

Making Cents of Abilities



You Need
BUSINESS
We Need You

Thank you to the following for their financial support of this initiative.



Introduction

It is with great excitement that we launch Making Cent\$ of Abilities – a unique initiative highlighting the economic benefits of employing persons with disabilities, and how employers can tap into the disabled workforce and available supports.

The objectives of this initiative are:

- Educate employers on the economic benefits of hiring and retaining persons with disabilities
- Reduce the barriers associated with the hiring and retaining of persons with disabilities
- Identify employers who are champions of hiring and retaining persons with disabilities
- Support employers in hiring and retaining persons with disabilities
- Provide information to employers about resources and services in the community



We hope to generate significant forward interest and momentum through this initiative to emphasize the need for better integration of these untapped workers into the workplace in the Region of Waterloo, Wellington County, and beyond.

Please continue to visit our website www.makingcentsofabilities.com for updates and resources.

Carol Simpson
Executive Director
Workforce Planning Board of Waterloo Wellington Dufferin (WPB)

About WPB



Workforce Planning Board
of Waterloo Wellington Dufferin

The Workforce Planning Board of Waterloo Wellington Dufferin (WPB) is a non-profit organization that works in partnership with all sectors including business, education & training and community organizations to collaboratively develop solutions to address labour market needs. Our mission is to engage partners to find solutions to local workforce development needs.

WPB's main role is to lead the Trends, Opportunities and Priorities (TOP) local labour market planning process. The TOP process includes research on current labour market conditions, community consultations and review, and discussion of research findings. WPB establishes priorities for labour market development and engages partners in initiating action plans that respond to priorities of mutual interest.

Did You Know?

- There are over 4,000 students with disabilities currently studying at Conestoga College, University of Guelph, Wilfrid Laurier University and the University of Waterloo. Are you ready for them?
- There are over a million adult Canadians who have a hearing disability.
- 97% of employers who had hired someone with a disability would do it again!
- Marriott Hotels recently reported that the turnover rate among their employees with a disability was only 6%. Among other employees the turnover rate was 52%.
- Only 16% of businesses surveyed said that they had a person with a disability currently employed.
- Over 80% of employment service providers are reporting that they are seeing increased barriers to employment for persons with disabilities.
- Barriers to employment for persons with disabilities, such as transportation, are still wide spread in the Region of Waterloo and Wellington County and need to be addressed.

Common Myths About Employees with Disabilities

Myth There aren't many people with disabilities so it is not an issue for our company.

Reality There are 4.4 million Canadians with disabilities – an increase of 12.4% from the 2001 disability rate and it is estimated that by 2026 that number will increase to 6.1 million.

- In the Region of Waterloo and Wellington County, there are nearly 23,000 people of working age (25 – 64) with disabilities.

Myth It will cost too much to accommodate employees with disabilities.

Reality Most employers report no cost or low cost for accommodating employees with disabilities. The Job Accommodation Network reports the following figures:

- 46% of employers spend nothing
- 45% experienced a one-time cost - typically \$500 or less
- Only 7% indicated that the accommodation is an annual ongoing cost

Myth Employees with disabilities will miss too much work and won't be able to effectively perform their job responsibilities.

Reality Employers report performance rating of average or above average for 90% of employees with disabilities. Additional studies found that:

