

PEEL Perspective

Promoting strategic HR leadership in Peel Region

FALL/WINTER 2016





Inside this Issue



ROBERT GEARING, CHRL
Director, Communications

Welcome to the Fall/Winter edition of the Peel Perspective. In this issue, we ask the Executive Director of the Canadian Mental Health Association 10 questions related to Mental Health in the Workplace, we also feature an interview with the CEO of Workplace Medical Corporation about some of the advantages of using a 3rd party disability provider in relation to managing absences and accommodations and more in the workplace.

We look back on the Chapter events that have taken place since the ABM up until the end of December 2016, so that all Chapter members can see what events, speakers and workshops have been held by the Chapter. I hope you all enjoy this issue and find it interesting and informative.

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9 Questions

with the Canadian Mental Health Association of Peel



Canadian Mental
Health Association
Peel Dufferin
Mental health for all

Association canadienne
pour la santé mentale
Peel Dufferin
La santé mentale pour tous

1. Can you tell me about the Canadian Mental Health Association of Peel Dufferin and what services you offer to the community?

Canadian Mental Health Association Peel Dufferin Branch (CMHA Peel Dufferin) is the leading client-driven, community-based mental health organization serving the Region of Peel, Dufferin County, Rexdale and West Woodbridge. We offer a variety of mental health programs and services and are dedicated to helping people recover from mental illness, build resiliency and participate in the life of the community.

Our programs and services include an Assertive Community Treatment Team (ACTT), a Mental Health and Justice program, Case management programs, early intervention programs, brief counseling, family support, the Peel Outreach Program (for homeless and those at risk), youth and seniors services and more. Our Recovery West drop-in program promotes mental health recovery through groups, activities and vocational services with a focus on peer support. Our Access team provides intake, information and referral services as well as working with our community partners.

24.7 Crisis Support Peel is our mental health and addictions crisis service offering timely response to adults (16 years and over) experiencing a mental health or addictions crisis; individuals having difficulties coping; and family, caregivers and friends needing support.

CMHA Peel Dufferin is also committed to community development, mental health awareness and addressing the stigma surrounding mental illness. We do this through public awareness campaigns and events as well as education and training programs. We recently

launched Wellness Works, a suite of workshops, courses and presentations to help employers learn more about mental health and support the implementation of the National Standard for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace.

2. What do you feel are the most common mental health issues typically seen in the workplace?

We know that 20% of Canadians will experience a mental illness in their lifetime, but the remaining 80% are affected by an illness in family members, friends or colleagues. In fact, the number of Canadians living with mental illness is three times more than people living with diabetes and almost five times more than heart disease.

Some of the most common mental health issues are depression and anxiety with about 8% of adults experiencing major depression at some time in their lives. What's really tragic though is that nearly half of those who feel they have suffered from depression or anxiety have never seen a doctor about the problem.

3. When an employee feels the need to be off work or that they may require an accommodation in their workplace due to a mental health disability, do you have any recommendations as to how they should consider approaching their employer to discuss their situation?

1. Read and become familiar with any policies that the employer has on record
2. Ask for a one on one meeting with the immediate supervisor and bring up the topic
3. Focus on how the symptoms or issues are affecting their work

4. Present a clear plan on what they need from employer; what accommodation are they looking for?
5. Be prepared to present medical evidence

4. Once an employee has come forward to their manager or supervisor about a mental health disability that they are dealing with, what information might be helpful for Managers and their employers to be aware of?

1. Managers must be knowledgeable about the policies of the org. and at the very least be aware of legislation governing disability
2. Ask employee how the disability affects the employee day to day, eg. medication might make them sleepy in the morning
3. Ask what accommodation they might need eg. Need to start their day later
4. What will help the employee to do their best work in the situation as well as manage their disability?
5. How much information is the employee willing to share with manager and co-workers?
6. Document everything in all meetings with employee. Be aware of privacy and confidentiality in health matters.
7. The legislation says - Employer must accommodate to the point of "undue hardship"

5. What could be some of the legal issues to consider when dealing with accommodation of mental health disability?

1. Be aware that Mental illness is recognized as a Disability in various employment related legislation eg. Ontario Human Rights Code, AODA
2. An employee can file a complaint of discrimination based on Mental disability under the Ontario Human Rights Code and AODA.
3. The employer will have to respond with documentation to the OHR Tribunal, if a complaint is filed.

