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BUSINESS
We Need You



Making Cent\$ of Abilities Employers' Resource to Hiring and Retaining Persons with Disabilities

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Making Cent\$ of Abilities

Employers' Resource to Hiring and Retaining Persons with Disabilities

Introduction

It is with great excitement that we launch Making Cent\$ of Abilities – a unique local initiative highlighting the economic benefits of employing persons with disabilities, how employers can recruit workers with disabilities and the available supports for employers in doing so.

The objectives of this initiative are:

- Educating employers on the economic benefits of hiring and retaining persons with disabilities.
- Addressing and reducing the barriers associated with the hiring and retaining persons with disabilities.
- Identifying employers who are champions of hiring and retaining persons with disabilities.
- Supporting employers in hiring and retaining persons with disabilities.
- Providing information to employers about resources and services in the community.

We hope to generate significant interest and momentum through this initiative's activities to emphasize the need for the integration of these untapped workers into the workplaces of the Region of Waterloo, Wellington County and Dufferin County.

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

Charlene Hofbauer
Executive Director
Workforce Planning Board of Waterloo Wellington Dufferin (WPB)



Workforce Planning Board
of Waterloo Wellington Dufferin

About the Workforce Planning Board

The Workforce Planning Board of Waterloo Wellington Dufferin (WPB) is a non-profit organization that works in partnership with all sectors including business, government 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 Local Labour Market Plan (LLMP) process. The LLMP 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.



Local Labour Market Information

For the most part, Canada’s economy has continued to remain robust with positive growth rates across many sectors and industries. The local economies of Waterloo Region, Wellington County and Dufferin are unique in that these economies are leaders in the technology, agriculture and manufacturing sectors – vital to the nation’s economy. With Kitchener-Waterloo at the forefront of the technological revolution in Canada, and Guelph-Wellington leading in agricultural development, especially with their recent \$10 million Smart Cities challenge win to develop the county’s first circular food economy, it is expected that these regions will continue growing and investing at exponential rates.

Based on the Workforce Planning Board’s most recent Labour Market Report for September 2019, there were a total of 40,339 online job posts in the Region of Waterloo and the Counties of Wellington and Dufferin between January 1st to June 30th 2019. The top three industries which had the most job postings

were Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services (3,669), Manufacturing (3,017), and Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (2,555). The top three positions which had the most job postings were Transport Truck Drivers (1,980), Computer Programmers and Interactive Media Developers (1,273), and Retail Salespersons (1,023).

In the Labour Force Survey of Canada’s most recent figures for August 2019, the Region of Waterloo had a total labour force of 317,100 with 298,500 employed, whereas Guelph had a labour force of 99,600 with 94,300 people employed. However, with the aging population and low birth rates, the labour force is expected to shrink in these regions and in Canada generally. Such factors are intensifying the talent shortage facing various industries and sectors, hampering employment growth and economic development. Therefore, persons with disabilities remain an important labour pool for employers which can help ease current labour and talent shortages.

Defining Disability

Persons with disabilities face more challenges in terms of work when compared to persons without disabilities. 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
- Seeing
- Speech
- Mobility
- Agility
- Pain
- Learning
- Memory
- Developmental disabilities
- Psychological
- Other