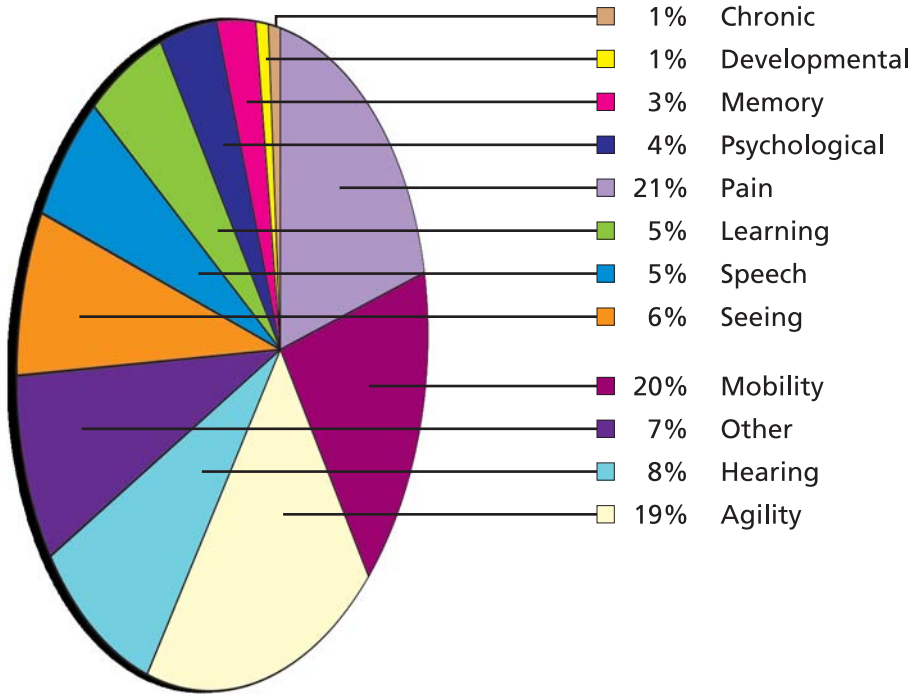
- 86% of employees with disabilities have average or above average attendance records.
- 33% of employers say that persons with disabilities work as hard as other employees while 46% say that persons with disabilities actually work harder.

Defining Disability

According to the Ontario Human Rights Commission, “disability covers a broad range and degree of conditions, some visible and others not. A disability may have been present from birth, caused by an accident, or developed over time. It includes physical, mental and learning disabilities, mental disorders, hearing or vision disabilities, epilepsy, drug and alcohol dependencies, environmental sensitivities, as well as other conditions.”

The Participation and Activity Limitation Survey (PALS) identifies the following types of disabilities in adults:

- Hearing
- Speech
- Agility
- Learning
- Developmental disabilities
- Other
- Seeing
- Mobility
- Pain
- Memory
- Psychological



Source: 2006 Participation and Activity Limitation Survey, Statistics Canada

Don't Forget the "Invisible Disabilities"

It is imperative that when discussing persons with disabilities in the workplace, we do not forget about the 'invisible disabilities'. Mental health issues are rampant among employees in Canada. In fact, it has been estimated by the World Health Organization that by the year 2020, depression will be the second most common cause of disability in the developed world.

Depression has been referred to as "the unheralded business crisis in Canada" by experts involved with the Global Business and Economic Roundtable on Addiction and Mental Health.

Consider these facts:

- 18% of the working population reported missing work or cutting back on workload because of depressive symptoms.
- Mental health costs Canadian Business \$16 billion per year – that is equal to 14% of the net annual operating profits of all businesses in Canada.
- For those who get access to treatment, the employer could save between \$5,000 to \$10,000 per employee per year in the cost of prescription drugs, sick leave, and average wage replacement.
- 84% of North Americans say CEOs should make helping employees in the workplace with depression a key human resources priority.

Business Case for Hiring Persons with Disabilities

Labour Shortage

According to the Conference Board of Canada, "beginning in 2014, if current trends continue, labour demand will exceed labour supply; thereafter the projected gap will grow steadily larger. As a result, Ontario could face a shortfall of 190,000 workers in 2020, rising to 364,000 by 2025 and 564,000 by 2030."



Win-Win Solution

Hiring persons with disabilities makes good business sense. By developing a strategy to hire persons with disabilities, not only will you be tapping into an under-utilized group of qualified employees, you'll also be tapping into an often overlooked consumer market. It is estimated that in Canada, persons with disabilities represent \$25 billion in consumer spending.

"People with disabilities want to work for you, and they want to buy your products. With skilled and loyal employees at a premium and traditional market growth slowing, can you afford to ignore or stereotype them?"

Fortune magazine, 1998

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005

It's all about making Ontario accessible for persons with disabilities. This important law is the first of its kind in Canada. Implemented by the Ministry of Community and Social Services, the goal is to achieve full accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities by 2025.