6. Do you have any recommendations as to how employers can help in the battle against the stigma that employees with mental health issues face in the workplace?

Education and training for employees and for managers is key to busting myths and eliminating the stigma associated with mental illness. We see it again and

again when we do workplace mental health training – so many people know someone or have been impacted by mental illness or suicide, yet stereotypes and discrimination still exist.

What's amazing though, is how a simple Mental Health 101 presentation can provide employees with an understanding various mental health issues, build mental health awareness and work towards removing stigma in the workplace. Those sessions always include lots of questions from participants who also learn strategies for maintaining their mental wellness and for providing compassionate support and understanding to colleagues, friends and family.

We also recommend that employers keep the conversation about mental illness alive after the trainings and also develop clear policies and procedures for dealing with mental illness that mirror policies on dealing with other types of illnesses.

7. Does the Canadian Mental Health Association of Peel offer any training sessions for employers on how to deal with workplace mental health and mental health issues in the workplace?

Our Wellness Works suite of workshops and trainings includes everything from Mental Health 101, to workshops for managing stress, conflict resolution, managing change, dealing with difficult people and strategies to work better and live happier. Our Compassion Fatigue training provides workers in helping professions with tools and strategies for and identifying and dealing with traumatic stress and the costs of caring.

We also offer Mental Health Works, CMHA's acclaimed workplace mental health program. Mental Health Works offers capacity building workshops that are person centered, evidence based, and solutions focused covering topics like mood and depression; stress and anxiety; psychological safety; and accommodation.

8. What are some approaches that can be used to help an employee to return to work successfully after a mental health disability?

1. Gradual return to work plan
2. Offer to accommodate
3. Be kind and flexible
4. Message and communication to teams and co-workers should be clear about non-discrimination and be careful of breaching employee's confidentiality

9. What could be some of the legal issues to consider when dealing with accommodation of an employee with a mental health disability?

1. Duty to accommodate
2. Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities ACT – AODA
3. Ontario Human Rights Code.

If you have questions or would like information about their services or programs please contact the CMHA Peel Dufferin at the number or email below.

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Interview With



WILLIAM J. SHAPIRO
P.Eng, MBA
HRPA – Peel Perspective



Bio: Bill is the President and CEO of Workplace Medical Corp. Since joining WMC in 1991, Bill has played a leading role in the growth of the company from a local occupational health clinic to a national provider of occupational health and absence management services.

In addition to his Master's degree in Electrical Engineering from the University of Toronto, Bill also earned his MBA from the Ivey Business School.

First Job: Software Engineer at a Biotech Company in Mississauga, Allelix

1. Can you tell me about Workplace Medical and what services your company offers?

Workplace Medical has a unique approach to helping organizations reduce avoidable absences by providing services that support their prevention, response and return to work strategies.

In prevention, we provide mobile hearing testing, occupational health exams and testing, wellness programs, and first aid training; in response, we provide call centre and specialized absence tracking software; and in the area of return to work, we provide disability management and early medical intervention and support as our clients' "company doctor".

We have a 3-pronged approach to reduce both occupational and non-occupational avoidable absences:

1. Prevent absenteeism – We act as the employers' outsourced health doctors to help ensure employees are safe and fit for the job; these include:

Hobbies: Played drums in a band, skiing and tennis

What do you do in your spare time: I spend time with my family, travel, read, play drums in a band, ski and play tennis.

