



TAKING ACTION ON PSYCHOSOCIAL HAZARDS: A GUIDE FOR JOHSC REPRESENTATIVES

During Mental Health Awareness Month (MHAM) 2025, BCNU members completed Psychological Health Self-Check Charts to identify workplace factors that may contribute to psychological injury. More than 1,300 members participated, identifying recurring psychosocial hazards such as staffing and workload pressures, verbal violence, hallway beds and physical workspace pressures, public/patient access to staff areas, and high noise/overstimulation.

Now it's time to move from findings to action.

As a JOHSC representative, you can use the MHAM findings to bring psychosocial hazards forward for discussion at your committee and help identify opportunities for workplace-level prevention and action.

PARTICIPATE for a
CHANCE to WIN!

Each eligible submission will be entered into a draw for one of 25 OHS swag bags.

Submission deadline: January 31, 2027

YOUR MHAM ACTION

Review the MHAM findings for your region/worksites and select 1-2 psychosocial hazards that are relevant to your workplace. Bring the selected hazard(s) forward at an upcoming JOHSC meeting to discuss what may be happening at your workplace and what action the committee can take or recommend.

1. REVIEW the Findings

Review the psychosocial hazard findings available for your worksite or region. If worksite or region-specific findings are not available, use the provincial MHAM findings.

Select 1-2 psychosocial hazards from the findings that are relevant to your workplace and could benefit from JOHSC discussion.

Remember: The findings are a starting point. Where possible, connect them to current workplace information or concerns.

2. BRING forward

Ask for the selected hazard(s) to be added to an upcoming JOHSC meeting agenda.

Suggested agenda item:

Psychosocial Hazard Review – *[insert hazard]*

Adding Psychosocial Hazards to your Agenda

Use the following email template to communicate with your committee co-chairs regarding the addition of psychosocial hazards to your committee agenda.

Subject: Addition of Psychosocial Hazard to Upcoming JOHSC Agenda

Hi *[Co-Chair Name]*,

As part of BCNU's Mental Health Awareness Month activities, members identified *[insert hazard]* as a psychosocial hazard in our region that may be contributing to psychological injury.

I would like to add this hazard to our next JOHSC meeting agenda to discuss whether it is present at our workplace and what follow-up or corrective actions may be appropriate.

Thank you,

[Your Name]

BCNU JOHSC Worker Representative



At the meeting, you can start the conversation with:

“The MHAM findings identified [hazard] as a psychosocial hazard reported by members. Can we discuss whether we are seeing this at our workplace, what controls are currently in place, and whether further action is needed?”

The goal is to move beyond simply acknowledging the finding and consider what the hazard looks like at your workplace and what the JOHSC can do or recommend to address it.

3. BRING the Conversation to the Workplace Level

Regional, worksite or provincial findings can help identify where to start, but the JOHSC discussion should consider what is happening at the workplace.

Where available, bring forward information such as:

- > specific workplace examples or concerns;
- > incident reports;
- > previous inspection findings;
- > relevant risk assessments; and
- > existing workplace policies, procedures or controls.

Consider:

What is happening?

Where, when and how is the hazard occurring?

What information do we have?

Are there examples, incidents, reports, assessments or inspection findings that help us understand the issue?

What is already being done?

What controls are currently in place? Are they working?

What needs to happen next?

Is additional investigation, inspection, corrective action or follow-up required?

Bringing specific examples and incidents forward can help move the JOHSC discussion toward active remedy rather than discussion without action.

4. IDENTIFY an Action

Use the discussion to determine what action the JOHSC can take or recommend.

Depending on the hazard and workplace circumstances, this could include:

- > Include the hazard in a regular site inspection: Consider how the psychosocial hazard or contributing workplace conditions could be incorporated into an upcoming inspection.
- > Conduct a special inspection: A focused inspection may help the JOHSC gather additional information about a particular hazard or contributing factor.
- > Review existing controls: Consider whether current policies, procedures, assessments or other controls are adequately addressing the hazard.
- > Identify corrective actions: Use the JOHSC reference table, applicable references and workplace-specific information to help brainstorm possible corrective actions.
- > Follow the employer's hazard resolution process: Where further action is required, follow the employer's established process for addressing and resolving workplace health and safety concerns.
- > Establish follow-up: Document who is responsible for the next step and when the JOHSC will revisit the issue.

Tip: For common psychosocial hazards, refer to the JOHSC Reference Table below for relevant legislation, resources and examples of potential corrective actions to help guide the discussion. For further information or support, contact healthandsafety@bcnu.org or your BCNU OHS/MH representative.



