



Canadian Centre
on Substance Use
and Addiction

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On 4/20, Report Finds Lack of Comprehensive Workplace Substance Use Policies

CCSA launches *A Review of Workplace Substance Use Policies in Canada*

Ottawa, April 20, 2018 — As Canada moves towards the legalization and regulation of cannabis, a new report from the Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction (CCSA) has found that not enough companies and organizations have comprehensive, well-developed workplace substance use policies.

“From our report, we know that Canadian employers and employees have lots of questions and concerns about workplace policies surrounding substance use,” said Rita Notarandrea, Chief Executive Officer of CCSA. “Harmful substance use can have an impact on an individual’s health, on productivity, absenteeism, turnover and workplace morale; not to mention the potential impact on the health and safety of other employees, particularly in safety-sensitive industries.”

A Review of Workplace Substance Use Policies in Canada: Strengths, Gaps and Key Considerations, is a first-of-its-kind study that portrays how Canadian organizations approach substance use that affects the workplace. Conducted through an environmental scan, surveys and interviews with Canadian employers, key findings reveal that not enough organizations have comprehensive, well-developed workplace substance use policies. The report also indicates that where policies do exist, there is often an imbalance between disciplinary measures and supportive measures to help employees.

More recently, as Parliament considers legislation to regulate and legalize the use of cannabis in Canada, the concerns of employers and other stakeholders have prompted them to consider how best to address substance use in their workplace policies and practices.

“Ultimately, the best tool employers have in order to reduce risks from harmful substance use is a well-developed workplace substance use policy that is consistently applied, incorporates supportive measures for the employee and is periodically reassessed for effectiveness,” said CEO Notarandrea.

The specific objectives of CCSA’s study were:

- To review, analyze and provide a general overview of the state of workplace policies on substance use in Canada, their common components, unique elements and any gaps;
- To identify lessons learned and best practices in the development and implementation of workplace substance use policies from the experiences of safety-sensitive organizations; and
- To determine which policy areas require more guidance, tools and resources, and from this information make recommendations to help improve policy development and employer responses to substance use affecting the workplace.

A Review of Workplace Substance Use Policies in Canada: Strengths, Gaps and Key Considerations and a [summary of the report](#) are now available on the [CCSA website](#).

For more information or to book an interview, please contact media@ccsa.ca or call TS Buchanan at 613-806-7176.



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CCSA was created by Parliament to provide national leadership to address substance use in Canada. A trusted counsel, we provide national guidance to decision makers by harnessing the power of research, curating knowledge and bringing together diverse perspectives.

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