Source of inspiration: My father was a family and occupational health physician. I've always believed he was really ahead of his time and this inspired me to work in this industry and help provide employer support services to organizations.

pre-employment testing, periodic medical exams, hearing testing and wellness programs. We provide this service through 7 company-owned occupational health clinics throughout southern Ontario (Hamilton, Toronto, London, Sarnia, Niagara Falls, Ajax and Ottawa). We also offer these services on location at a client's office, as well as through a national network of associate clinics and physicians.

2. Respond to absenteeism – We have a 24/7 call centre to capture calls and a robust, web-based software to track, measure and communicate absences. Our software and call centre were created to combat the considerable amount of absences that were not being captured due to voicemail bottlenecks and lack of real-time absence tracking. At Workplace Medical, we track and measure the absences, so the right people are notified at the right time, and then provide detailed analytics to better understand, plan and measure.

3. Return to work after the absence – Workplace Medical provides doctor-to-doctor communication with family physicians, early intervention and case managers to provide support to the employee and be the liaison between employer and employee.

We support WSIB's mandate by implementing early intervention and return to work programs. We liaise with the company and family physicians to understand the medical reasons for the absence, and work with the family physician on a return-to-work plan.

2. What is your take on Disability Management and why it is important for employers?

Disability Management is an important part of the medical and management support for the employer.

I believe that Disability management is important for employers for a number of reasons:

1. Employees are the foundation of any business and keeping them healthy and productive is a win-win for everyone.
2. Cost reduction and management. The cost of absence is both the direct cost of the employee and also the indirect costs. For example, a DM program will reduce the cost absences by reducing the risk that the absences last longer than necessary management overheads, decreased service levels, and quality and employee morale.

It can make a big difference in the health and working life of your employee. Statistics show that the longer you are off work the higher the risk that you never return to work. If your employee is off for 6 months there is only a 50% chance that they will return to work and it drops to 10%-15% if they are off one year. There is a less than 5% chance of returning to work if they are off for 2 years.

3. What are some of the advantages for an organization in using a 3rd party disability provider?

A key advantage to having a third party disability provider is to provide HR with objective medical advice and support and relieves them of the difficult position of discussing medical issues with their employee or employee's family physician. They can tell their employees "I'm not a doctor so I would like our doctor or case manager to review this issue".

A third party DM provider like WMC can maintain confidentiality and an employer does not have to get involved in the potential conflict with the medical intervention.

4. What would be some reasons you might suggest that an organization look into using a 3rd party disability management company like Workplace Medical?

We find that many businesses prefer to work with WMC because we take on the responsibility of dealing with family doctors and medical notes on a timely basis.

The second most important issue we see is the level of transparency our OHS physician provides to the employer. They are able to provide employers with medical advice and support for a variety of issues.

5. Do you see a connection between Attendance Management and Disability Management?

Yes, and that is one of our biggest messages. Often employers put things in silos and do not see a connection.

Disability Management is just one type of absence and they should put that in context of their absence management policies and strategies.

We put all types of absences (casual, occupational, non-occupational, approved and unapproved) under the Absence Management umbrella. When you do this, the cost of absenteeism is significant and should get the attention of the CFO. We say that if the Cost of Absenteeism a line item on the P&L then it would get much more attention and it would be a strategic risk management issue.

Direct and indirect costs associated with employee absences are approximately 17% of payroll each year. Studies have shown only a few percentages of Canadian employers track absences. Understanding absence patterns and identifying causes of absences can help organizations put policies in place to help reduce absenteeism.

6. What are your suggestions to organizations that may help them in finding the leaks in their attendance management or disability management programs?

A leak is when an individual absence crosses the threshold from casual absence to short and long-term disability claims. Recognizing the root causes of absences will help determine which absences are avoidable. I'd encourage organizations to start by reviewing their processes and how the absence is first communicated in your company.

When you look at that through a process you can find the bottleneck, lack of transparency, and lack of handoff from one stakeholder to another. We can also review your policies and find out if your policies are actually causing them. That's how we find the leaks.

7. What are some of the challenges you hear from your clients when it comes to managing disabilities and or difficult WSIB claims and do you have any advice on how employers can better manage those challenges?

