



**2022-2023**

**ANNUAL REPORT**



# MESSAGE FROM OHC LEADERSHIP

2023 marks the 40th anniversary of the MFL Occupational Health Centre. Starting from the spark of an idea within the MFL and supported by the work of the MFL Health & Safety Committee, OHC was founded in 1983 by workers in Manitoba who did not have access to adequate, impartial occupational health care. The Centre opened its doors at Sherbrook and Westminster on April 8th, 1983, just two blocks from our present-day location. Today, OHC is a worker-centred community health clinic based in Winnipeg, specializing in occupational health and safety, one of the few occupational health centres in the country, and the only one between Thunder Bay and Edmonton.

The past year has certainly been an interesting one, as we've navigated the tail-end of the COVID-19 pandemic. Though we recognize that our collective risk is not over, OHC, like much of healthcare and social services, has looked to address the fallout of the 'shadow pandemic'. Throughout these last several years, workers have dealt with increased risks to their physical and psychological health, not only from COVID but additionally from the psychosocial ramifications of our collective response – or lack thereof. As part of our Cross-Cultural Community Development Program, OHC convened discussion groups with newcomer workers to debrief the impacts of the pandemic and understand their experiences. We appreciate the contributions of those who so generously shared with us and will use this information as a guide to inform our future programming.

In addition to facilitating groups with workers specifically from newcomer communities, OHC has also increased our engagement with injured workers. In spring 2022, our Occupational Health Nurses reinvigorated this work and, with the help of our social workers and Dr. Rob Chase, developed a focus group to discuss the best approach to provide support to workers who have been injured out of their field and are now dealing with the physical and psychological ramifications. The learnings we took from the workers who shared their experiences and their recommendations were helpful in developing a path forward: in partnership with an active Injured Worker Support Network in Thunder Bay, Ontario, OHC is undertaking programming to support capacity-building and give space to those who may need to share their experiences in a safe, supportive setting.

As we celebrate our 40th year, we're looking forward to what the future brings – our recently completed strategic plan charts a course for OHC to strengthen our organization, widen our sphere of influence, enhance our existing offerings, and engage in meaningful equity work. We're so grateful to the staff, board members, community trainers, partners, funders, and supporters who helped OHC develop this plan. It is a reflection of our community and renews our commitment to the workers of Manitoba to continue to strive toward our vision of healthy workers, healthy workplaces, and healthy communities.

In Solidarity,



Kevin Rebeck  
Chair, MFL Occupational Health Centre



Carly Nicholson  
Executive Director, MFL Occupational Health Centre

## BY THE NUMBERS

Served over  
**3500**  
workers  
in 2022-23

Coordinated with  
**48**  
new partners  
in 2020-21

Over  
**500**  
medical  
services  
in 2022-23

Educated nearly  
**1,000**  
newcomer and  
migrant workers  
with health and safety  
workshops and individual  
assistance in their first  
languages

**87 Trainers**  
from  
**24 cultural  
communities**  
providing first-language  
health and safety  
training

Supported nearly  
**1200**  
healthcare  
workers  
in 2022

Provided  
**629**  
workers  
with Ergonomics  
training

Supplied nearly  
**200**  
workers  
with actionable tools  
to improve consent  
in their workplaces

Supported  
**585**  
workers  
in expanding  
their **psychological  
health and safety  
awareness**

# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

## Cross Cultural Program

- Delivered 25 community workshops for 14 communities, both in person and on virtual platforms.
- Partnered with other newcomer-serving agencies and delivered 13 presentations for community, employment, and EAL programs.
- Organized 8 discussion groups on “**The Impact of COVID-19 for Newcomer Workers**” for workers in larger cultural communities in Manitoba. The resulting report will inform future OHC newcomer programming.
- Provided short-term resource counselling, referrals, and support to 15 injured workers from Newcomer communities.

