



Health Care Sector Plan 2008/09

**Ministry of Labour
Occupational Health and
Safety Program**

Introduction

The purpose of the health care sector plan is to share with our stakeholders the manner in which the Ministry of Labour (MOL) will enhance health and safety compliance in this sector.

The plan contains a sector description, statistical data, environmental trends, major hazards, key issues, and the 2008/2009 enforcement focus. To describe the sector, Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) codes and WSIB rate groups are provided.

To improve health and safety in the health care sector, the MOL is joined by partners in Ontario's occupational health and safety system, which include the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB), and the Ontario Safety Association for Community and Healthcare. These organizations work with the MOL to develop coordinated strategies directed at problem areas.

Sector Summary - Health Care

DESCRIPTION

- Hospitals; long-term care homes; community care access centres; group homes; health care laboratories; health professional offices and agencies

SIZE

- Number of Registered Premises = 6,068
- Number of Registered Workers = 484,816

HISTORY OF LOST-TIME INJURIES (LTIs)

(Courtesy of the Ontario Safety Association for Community and Healthcare)

	Total	Health/ Community Care Sector	Group Homes	Long- Term Care Homes	Hospitals	Nursing Services	Professional Offices/ Agencies	Treatment Clinics/ Specialized Services
*LTI Frequency	2.12	2.56	3.56	3.51	1.86	2.56	0.73	1.53
**LTI								
MSD Client Handling	4,449	2,308	123	712	932	303	12	59
Musculoskeletal Disorder (MSD) Other	5,040	2,624	139	580	1,084	223	112	278
Slips and Falls	2,639	1,372	88	45	437	437	81	179
Contact/Struck	1,915	910	58	39	393	393	34	88
Violence/Aggression	1,390	703	139	6	225	225	12	80
Exposure	1,276	662	13	15	245	245	9	87
Not Classified	418	201	8	7	91	91	6	14
Transportation	292	185	7		17	17	30	36
Fire and Explosion	8	4	1		1	1		1

*LTI rates = LTI/100 workers

**Is total count of LTIs for 2006

ENVIRONMENT (growth, trends, etc.)

- Growth Trend: jobs increased by 24,553 in health care in 2007 (Ministry of Labour data)
- Health care setting is a workplace with unique health care related hazards in addition to the typical industrial hazards.
- New Needle Safety Regulation (O. Reg. 474/07) coming into effect September 1, 2008, in hospitals.

MAJOR HAZARDS

- Influenza pandemic
- Needle stick injuries
- Exposure to infectious diseases in the workplace
- Musculoskeletal disorders
- Violence in the workplace

- Contact/struck by Injuries
- Slips, trips and falls

KEY ISSUES

- Asbestos in the workplace
- Exposures to chemical, biological and radiological hazards
- Legionella prevention and control
- Ventilation maintenance and monitoring
- Lifting devices and mobile equipment
- Emergency preparedness and response
- Motor vehicle accidents
- Material Safety Data Sheets and Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) training
- Workplace safety culture
- Reporting of occupational illness

ENFORCEMENT FOCUS

All hospital networks and/or hospitals will be inspected.

Enforcement of the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA) and the Regulation for Health Care and Residential Facilities (O. Reg. 67/93).

It is recommended that Inspectors pay particular attention to the following enforcement focus topics and issues. This is not intended to be an exclusive list.

Infection Prevention and Control: Frontline and support health care staff are continually at risk from exposure to pathogens in the workplace both on an ongoing basis and in the event of an influenza pandemic. Workplaces are required to have in place written measures and procedures to protect workers from exposure to infectious diseases. Consultation with the Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC), or Health and Safety Representative, and worker training are required.

Needle Safety: As of September 1, 2008, the Needle Safety Regulation (O. Reg. 474/07) will come into effect in hospitals. Workplaces need to be in compliance when the regulation comes into effect.

Musculoskeletal Disorders: Result in the greatest number of LTIs, followed by slips, trips, falls and contact with equipment.

Workplace Violence Prevention: Health care workers experience a large number of injuries in the workplace. Violence prevention measures and procedures and worker training are required.

Workplace Safety Culture and the Internal Responsibility System (IRS): Safety in the workplace is a partnership between the employer and workers. Workplaces are required to have a JHSC or Health and Safety Representative in place, which must conduct meetings and inspections in accordance with the Act. Supervisors are required to be competent persons as defined under the Act. Verification to ensure at least one worker member and at least one employer member are certified as JHSC members (core/basic and workplace specific) is required.