In general some of the biggest challenges we see are the lack of transparency companies have about the status of their absences, including whether they are making progress in RTW, or if there is a RTW doctor's note. We also find many clients are not clear on how to identify medical communications or develop their own policies and organizational structures to track absences.

We have also found that accountability is too often a huge challenge as no individual person has been identified as the person responsible for managing disabilities and/or difficult WSIB claims. Sometimes in these cases, organizational change is required to implement the organizational structure that would support this process.

I would advise employers to start with understanding the policy and process in place as well as considering an outside DM consultant to help them better understand the problem.

Collaborative implementation can help in plugging the leaks, when HR works with other departments who can also benefit from using the tracking tools and support. The key to success is supporting the HR supervisors in tracking and communicating the data while ensuring they are accountable.

8. How can using a 3rd party disability management provider like Workplace Medical assist an employer in reducing costs related to absences, short/long term disability and WSIB?

WMC can assist an employer in reducing costs related to absences, short/long term disability and WSIB by working to help review and develop policies and procedures and to help breakdown silos.

In an ideal world, all employees would be available for work 100% of the time. In reality, some portion of the workforce will be unavailable on any given day: this is a cost of doing business. However, hidden in this cost is a second class of expenses due to absences that were avoidable or have lasted longer than expected. We call this leakage because it is hard to identify where it is coming from for many companies, but rising costs are the evidence that it exists. Workplace Medical has programs and process in place to help identify where these leaks are and then create policies and plans to help them overcome these leaks and plug the silos.

9. Do feel that employer wellness programs make a difference in the workplace and if so how and why?


Wellness programs historically have been seen as an employer perk. As more and more studies have been conducted on the relationship of wellness in the workplace to an increase in productivity and ROI, wellness programs have now become an important and strategic function of HR. Wellness programs send the message to employees that the company is concerned about your health and well-being, and will support you holistically.

10. Your advice to new generation pursuing career in this field:

There are great opportunities for people entering this industry and field because it combines a number of different backgrounds in health, HR, strategic management and finance. It is an industry that truly supports the growth of an organization.

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Events Summaries – Fall/Winter 2016

WORKPLACE INVESTIGATIONS

Professional Development Day

June 15, 2016

Article by Megan Shanahan

The Peel Chapter hosted its first Professional Development half-day this year at the Lionhead Golf & Country Club in Brampton. The event was an interactive training session on conducting investigations in the workplace. The session was led by Dorian N. Persaud from Persaud Employment Law. Participants were led through how to determine whether a formal investigation is necessary, the steps of conducting an investigation, tips for interviewing witnesses, and drafting investigation reports. The morning concluded with a case study, where participants put what they learned into practice, and shared their thoughts and feedback with the group. Overall this was a very informative training session that provided attendees with knowledge, tools and resources they could bring back to the workplace.

PEER SHARING AND EMPLOYMENT NETWORKING GROUP

Employment Networking Group

July 18, 2016

Article by Carmen Fischer

This Peer Sharing ENG was an interactive event where each member had to introduce themselves and indicate what their goal was in attending the event. I had the opportunity to meet first-time members, long-time members and new grads that are in the process of working toward an HR designation. The following questions were distributed and discussed by each table and shared with the rest of the audience:

- What are the things to do before changing a job?
- How do you prepare for your job search?
- How do you build your social media profile?
- What does a good resume look like?
- What are specific activities you can carry out to find job leads?
- How do you prepare for an interview?
- How to create a great first impression in an interview?
- What are the things to do if you have not found a job after a while?

WHAT TALENT ACQUISITION PROFESSIONALS ARE LOOKING FOR

Employment Networking Group

September 19, 2016

Article by Jyoti Shamnani

This was the first meeting of the Employment Networking Group after the summer break. The purpose of this ENG meeting was for attendees to gain advice, information, feedback and general insight into what Talent Acquisition professionals are looking for in resumes and interviews in order to leave a better impression and increase their chances of success when applying to larger companies and recruiters.

