

## Ontario Aims to Prevent Traumatic Mental Stress in High-Risk Workplaces

Findings from Government Roundtable on Traumatic Mental Stress Released

NEWS

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Ontario has released the findings from a roundtable that provides insights into ways to prevent traumatic mental stress, reduce the stigma associated with mental health disorders and help people who have suffered mental injuries in the workplace.

The Roundtable on Traumatic Mental Stress was launched by the Ontario government in 2012 to help promote healthier, more productive workplaces. It brought together representatives from police, nursing, fire services, emergency medical services and transit services to discuss how to promote awareness and share best practices across sectors on work-related traumatic mental stress, which includes post-traumatic stress disorder.

With a focus on prevention, response and support, roundtable members generated a range of proposed follow-up actions, such as:

- Ensuring traumatic mental stress is a priority for the Ministry of Labour's Chief Prevention Officer.
- Working with ministries across government to provide mental health supports in high-risk workplaces.
- Organizing a workshop to share best practices across multiple sectors relating to traumatic mental stress.

To help implement these ideas and continue the work of the roundtable, Ontario will host a conference in 2015 on work-related traumatic mental stress that will bring together representatives from a wide range of impacted sectors to share experiences, concerns and best practices, and learn from innovators in this field.

Supporting mental health in the workplace by expanding services for employees continues to be a cornerstone of Minister Flynn's responsibilities, as outlined in his [mandate letter](#). Protecting workers supports the government's economic plan for Ontario. The four part plan is building Ontario up by investing in people's talents and skills, building new public infrastructure like roads and transit, creating a dynamic, supportive environment where business thrives, and building a secure savings plan so everyone can afford to retire.

### QUOTES

"We know that certain occupations have more occurrences of traumatic mental stress than others, and that some sectors have developed best practices that could be shared across the province. Our goal is for this conference to engage various sectors to find effective methods to prepare workers and employers for potential stress, and to provide tools to help respond to potentially traumatic situations and re-integrate workers who have suffered from traumatic mental stress back into meaningful work."

– Kevin Flynn, Minister of Labour

“It is essential that, together, we end stigma, break down barriers and ensure our first responders, and all workers, get the mental health care and accommodation at work - with the proper tools in place to identify and respond effectively to issues of operational stress injuries.”  
– Yasir Naqvi, Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services

## QUICK FACTS

- The Canadian Mental Health Commission has reported that, in any given year, one in five people in Canada experience a mental health problem or illness, with a cost to the economy of more than \$50 billion.
- Mental health problems and illnesses typically account for about 30 per cent of short- and long-term disability claims.
- Work-related traumatic mental stress is a compensable injury under Ontario’s [Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997](#).
- The 2014 budget invested \$4.4 million to provide resources that address Operational Stress Injuries for Ontario Provincial Police.

## LEARN MORE

Read the [roundtable report on traumatic mental stress](#).

Read how the Ontario Government is [working](#) to reduce the impact of traumatic mental stress.

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