

**Leeds, Grenville & Lanark District
Health Unit
MEDIA RELEASE**

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It's Time to Rethink Your Drinking ... The Health Unit is pleased to announce new resources for a healthy workplace.

Workplaces can take part in the Rethink Your Drinking campaign to help change the way we think about alcohol use. The campaign is not asking adults to stop drinking, instead we hope it encourages individuals to look at their relationship with alcohol, like why, when, and how much they drink.

This summer, workplaces can contact the health unit for the following resources:

- The new Substance Misuse Workplace Toolkit.
- A display banner for a common room or lobby.
- An interactive display on standard drinks and binge drinking.
- Canada's Low-Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines pamphlets.
- Staff giveaways.

The available resources will support workplaces in:

- Promoting Canada's Low-Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines.
- Raising awareness on the risks of alcohol use and other substances.
- Designing a workplace alcohol and substance policy.
- Enhancing the skills of supervisors and staff on dealing with alcohol use concerns.
- Establishing a supportive environment for all staff.

It is important to address alcohol in the workplace.

"Workplaces that address alcohol misuse and promote Canada's Low-Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines will notice job performance improvements and cost reductions." –

Bonnie Schnittker, RN

In Ontario, the estimated cost of substance abuse is \$9.2 billion per year in health care, law enforcement, and lost productivity. Alcohol use alone accounts for approximately half of these costs.¹

Addressing alcohol misuse in the workplace will help to prevent alcohol related problems such as:

- Accidents and injuries.
- Hangovers and withdrawals.
- Absenteeism and illness.
- Loss of production.²

Some studies have shown it may not be the chronic drinker who is contributing to the majority of these alcohol related problems, but the occasional drinker who engages in risky drinking away from the workplace.³ Prevention efforts and early interventions in alcohol and substance misuse can save money and provide a better chance of success for employees struggling with alcohol and substance use issues.

For electronic copies of the Substance Misuse toolkit and the guidebook on Comprehensive Workplace Health visit our website at <http://www.healthunit.org/workplace/>

To order the **Rethink Your Drinking** campaign materials for your workplace, call the Health ACTION Line at 1-800-660-5853. To follow the campaign trail, please visit our website: http://www.healthunit.org/alcoholdrug/alcohol/rethink_your_drinking.html, and like our Facebook page or follow us on Twitter.

References:

1. Ontario Ministry of Health and Long Term Care. "Ontario ministry of health and long term care. Publications. Ontario programs for health promotion and disease prevention." Available from: <http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/public/publications/hpromo/hpromo.aspx#one> (accessed 2015 Apr 17).
2. Government of Canada. "Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety – Substance Abuse in the Workplace". Available online: <http://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/psychosocial/substance.html>(accessed 2015 Apr 15)
3. Alcohol Policy Network. *Let's Take Action on Alcohol Problems in the Workplace*. Toronto: Author, 2001 (updated 2004; accessed 2015 Apr 21). Available from: http://www.simcoemuskokahealth.org/Libraries/JFY_-_Employers/TakeActionOnAlcoholProblemsWorkplace.sflb.ashx

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