

Engaging with research at WorkSafeBC

WorkSafeBC's Research Services department supports the development of high-quality scientific evidence in occupational health and safety. Focusing on emerging issues and applied research, Research Services provides funding for academic scientific study and practical, innovative projects aimed at finding solutions for pressing workplace safety needs.

For physicians, this research may be relevant to the treatment and care of those who are injured or become ill on the job. Medical experts and practitioners are encouraged to connect with Research Services by exploring the active and completed research projects detailed on www.worksafebc.com, and to participate in research by submitting funding proposals or partnering with other researchers.

Funding opportunities

Through rigorous peer-reviewed competitions, WorkSafeBC provides funding for research through the following four specialized streams:

- **Innovation at work.** Open to Canadian residents, this stream has been designed to support nimble, small-scale projects that promote collaboration between workplace parties and researchers. Recent topics include health-promotion programs for long-haul truck drivers, barriers for psychiatric workers seeking help for PTSD, eye exposures to radiation among veterinary clinicians, and new tools for detecting pathogens in emergency-services environments. The next request for proposals will be announced this fall.

This article is the opinion of WorkSafeBC and has not been peer reviewed by the BCMJ Editorial Board.

- **Research training awards.** Each spring, Research Services invites applications from master's and doctoral students pursuing training in occupational health and safety and workers' compensation research in BC.

Research Services funds independent, scientifically valid research.

- **Systematic reviews.** These studies ask researchers to find and analyze the best evidence addressing critical issues in policy and practice. Open to researchers worldwide, these competitions are held as needed and help WorkSafeBC stakeholders better understand the state of knowledge on priority issues, provide critical assessment of current science, and identify gaps in areas of relevance to workers' compensation policy and practice.
- **Specific priorities research.** This stream was launched in 2014 to answer occupational health and safety questions that have immediate relevance to WorkSafeBC with findings that have clear application in policy and practice. Current areas of focus include the relationship between sex and gender and occupational health and safety, the impact of emerging technologies and artificial intelligence, return to work following mild traumatic brain injury, and key indicators for evaluation of violence prevention in health care.

Partnerships

The Partnership for Work, Health, and Safety was established in 2005 between WorkSafeBC and researchers at the University of British Columbia.

The partnership works with routinely collected data from multiple sources, pulled together through Population Data BC, allowing researchers to develop a unique and comprehensive picture of the health and well-being of workers in our province. The partnership team is made up of a diverse group of faculty members, students, and staff working at UBC. Advisors from WorkSafeBC meet regularly with researchers to identify new topics and receive updates on ongoing projects.

Additionally, Research Services fosters and maintains partnerships with workers' compensation organizations and government groups across Canada to support research that benefits all Canadian workers. These collaborations enable WorkSafeBC to reach a wider sphere of researchers and encourage interprovincial initiatives.

About Research Services

Research Services funds independent, scientifically valid research that can provide insight into real issues faced by workplaces and workers' compensation organizations. The central objectives are improving health and safety in BC workplaces, fostering successful rehabilitation and return-to-work of injured workers, and ensuring fair compensation for people suffering injury or illness on the job.

Outlines, summaries, and full reports of active and completed projects are available on our website. To learn more about the department, ongoing research, and upcoming funding opportunities, visit www.worksafebc.com/en/about-us/research-services or email resquery@worksafebc.com.

—Susan Dixon
Knowledge Transfer,
WorkSafeBC Research Services