5. DOCUMENT and Follow Up

Make sure the discussion and any actions are captured in the JOHSC meeting agenda and meeting minutes

Where applicable, document:

- > Hazard discussed
- > Information reviewed
- > Action identified
- > Person responsible
- > Follow-up

Continue to track the issue through the JOHSC until the identified actions have been addressed.

6. SUBMIT and Stay Connected

Send a copy of the JOHSC agenda or meeting minutes demonstrating that the psychosocial hazard was discussed to **OHSReports@bcnu.org**

You can also connect with your OHS/MH representative or BCNU OHS Prevention if additional support is needed.

Your participation with every submission will be eligible for entry into the draw to win one of the 25 OHS swag bag.

QUICK CHECKLIST

- ☐ Review regional/site findings & select 1-2 psychosocial hazards
- ☐ Add the selected hazard(s) to an upcoming JOHSC meeting agenda
- ☐ Connect the findings to workplace- specific concerns, examples and existing controls
- ☐ Discuss existing controls and potential actions
- ☐ Identify appropriate next steps, such as an inspection, review of controls, or corrective action
- ☐ Record the discussion, actions and follow-up in the JOHSC agenda and/or meeting minutes
- ☐ Follow up on actions identified
- ☐ Submit the agenda/minutes to OHSReports@bcnu.org



JOHSC REFERENCE TABLE

Psychosocial Hazard	Legislation / Reference	Examples of Potential Corrective Actions
Staffing and workload pressures (insufficient nurse-to-patient ratios, short staffing, high pace of work)	OHSR 4.19 – Physical or Mental Impairment WorkSafeBC – Fatigue Risk in the Workplace WorkSafeBC – Work Schedules and Fatigue Health Authorities' Policy on Fatigue	> Conduct workload and/or fatigue risk assessments. > Review staffing levels and scheduling patterns that may contribute to workload and fatigue. > Review or develop workplace fatigue policies and procedures. > Review incident trends and psychological injury reports at JOHSC meetings to identify recurring workplace factors. > Consider peer check-ins, psychological supports and early intervention resources.
Verbal and physical violence	OHSR 4.28 – Risk Assessment OHSR 4.29 – Procedure to Eliminate or Minimize risks to workers OHSR 4.30 – Instruction of Workers responding to violence	> Review the site's Violence Risk Assessment (VRA) and ensure identified controls are implemented. > Ensure behavioural care plans are complete, current and communicated before providing care. > Confirm RSO and other violence-prevention resources are available. > Ensure Code White and Provincial Violence Prevention Curriculum (PVPC) training is up to date. > Ensure timely Critical Incident Support following incidents. > Provide education on workers' right to refuse unsafe work.
Hallway beds / physical workspace pressures	OSHR 4.1 – Safe Workplace	> Include crowding and workspace hazards in workplace inspections. > Identify areas where hallway beds or equipment impede safe movement. > Discuss strategies to address bed capacity issues.



Psychosocial Hazard	Legislation / Reference	Examples of Potential Corrective Actions
High noise/overstimulation	OSHR 7.2 – Noise Exposure Limit	> Assess sources and levels of workplace noise. > Identify opportunities to reduce unnecessary noise or overstimulation. > Ensure noise measurement and monitoring equipment is available. > Consider appropriate mitigation measures, such as shorter shifts and hearing protection, where applicable.
Public/patient access to staff areas	OHSR 4.28 – Violence Risk Assessment OSHR 4.29 – Procedures and Policy to Protect Against Violence OHSR 4.30 – Instruction to Workers Health authorities' specific violence prevention policy	> Review access controls and staff-only areas. > Include staff protection measures in workplace inspections. > Review violence-prevention procedures and site-specific controls. > Training and education on procedure to respond to violence at the specific worksites.
Lack of safety equipment	OHSR 4.20.2 – Hazard Identification, Elimination and Control	> Review availability and accessibility of required safety equipment. > Identify equipment gaps through inspections. > Review maintenance and replacement processes
Compromised indoor air quality	OHSR 4.1 – Safe workplace WSBC FAQ on Wildfire Smoke WSBC Indoor Air Quality Guide	> Review ventilation and potential sources of poor air quality. > Include ventilation/air quality concerns in workplace inspections. > Identify appropriate exposure controls.
Isolation/working alone	OHSR 4.21 – Procedures to Checking Well-being of Workers OHSR 4.22 – Written Procedure to Check in Worker's well-being	> Review working-alone procedures. > Ensure effective check-in systems and alarm devices are available. > Review procedures when workplace conditions change.