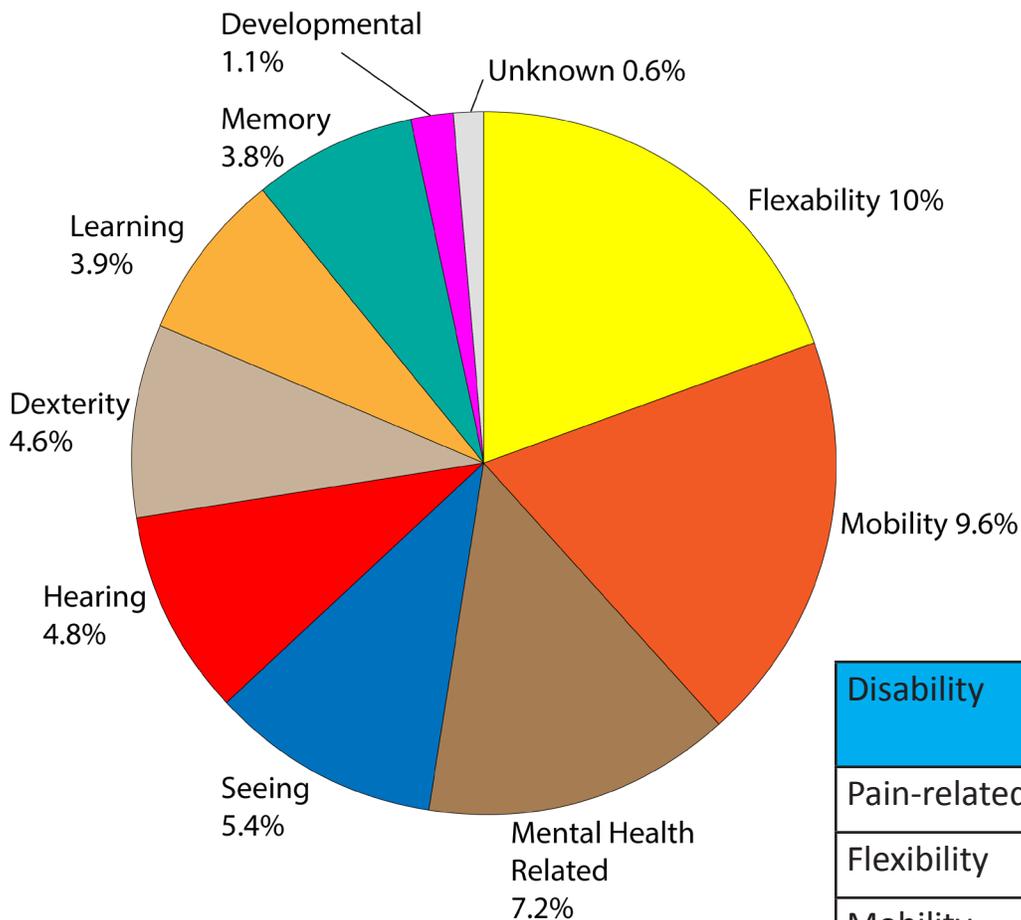
Source: 2006 Participation and Activity Limitation Survey, Statistics Canada



Table 3

Canadian population aged 15 years and over with a disability, by disability type and sex, 2017
Table summary

This table displays the results of Canadian population aged 15 years and over with a disability. The information is grouped by Disability type and includes both women and men.



Disability	Total number of population
Pain-related	4,062,000
Flexability	2,795,110
Mobility	2,676,370
Mental health-related	2,027,370
Seeing	1,519,840
Hearing	1,334,520
Dexterity	1,275,610
Learning	1,105,680
Memory	1,050,840
Developmental	315,470
Unknown	155,810

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Survey on Disability, 2017

Business Case for Hiring Persons with Disabilities

The business case for hiring persons with disabilities is important for employers to note and can have positive implications for their overall organization. One key reason, as was discussed earlier, is the on-going labour shortage currently facing many industries. In fact, a 2014 report by Miner Management Consultants found that by 2031, Canada is expected to face a labour shortage of close to 2 million workers.¹ This shortage of finding talent has been cited as one of the main challenges for employers in the region where difficulties hiring and retaining workers is understood to be directly affecting employers' abilities to invest and grow both their workforce and business. As a result, employers must continue finding sources of labour if they wish to succeed in growing their business operations. It is reported that, "The national employment rate of people who have a disability is 59 percent, compared to 80 percent of people without a disability."²

"The national employment rate of people who have a disability is 59 percent, compared to 80 percent of people without a disability."

With such variations in employment rates between persons with and without disabilities, employers have an important labour pool waiting to be tapped.

Another reason why hiring persons with disabilities is good for business is due to the fact that organizations committed to diversity have been found to be more creative and productive in comparison to businesses who are not committed to diversity in their

workplace. As noted by the Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work, "A diverse workforce that includes employees with disabilities can directly affect productivity and improve your company's bottom line."³

A key finding from a Deloitte research report on inclusion stated that where employees felt that their organizations were committed to diversity, the employees reported an 83 percent uptick in innovation in terms of business performance, 31 percent uptick in responsiveness to changing customer needs and a 42 percent uptick in team collaboration.⁴ In a separate report by Deloitte, it was found that organizations which are inclusive and that promote diversity in their work culture were six times more likely to be innovative and agile and eight times more likely to achieve better business outcomes.⁵ Therefore, diverse workplaces and employers who hire persons with disabilities and promote diversity are more successful – leading to greater profit earnings.