People with disabilities should have the same kind of opportunities as everyone else. They should be able to do the things that most of us take for granted — going to work or school, shopping, taking in a movie or eating out. That's the goal of Ontario's legislation. Businesses and organizations who provide goods and services to people in Ontario will have to meet certain accessibility standards in five important areas of our lives:

- *customer service*
- *transportation*
- *information and communications*
- *built environment*
- *employment*

Government of Ontario
Ministry of Community and Social Services
Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities

For more information on the standards related to this legislation, and what changes you can and are legally required to implement visit www.accesson.ca and www.mcsc.gov.on.ca/mcss/english/pillars/accessibilityOntario



Accessibility & Accommodations

Workplace accessibility refers to how easily all people, regardless of ability, can function in a work environment. Accessible workplaces are free of barriers and allow all employees with disabilities to move, interact, communicate, be productive and compete in the marketplace as equally as their co-workers.

How Accessible Is Your Workplace?

- Are your job advertisements and applications accessible for people with vision disabilities?
- Is your recruitment and selection process fair for all applicants? Are you able to provide accommodations for applicants if required?
- Is your staff trained on how to interact with people with disabilities?
- Are your facilities physically accessible for persons with disabilities (i.e. ramps, elevator buttons, Braille signs, etc.)?
- Do employees with disabilities have the same access and opportunities for learning and professional development?
- Are resources and information provided in accessible formats?

Employers can make their workplaces accessible by implementing accommodations for employees with disabilities. According to the Job Accommodation Network, "job accommodations are modifications to the facility, changes in job process and assistive technology that allows a person to perform at the expected performance standards."



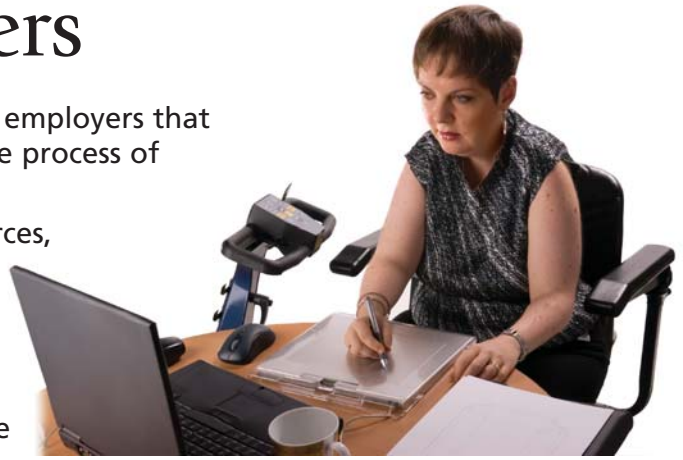
Examples of job accommodations include:

- Making existing facilities accessible to and useable by a person with a disability
- Modification of work schedules
- Modification of equipment and/or devices
- Installation of equipment and/or devices (voice input or speech recognition aids, voice synthesizer, TTY telephone service, computer screen magnifiers)
- Provision of qualified interpreters
- Modification of applications, procedures and training materials
- Self-paced workload
- Alternate methods of communication

Resources for Employers

There is a multitude of resources available to employers that will help guide and support them through the process of hiring and retaining persons with disabilities.

For direct links to these and additional resources, including organizations, please go to our website www.makingcentsofabilities.com



Business Takes Action (BTA)

Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters initiative

A Place for All: A Guide to Creating an Inclusive Workplace & A Guide for Managing the Return to Work

Canadian Human Rights Commission

Make Your Workplace Accessible

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities
Ministry of Community & Social Services

Creating a Welcoming Workplace for Employees with Disabilities

Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat

Workshop on Duty to Accommodate Policy

Canadian Public Service Agency

Tapping the Talents of People with Disabilities

Conference Board of Canada

The Employer Toolkit (includes handbook & video)

WorkAble Solutions

Enabling Accessibility Fund

Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC)



Workforce Planning Board
of Waterloo Wellington Dufferin

Workforce Planning Board of Waterloo Wellington Dufferin
218 Boida Ave, Unit 5
Ayr, Ontario N0B 1E0
Tel: (519) 622-7122
Fax: (519) 622-7260
www.workforceplanningboard.com

WPB is funded by Employment Ontario