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NIOSH
TOTAL WORKER HEALTH in Action!
Advancing worker safety, health, and well-being

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Director's Buzz

L. CASEY CHOSEWOOD, MD, MPH



Today's workers and employers face new challenges due to constantly evolving changes in work, the workforce, and the workplace. We at NIOSH and the *Total Worker Health* Program are expanding our focus on traditional indicators of occupational safety and health to better prepare for and respond to issues relevant to worker safety, health, and

well-being. The [recent commentary](#), published in the *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, on the expanding focus of the field of occupational safety and health (OSH) identifies solutions for employers and workers to address the changes challenging traditional OSH systems. This commentary is complemented by the release of the recently revised graphic, "[Issues Relevant to Advancing Worker Well-Being Using Total Worker Health Approaches](#)." In the new edition of this graphic, the *Total Worker Health* (TWH) program highlights critical [priority areas](#) and emerging issues relevant to advancing worker well-being. The priority areas provide guidance for both short- and long-term TWH efforts, in addition to the program's latest research interests and needs. By broadening our focus to address the issues facing workers today, we create workforces and workplaces that are better prepared to face future challenges.

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Stay up to date on the latest TWH news, research, and events by following us on Twitter at [@NIOSH_TWH](#), joining our [NIOSH Total Worker Health LinkedIn Group](#), or sending us an email at twh@cdc.gov.

Total Worker Health Exclusive

Center for Health, Work & Environment Partnership Helps Employers Address Mental Health

The Center for Health, Work & Environment, a NIOSH-funded Center of Excellence for *Total Worker Health*, recently partnered with ECHO (Extension for Community Health Outcomes) Colorado to develop a novel approach that helps employers address mental health. ECHO Colorado, based at the University of Colorado Anschutz, provides a unique platform for connecting. The ECHO platform is used to host free series that combine the improved access and convenience of connecting through an online virtual experience with the interactive learning and case-based sharing aspects of an in-person training. The platform is typically used to target health professionals, but the Center for Health, Work & Environment (CHWE) and ECHO Colorado found a new, innovative use of the platform by developing a series specifically for employers.

To launch the series, CHWE planned and hosted a live ECHO event in August 2019. A total of 62 participants worked through a series of case studies addressing mental health in the workplace with guidance from subject matter experts. Topics discussed included mental health and workplace stigma, emerging employer approaches to employee mental health, and strategies for increasing and integrating mental health resources into the workplace. Participants were also introduced to mental health resources and services available in their community.

In a post-event evaluation, participants reported an overall 4.5 out of 5.0 satisfaction rating. Participants also indicated several actions they planned to take as a result of attending the training, including creating or better advertising employee assistance programs, providing additional training to managers, and checking in with employees more consistently.

As a follow-up to the launch, a full online ECHO series entitled "Solutions for Workplace Behavior and Mental Health Challenges" was held in fall 2019. The series took place between October and November and included five sessions:

1. Raising Mental Health Awareness and Reducing Stigma in the Workplace
2. Mental Health Challenges in the Workplace: Depression
3. Mental Health Challenges in the Workplace: Anxiety
4. Mental Health Challenges in the Workplace: Substance Abuse Disorder
5. Creating a Positive and Supportive Workplace for Your Employees

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This first-of-its-kind ECHO series cohort consisted of 27 participants representing diverse backgrounds, diverse industries, and 13 counties across Colorado. Participants indicated that the most valuable aspects of the series were sharing experiences with peers about mental health, engaging and interaction with other participants, gaining insight from guest speakers, and identifying solutions to implement in the workplace. [CHWE](#) plans to develop additional employer series for topics related to mental health, opioids in the workplace, and supporting employees with cancer, with the goal of expanding the reach and adoption of *Total Worker Health* approaches and best practices.

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Spotlight on Opioids in the Workplace

NIOSH Seeks Input: Developing a Workplace Supported Recovery Program

Editor's note: If you or someone you know needs assistance (in English or Spanish) with mental and/or substance use disorders, prevention, and recovery, please contact SAMHSA's National Helpline at 1-800-662-HELP (4357) or visit <https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help>.