Lisa Silveira, Talent Acquisition Specialist at Maple Leaf, Seema Sawhney, a professional with over 19 years' experience in HR and talent acquisition, and Antonia Drake, Partner, Elby Professional Recruitment were the three talent acquisition professionals. Each of them gave presentation on how the whole process works.

Key topics covered included technical requirements, cultural fit, how behavioural questions are related to culture, use of LinkedIn, networking and more. Attendees were very engaged and it was an interactive session.

FALL SOCIAL

Social Networking Event

September 29, 2016

Article by Jyoti Shamnani

As always, September is a time to get back to work and school after some much needed vacation time. The Fall Social is a great time to broaden our network circles and to connect with other HR professionals! This event was primarily a meet and greet, where attendees had the opportunity to meet new board members and volunteers. I also met couple of HR professionals who were interested in becoming a volunteer and I was glad to connect them with the board members of the committees they were interested in.



EMPLOYMENT LAW UPDATE

Professional Development Day

October 13, 2016

Article by Carmen Fischer

This event took place at the Lionhead Golf and Country Club in Brampton. The presentation was handled by the professional team of Hicks and Morley (Law Firm).

The session covered a variety of updates in legislation. Some of the topics included the Occupational Health and Safety Act, Social Media Harassment, Medical Marijuana in the Workplace, Bill 132, Constructive Dismissal, EI and CPP and Mental Health at Work.

There was a lot of useful information and resources provided for HR professionals to apply best practices in their role as advisors in their organizations. The presenters also provided case studies in Constructive Dismissal, Mental Health and Harassment where the attendees had the opportunity to decide what would have been the result ruled by the Court.

Some of the questions at the end of the presentations were about mental health, drug testing, compensation in constructive dismissal, harassment and challenges that employees over 65 are facing on finding a long term disability insurance plan. All the slides from the presentation were provided to attendees on a USB key.

Presenters: Alyson M. Frankie, Jacqui J. Luksha, Amanda J. Hunter, Matthew J. Milhailovich, Gargi V. Chopra, Amanda E. Lawrence and Kathryn J. Bird.

NEW MEMBERS DINNER

October 18, 2016

Article by Carmen Fischer

A very enthusiastic group of new Peel Chapter members came to this event to learn about the HR Peel Chapter. The current Director of Membership, Shady Hana, explained that the Human Resources Professionals Association consists of 28 chapters with more than 20,000 members. He also explained the three broad Strategic Initiatives of the Association (Enrich the Member Experience, Improve Protection of the Public and Expand HRP A Influence). An Expectation Survey took place with three different questions where all members participated and had the opportunity to ask about their membership and the Chapter. Bessie Wang shared the importance of the Peel Chapter with more than 2,400 members, its structure and portfolios. She also explained the added value as a member with new complimentary programs. Paul Rushton presented the mentoring program and explained the value of having people with different specialties and how important the role of becoming a mentor is for new grads and for HR professionals that are starting their career.

BUSINESS AND HR TRENDS FOR 2017

Programs Dinner

November 2, 2016

Article by Megan Shanahan

The world of work as we know it has been changing at an unprecedented rate. This Programs Dinner focused on key findings from Willis Towers Watson's research on current business trends and how they are changing the future of HR. Our presenters from Willis Towers Watson were Lucille Raikes, Senior Consultant, and Daniella Permack, Senior Analyst.

Lucille and Daniella reviewed global survey results on business practices surrounding attraction, recruitment, retention, leadership, performance evaluations and best practices from employee and employer perspectives. Attendees were challenged to consider how their organizations would need to revisit their respective Employee Value Propositions in order to support the new world of work. Specific areas that were explored in order to create a more meaningful employee experience included leadership, wellness, performance management and total rewards. This was an interactive session that facilitated great idea generation and business practice sharing among attendees.

MOCK INTERVIEWS

Employment Networking Group

November 21, 2016

Article by Carmen Fischer

This event provided an opportunity for HR Professionals in career transition to practice interviewing with a group of interviewers that met with each participant.

