

Workplace Safety Action Plan

for Nova Scotia's Health and Community Services Sectors



Update - March 8, 2021

As you might expect, work on the Workplace Safety Action Plan slowed down considerably in mid-March 2020. Up until then, work had proceeded at a steady pace with a focus on the development of workplace level program requirements for the safe handling and mobility and workplace violence prevention programs.

During the summer and fall of 2020, draft versions of the program requirements documents for the safe handling and mobility and workplace violence prevention programs were created and reviewed by members of the Action Plan's Steering Committee. Final drafts were then created to incorporate feedback from the Steering Committee.

In October, 2020, the Action Plan work was 're-ignited' when Davis Pier was selected to act as project consultants / managers for the plan. A new governance structure was created that includes:

- a Program Management Group with co-leads from the Department of Health and Wellness (DHW) and the WCB
- a new Executive Committee with representatives from DHW, Department of Community Services (DCS), Department of Labour & Advanced Education (DLAE), and WCB
- new Program Sponsors with representatives from DHW, DCS, and WCB, and
- new Program Owners (Kevin Orrell, Deputy Minister for DHW, Stuart MacLean, WCB CEO)

The Action Plan Working Group, made up of representatives from AWARE-NS, WCB, and Davis Pier, have worked hard to update the Action Plan Program Charter, and to ensure that project charters for each of the 21 Action Plan recommendations, as outlined in the [Charting the Course Report](#), are complete, solution focused, and endorsed by the Program Sponsors. Other work and progress to date includes:

- The final draft program requirement documents the safe handling and mobility, and workplace violence prevention programs are being reviewed by DCS and DHW in order better understand the system level implications of implementing these programs in our long term care, home care and disability support program workplaces.
- A plan to evaluate the approach used to deliver safe handling and mobility related training to sector workplaces is being finalized and will be implemented in March.
- A working group has been formed to identify and get general agreement on workplace level Stay-at-Work / Return-to-Work program requirements. The working group has met twice with a plan to have an outline of program requirements endorsed by mid-March.

- Significant work has been done to understand the current state of the various programs that are in place to provide safe handling and mobility related equipment to residents in long term care, clients in home care, and those who receive support in the disability support program. This work will help us identify possible options to ensure that required equipment, including lifts in home care, is available to all who need it, when they need it.
- A new project charter for the Risk Assessment and Management Framework has been drafted and is currently being reviewed. Work has also begun to conduct a current state assessment of the approaches used to assess risk in the different sectors and by system partners.

As you can see, lots of work is taking place in the background, and we look forward to working with stakeholders from long term care, home care, and disability support program sectors to implement the plans to improve staff health and safety.

Susan Dempsey

AWARE-NS Executive Director