certification, which involves completing 20 hours of documented continuing education annually in addition to continuing to work in the field.

For further information concerning the professional designations in the field of Disability Management and Return to Work, please visit the Certification webpages of the NIDMAR website at www.nidmar.ca