Job descriptions were distributed by table and each individual was asked to join a group per specialization. There were groups for HR Generalists, HR Business Partners, Organizational Development, Health & Safety, Administrative Coordinator and HR Coordinators. Each team analyzed the job description to understand the duties and responsibilities of the role in order to prepare for the interview.

A special thank you goes out to the volunteers: Alison Tsoi, Julie Chagger, Shawn Jethua and Bordine Boddie who participated as interviewers. The interviews helped the participants to practice an interview with real questions and scenarios that interviewees could expect to be asked with an employer. At the end of each interview, the interviewers provided feedback to the participants, focusing in certain areas to improve their interview and presentation skills.

HOLIDAY LUNCH

Social Networking Event

November 24, 2016

Article by Jyoti Shamnani

2016 flew by, and this was a great event to say thank you for the year and to meet and socialize with HR colleagues, friends, and other professionals. Attendees were truly in a holiday mood at Lionhead Golf and Country Club as we approached that magical time of the year again. Good food and lots of donations were given in both cash and food to be donated to a local Peel Region food bank. There were quite a few giveaways that were donated by a number of organizations within the region and beyond. This was a lunch filled with fun and laughter, for all who attended.



BRINGING TOGETHER MENTORS AND MENTEES

Mentoring Program Orientation

November 28, 2016

Article by Jyoti Shamnani

This was another proud mentor/mentee pairing event for the Peel chapter which won the 2015 Excellence Award for Mentoring. I was pleased to see all the enthusiastic mentees as well as the mentors. What was interesting to know was that some of our mentors had volunteered to mentor more than one mentee. The main objective of this program is to help HR professionals with less

experience to gain knowledge and insight into the HR world with the help of experienced HR professionals. This is a give and take relationship and it was great to see that the experienced HR professionals were happy and open to learn about technology and social media from many younger HR professionals.

TOTAL REWARDS DINNER



BILL 132 - ONTARIO'S SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT ACTION PLAN ACT

Article by Gagan Aulakh,CHRP

Effective September 8, 2016 new employer workplace harassment obligations came in force that amends the various pieces of legislation including the workplace harassment provisions of the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA).

Bill 132 makes employers accountable to develop policies and procedures to include workplace sexual harassment and to give training to their employees. It also requires employers to consult with joint health and safety committee to develop such written workplace harassment policies.

1. 'Workplace harassment' definition now includes engaging in unwelcomed comment or conducts because of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression where the course of comments or conduct is known to be unwelcomed .It also includes making a sexual solicitation or advance where the person making the solicitation or advance is in a position to confer, grant or deny a benefit or advancement to the worker and the person knows or ought reasonable to know that the solicitation or advance is unwelcome. Bill 132 also classifies what is not considered as sexual harassment i.e. any reasonable action by an employer or supervisor relating to the management and direction of the workplace.
2. Training and instruction to employees regarding workplace harassment policy and program. Bill 132 requires employers to develop and give formalized training to employees including new hires & existing employees.

3. Formal investigations become mandatory. Although employers are obliged to investigate and report all incidents of workplace harassment Bill 132 sets out how incidents or complaints of workplace harassment will be investigated and dealt with. It outlines that employers must have written processes to be followed. It also outlines the specific procedural steps to investigate and to obtain the information. It gives power to Ministry of Labor to order independent third party investigation and reporting if required. The expenses of the investigation and reporting to be paid by the employer.
4. It also outlines the specific procedural steps to investigate and to obtain the information.
5. Bill 132 sets out that any corrective action as a result of investigation will be informed to all the parties in writing. An employee who is experiencing such harassment will also be informed of the results of such investigation in writing.
6. Annual review of policies and procedures
To provide compliance to the new requirements employers need to revisit their policies and procedures annually.

Overall the Bill imposes positive duties on employers to protect workers from workplace harassment. For further information please visit <https://www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/hs/topics/workplaceviolence.php>.

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