Hiring persons with disabilities also makes good business sense when it comes to businesses reflecting a more diverse customer base. 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 the consumer market for people with a physical disability that impairs their mobility, vision, or hearing currently makes up about \$165 billion, and by 2030, this amount is expected to rise to \$316 billion annually.⁶ As such, the more company employees reflect their consumers and markets, the better able they are to attract customers.

Key Points

- Hiring persons with disabilities increases an employers' skilled labour pool.
- Employees with disabilities tend to have longer tenures with companies than their counterparts. This leads to savings in recruitment costs and less lost productivity due higher turnovers rates.
- Hiring and accommodating employees with disabilities can boost morale and productivity with inclusivity leading to better business.
- Employees with disabilities often bring fresh creative thinking to teams and organizations where they can challenge problems from different angles and bring new solutions.
- Many persons with disabilities are overqualified in the jobs they do.
- Assistive technologies for persons with disabilities can lead to improved efficiency and productivity for all employees and not just for employees with disabilities.
- Employees with disabilities are often the safest workers employed where studies have shown that employees with a disability follow safety procedures more closely and are involved in fewer accidents at work.

“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





Did You Know?

- In 2011, the employment rate of Canadians aged 25 to 64 with disabilities was 49%, compared with 79% for Canadians without a disability.
- The employment rate among persons aged 25 to 64 with a mild disability was 68%, compared with 54% of those with a moderate disability, 42% of persons with a severe disability and 26% among those with a very severe disability.
- The difference in employment rates between persons with disabilities and those without a disability was lower among university graduates. This difference was non-significant in the case of university graduates who had a mild or moderate disability.
- Approximately 1 in 2 university graduates, with or without a disability, held a professional occupation. However, graduates with a disability were less likely to hold a management position and earned less than those without a disability, especially among men.
- Among Canadians with a disability, 12% reported having been refused a job in the previous five years as a result of their condition. The percentage was 33% among 25 to 34-year-olds with a severe or very severe disability.

Source: Statistics Canada, Insight on Canadian Society, Persons with disabilities and Employment, 2014



Common Myths About Employees with Disabilities

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

Reality: There are 6.2 million Canadians with disabilities – representing 22% of the Canadian population. In the Region of Waterloo and Wellington County, there are nearly 30,000 people of working age (25 – 64) with a disability.

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.

Myth: Most employers are not willing to hire persons with disabilities.

Reality: A recent study by the Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work (CCRW) found that 87 percent of employers agree being an inclusive employer aligns with business goals and 64 percent of employers agree they like to give everyone a chance.

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." For example, mental health issues are rampant among employees in Canada. In fact, it has been estimated by the World Health Organization that by the year 2030, depression will be the leading cause of disability. 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.

Many employers are also unsure how many of their current employees live with a disability as this can be a sensitive topic. Disabilities such as arthritis, chronic pain and mental illness are invisible, yet increasingly, such illnesses are found among many Canadians.

According to an RBC Insurance Survey, and reported by the Canadian HR Reporter, the top reasons that employees did not admit or were reluctant to admit a mental illness were:

- Believing that there is a public stigma around mental health (45 percent)
- Not wanting to be treated differently (44 percent)
- Not wanting to be judged (40 percent)
- Fear of negative consequences, such as losing their job (36 percent)



Consider these facts:

- 18 percent of the working population reported missing work or cutting back on workload because of depressive symptoms.
- According to the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, 500,000 Canadians are absent from work each week due to mental health issues.
- Mental health costs Canadian business over \$16 billion per year.
- 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 medication, sick leave, and average wage replacement.
- 84 percent of North Americans say CEOs should make helping employees in the workplace with depression a key human resources priority.

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005



It's all out 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
- Design of Public Spaces
- Employment

Source: Government of Ontario, Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act

Ontario's Accessible Employment Standard requires you to make your employment practices accessible to meet the needs of employees and job applicants with disabilities. There are 6 requirements to meeting the employment standard.