## Migrant Workers

- Distributed health and safety resources in Spanish to approximately 90 migrant farmworkers at a community event
- Provided an online workshop to migrant farm workers on **Workers’ Health and Safety & Community Resources**
- Formed & coordinated regular meetings of the **Manitoba Regional Coordinating Committee for the Alliance for Gender Justice in Migration**, composed of representatives from community organizations, academics, and women with lived experience
- Contributed to research & writing of the **Alliance for Gender Justice in Migration’s** position statements on **Regularization, Workers’ Rights, and Reproductive Justice for Women and Gender-Diverse migrants** with precarious immigration status
- Supported the **Health Care for All Campaign** to extend provincial health care coverage to all residents of Manitoba, regardless of immigration status
- Presented on “**Precarious Immigration Status during the COVID-19 Pandemic & Beyond**” at Immigration Partnership Winnipeg’s first conference in January 2023

## Psychological Health & Safety

- Delivered 42 workshops, trainings, presentations, and other outreach activities serving 585 participants across a broad range of workplaces and sectors.
- Provided ongoing advisory support to a growing network of partners in manufacturing and services alongside Industry-Based Safety Associations hoping to expand PH&S training capacity.
- Continued partnering with provincial stakeholders in healthcare and education, focusing on how to train committees & leaders to assess for root causes of burnout and poor mental health.

## Ergonomics

- 25 educational sessions were conducted focusing on office ergonomics, childcare workers, psychosocial issues with MSIs, newcomer workers, and ergonomic committees.
- Conducted 47 assessments in office and industrial settings including case studies used for health and safety committee/ergonomic team training and workplace ergonomic strategic planning events in 22 different workplaces.
- Partnered with **Safe Workers of Tomorrow** to develop and conduct ergonomics training for the **MFL’s Health and Safety Conference**.
- 110 Participants attended the **RSI Awareness Day** speaker series on **Mindfulness, MSI Culture and Ergonomic Assessments**.

## Workplace Sexual Harassment

- Launched an award-winning public awareness campaign: **Consent at Work**.
- Connected and shared ideas with other organizations focused on sexual harassment prevention across Canada.
- Experimented with accessibility for workers who may not have the opportunity to bring their workshop to their workplace or attend during regular work hours by offering both in-person and virtual evening sessions and series.
- Presented at and attended a variety of Manitoba and National Conferences with focuses on topics such as labour, film, public education, and legal education.

## Public Info Sessions

- 9 virtual public information sessions attended by over 620 participants
- Topic Highlights: **Long COVID: Rehabilitation and Return to Work Considerations; Integrating Psychological Health and Safety with Hybrid Workspaces; Self-Care and Stress Management; An Overview of Worker’s Compensation; Considerations for Workers at Greater Risk of Injury; An Intro to Consent at Work; Immigrant Home Care Workers in Manitoba During the Pandemic: Exploitation, Precarity & Resistance**, etc.
- Featured speakers included: a Worker Advisor from the Department of Labour, Consumer Protection and Government Services in Brandon; an Assistant Professor, Sociology at Trent University; and the Manager of Clinical Services at the Wellness Institute and Physiotherapist at the Wellness Institute Clinic

# THANK YOU

## Our Staff

Andrew Dolhy	Lisa Houtkooper
Carly Nicholson	Mona Phillips
Geetha Jayasinghe	Richard McCrae
Geoffrey Thompson	Tiffany Pau
Judith Oviosun	Dr. Allen Kraut
Karen Hamilton	Dr. Rob Chase

## Our Board of Directors

Aarti Sharma	Fowsia Sheikhal	Mohinder Sidhu
Andy Spence	Kevin Rebeck	Monica Girouard
Blaine Duncan	Kristen Fallis	Richard Rennie
Cathy Pellizarro	Loreto Gutierrez	Susan Rodriguez
Clint Wirth	Marla Johal	Tiffany Pau
	Michelle Bergen	

## OHC's Community Trainers from the following communities:

Afghan	Eritrean	Salvadorian
Bhutanese	Ethiopian	Somali
Brazilian	Filipino	North Sudanese
Burundi	Karen	South Sudanese
Chinese	Iraqi	Syrian
Congolese	Nepali	Ukrainian
Colombian	Nigerian	Vietnamese
East Indian	Punjabi	Yazidi

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