

PRESS RELEASE

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**Government of Canada Supports World Congress on Return to Work / Disability Management  
IFDM 2018 to be held October 14-17, 2018 in Vancouver, BC, Canada**

The Pacific Coast University for Workplace Health Sciences (PCU-WHS) is pleased to announce that the 2018 International Forum on Disability Management (IFDM) conference will receive \$75,000 through the Government of Canada's Social Development Partnerships Program-Disability (SDPP-D) component, which helps improve the lives of children and families, people with disabilities, and other vulnerable Canadians.

"Canada is at its best and all of society benefits when everyone is included," said the Honourable Kirsty Duncan, Minister of Science and Minister of Sport and Persons with Disabilities. "By bringing together academics, professionals and disability stakeholders from all over the world to share their knowledge and generate valuable ideas, this conference will help ensure that Canadians with disabilities are able to fully participate in their workplaces and communities," she added.

It has been quite a journey since the IFDM was hosted by the National Institute of Disability Management and Research (NIDMAR), in 2002 as a joint Canadian/German international congress, co-chaired by major business and union leaders, and supported through many relevant stakeholders. The IFDM was designed to promote innovation, leadership and practical policy and program solutions designed to reduce the socio-economic burden of disabling impairments on employers, workers and society at large.

Building on the amount of interest emanating from the first IFDM which saw over 400 individuals from 10 countries participate, IFDM's have since been held in the Netherlands, Australia, Germany, the UK, the United States, Malaysia and now in Vancouver for 2018. IFDM 2020 will be hosted by the Social Security Agency of the Government of Belgium, and then this World Congress will transition to the International Social Security Association (ISSA), a United Nations affiliated agency in Geneva, to be held in perpetuity as a triennial World Rehabilitation Congress.

While the international success of the IFDMs is perhaps a reflection of the growing recognition that with an innovation and leadership mindset we can collectively achieve much improved outcomes for individuals who acquire a mental or physical health impairment during their working life, it also increasingly reflects the desire of many countries to meet the goals and objectives of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

It is in this context that the hosting of IFDM 2018 in Canada is perhaps most appropriate as we expect to see the introduction of Canada's historic federal accessibility legislation to Parliament in 2018. Following a highly accessible and inclusive engagement process, the new legislation will eliminate barriers and ensure greater accessibility and opportunities for Canadians with disabilities in areas under federal jurisdiction.

"We are very grateful for the significant support that the Government of Canada has provided, especially when considering recent reports that indicate 23 percent of all people living in poverty across Canada are persons with mental or physical health impairments, and in excess of 80 percent of impairments are acquired during a person's working life, and therefore effective and collaborative workplace efforts in job retention and return to work can have a significant impact on changing this narrative," said PCU-WHS President Wolfgang Zimmermann.

For further information on IFDM 2018 please visit the website: [www.ifdm2018.com](http://www.ifdm2018.com) or email: [info@ifdm2018.com](mailto:info@ifdm2018.com).

Pacific Coast University for Workplace Health Sciences (PCU-WHS) is a statutory, not for profit, degree granting University for the special purpose of creating and disseminating new knowledge including applied research in the fields of workplace safety, health promotion, return to work and disability management, comprehensive rehabilitation and disability leadership studies. (Web: [www.pcu-whs.ca](http://www.pcu-whs.ca))

National Institute of Disability Management and Research (NIDMAR), founded in 1994, is an internationally recognized organization committed to reducing the human, social and economic costs of disability, which international research has proven is the most effective way of restoring and maintaining workers' abilities while reducing the cost of disability for workers, employers, government and insurance carriers. (Web: [www.nidmar.ca](http://www.nidmar.ca))

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