Reporting Occupational Illnesses: Health care associated infections in health care workers, acquired as a result of workplace exposures, are occupational illnesses that must be reported to the Ministry of Labour in accordance with OHSA s.52(2) and the Regulation for Health Care and Residential Facilities s.5(5).

Exposures to Chemical, Biological and Radiological Hazards: There are injuries associated with exposure to chemical, biological and radiological substances present in the workplace.

Emergency Preparedness and Response: Workers in health care facilities should be prepared and trained for emergencies such as, fires, blackouts, terrorist events, adverse weather, etc.

Asbestos: Older health care facilities may contain asbestos; if they do, inspecting the asbestos-containing material is required.

Ventilation maintenance and monitoring: Ventilation is required to be inspected every six months, and the report presented to the JHSC or Health and Safety Representative.

Lifting Devices and Mobile Equipment: Lifting equipment must be thoroughly examined by a competent person. Workers must be trained in their use before operating.

Transportation: Home care health care workers are a growing segment of the health care population, spending an increasing amount of time in vehicles. Injuries and some fatalities have been recorded.

MSDSs and WHMIS: The health care sector employs a wide variety of chemicals in liquid, solid, and gaseous states. Because health care workers are at risk of exposure to chemicals in the workplace, they are required to have access to current MSDSs and training in WHMIS.

STANDARD INDUSTRIAL CLASSIFICATION (SIC) Code

8611	General Hospitals
8612	Rehabilitation Hospitals
8613	Extended Care Hospitals
8614	Mental (Psychiatric) Hospitals
8615	Addiction Hospitals
8616	Nursing Stations and Outpost Hospitals
8617	Children's (Paediatric) Hospitals
8619	Other Specialty Hospitals
8621	Homes for Nursing Care
8622	Homes for Physically Handicapped and/or Disabled
8623	Homes for Mentally Retarded
8624	Homes for Mentally Handicapped and/or Disabled
8625	Homes for Emotionally Disturbed Children
8626	Homes for Alcohol/Drug Addicts
8627	Homes for Children In Need of Protection
8628	Homes for Single Mothers
8629	Other Institutional Health and Social Services, not elsewhere classified
8632	Drug Addiction and Alcoholism Treatment Clinics
8633	Health Rehabilitation Clinics

8634 Home Care Services (Including Home Services)
8635 Public Health Clinics/Community Health Centres
8639 Other Non-Institutional Health Services
8642 Child Welfare Services
8643 Family Planning Services
8644 Sheltered Workshops
8645 Home-Maker Services
8646 Meal Services (Non-Commercial)
8647 Social Rehabilitation Services
8648 Crisis Intervention
8649 Other Non-Institutional Social Services
8651 Offices of Physicians, General Practice
8652 Offices of Physicians and Surgeons, Specialists
8653 Offices of Dentists, General Practice
8654 Offices of Dentists, Specialists
8661 Offices of Chiropractors and Osteopaths
8662 Offices of Nurses, Registered
8663 Offices of Nurses, Practical
8664 Offices of Nutritionists/Dieticians
8665 Offices of Physiotherapists/Occupational Therapists
8666 Offices of Optometrists
8667 Offices of Podiatrists and Chiropodists
8668 Offices of Denturists
8669 Offices of Other Health Practitioners not elsewhere classified
8671 Offices of Psychologists
8672 Offices of Social Workers
8679 Offices of Other Social Service Practitioners
8681 Medical Laboratories
8682 Radiological Laboratories
8683 Combined Medical and Radiological Laboratories
8684 Public Health Laboratories
8685 Blood Bank Laboratories
8689 Other Health Laboratories
8691 Health care and Public Safety Promotion Associations and Agencies
8692 Health care Standards Agencies
8693 Health care Research Agencies
8694 Social Service Planning and Advocacy Agencies
8699 Other Health and Social Service Associations and Agencies

WSIB Rate Groups

851 - Homes for Nursing Care
852 - Homes for Residential Care
853 - Hospitals
857 - Nursing Services
858 - Group Homes
861 - Treatment Clinics and Specialized Services
875 - Professional Offices and Agencies