1. Hiring
2. Workplace Information
3. Talent and Performance Management
4. Communication of Accessible Policies
5. Accommodation Plans
6. Return to Work Process

Small businesses with 1-49 employees must meet the first 4 employment requirements and companies with 50 or more employees must meet all 6. 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 or www.ontario.ca/page/accessible-workplaces



Accessibility and 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 persons 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, TY 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

Kitchener-Waterloo

Anishnabeg Outreach Employment & Training Inc.

151 Frederick Street, # 501 – Kitchener
519-742-0300
11A Suffolk Street – Guelph 519-763-5292
Toll Free: 1-866-888-8808 or 1-855-589-5292

Bridging Employment Supports and Links to Work

1 Blue Springs Drive, Suite 100,
Waterloo, Ontario N2J 4M1
519-749-3700 x4087 - Toll Free: 1-866-387-6660 x.4087

The Canadian Hearing Society

120 Ottawa St. N, Kitchener, Suite #200
519-744-6811
Agilec Employer
385 Fairway Rd. S., Unit 205, Kitchener
519-576-2681

March of Dimes Canada

180 King St S Unit 220, Waterloo, ON N2J 1P8
236 Victoria St N Unit 1B
519-579-5530

The Job Centre

1-800-350-8361

Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work

127 Victoria Street South Suite 201 |
Kitchener, ON, N2G 2B4
519-571-6788 x.7481

Lutherwood

165 King St. E., Kitchener ON N2G 2K8
519-743-2460

The Working Centre

58 Queen St. S., Downtown Kitchener
519-743-1151

Region of Waterloo Employment Services

235 King Street East, Downtown Kitchener
99 Regina Street South, Uptown Waterloo
519 883 2101 x.5655

YMCA Employment Services

800 King Street West, Kitchener
519-579-9622

Wellington Country

Learning Disabilities Association of Wellington County

233, 17A – 218 Silvercreek Pkwy N
519-837-2050

Second Chance Employment Counselling

160 St David St South Unit 104, Fergus, ON
N1M 2L3 519-843-5513
177 Norfolk St, Guelph, ON N1H 4K1
519-823-2440

Family Counselling and Support Services for Guelph-Wellington

109 Surrey St East, Guelph, ON N1H 3P7
519-824-2431

Lutherwood

89 Wyndham St North 3rd Fl, Guelph, ON
N1H 4E9
519-822-4141

Torchlight Services

Sunny Acres Plaza, 30 Edinburgh Rd North,
Guelph, ON N1H 7J1
519-822-7600

Resources and Further Information

Accessible Employers

accessibleemployers.ca

Mental Health in the Workplace

An Accommodation Guide for Managers and Staff

www.mentalhealthworks.ca/mental-health-workplace-accommodation-guide-managers-staff/

Canadian Human Rights Commission

A Place for All: A Guide to Creating an Inclusive Workplace

www.chrc-ccdp.gc.ca/eng/content/place-all-guide-creating-inclusive-workplace

Workplace & A Guide for Managing the Return to Work

www.chrc-ccdp.gc.ca/eng/content/guide-managing-return-work

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Ministry of Community & Social Services

Make Your Workplace Accessible

www.aoda.ca/make-your-workplace-accessible/

Canadian Public Service Agency

Workshop on Duty to Accommodate Policy

www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/ee/publications/inclusive/wdap-aopma-tblpr-eng.asp

Conference Board of Canada

Tapping the Talents of People with Disabilities

www.conferenceboard.ca/e-library/abstract.aspx?did=85

The Employers Toolkit:

Making Ontario Workplaces Accessible to People with Disabilities, 2nd edition

www.conferenceboard.ca/docs/default-source/pdf_downloads/7159_accessibilitytoolkit-2015_rpt.pdf

Human Resources and Skills Development Canada

Enabling Accessibility Fund

www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/enabling-accessibility-fund.html

Hire for Talent

Employer Toolkit – Find the Right Talent for your Business

www.hirefortalent.ca/images/pdf/Employer_Toolkit_Condensed_Printable_Version.pdf

Ontario Chamber of Commerce

Employer Toolkit - Working Towards Mental Wellness

occ.ca/wp-content/uploads/Working-Towards-Mental-Health-Interactive.pdf



References

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6. *The Business Case to Build Physically Accessible Environments*, The Conference Board of Canada, 2018, 21.

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Workforce Planning Board
218 Boida Ave. Unit 5
Ayr, ON
N0B 1E0

519-622-7122
Workforceplanningboard.com