Developing a *Workplace Supported Recovery Program*: A Strategy for Assisting Workers and Employers with the Nation's Opioid and Substance Use Disorder Crisis

Employers have a unique opportunity to protect and support workers while addressing the opioid crisis. The implementation of a *Workplace Supported Recovery Program* provides employers with an opportunity to both prevent the use of opioids and support recovery for workers. A *Workplace Supported Recovery Program* uses evidence-based policies and programs to reduce the risk factors associated with initiating substance misuse and progression of a substance use disorder, as well as assisting workers in recovery to stay or return to work.

Beginning in February, NIOSH began seeking input through a Request for Information in the *Federal Register*. Learn more about the program and find out how to submit input before the commenting deadline (April 27, 2020) at <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2020-02-26/pdf/2020-03785.pdf>.

Updates from the NIOSH Centers of Excellence for *Total Worker Health*

- The [Center for Health, Work & Environment \(CHWE\)](#) is proud to present the [Health Links Get Outdoors Employers Toolkit](#). The toolkit is the product of a partnership with the Outdoor Recreation Industry Office (ORIO) at the Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade, as well as key partners in conservation, industry, and public health. The toolkit promotes a healthier Colorado workforce through the creation of a health and business-focused wellness assessment and a collection of free local resources for businesses. The toolkit will be piloted this spring with 50 employers through Health Links. In addition, throughout the next year, the CHWE will be working with the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment and other community partners to improve worker health, using evidence-based approaches to prevent and manage chronic disease. Through this partnership, various chronic disease prevention programs will be offered to small and mid-sized employers.

- The [Center for the Promotion of Health in the New England Workplace \(CPH-NEW\)](#) recently released a [feature](#) detailing an integrated approach to a healthier workplace. The piece defines TWH and provides examples of integrated approaches. In November, CPH-NEW investigator Laura Punnett spoke at two industry events on the topic of the Future of Work, as part of a panel and as part of a [University Industry Demonstration Partnership](#). CPH-NEW investigators will also lead [courses](#) as part of the *Total Worker Health* track at the AIHA AIHce Expo this summer.
- [Harvard's Center for Work, Health, and Well-being](#) recently announced a postdoctoral fellowship opportunity, the [PMC Team Boston Fire Fellowship: Cancer Prevention for Firefighters](#). The Dana-Farber Cancer Institute and the Center for Work, Health, and Well-being at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health have announced a two-year postdoctoral research fellowship focused on cancer prevention and occupational health for firefighters. This fellowship will include one or more mentored research projects related to cancer prevention among firefighters, including examining risks associated with physical, psychosocial, and organizational hazards in firefighters' work environment.
- The [Healthier Workforce Center of the Midwest \(HWC\)](#) will release a two-part [podcast series](#) this spring on marijuana in the workplace. In an introductory podcast, industry experts provide an overview of the issues employers are facing today. The companion podcast will discuss workplace policies. These podcasts are part of the HWC series Workplace Matters, which covers a variety of topics impacting the workplace, such as leadership and participation.
- The [Oregon Healthy Workforce Center \(OHWC\)](#) attended Oregon OSHA's first-ever Spanish Safety Conference this November. OHWC members participated in the all-day event and hosted an exhibit to share resources available in Spanish, including [Health Impacts Safety](#) guides and the [Be Super!](#) Learn more about the event in the OHWC [blog](#). The OHWC recently launched the [TWH Graduate Travel Award](#). Up to four awards of \$1,000 each will be awarded on the basis of relevance to topics. The award is open to students in Oregon, Washington, Idaho, and Alaska.
- The [University of Illinois \(UIC\)-Center for Healthy Work](#) recently shared significant developments from the Greater Lawndale Healthy Work Project (GLHW). Formed in September 2019, the GLHW Council is composed of community research partners, steering committee members, UIC investigators, and students. In November 2019, the council added two additional worker center representatives. These representatives will aid in the development of sustainable and effective interventions in Greater Lawndale, as well as the education and capacity-building of the council. This January, the GLHW Council worked together to establish a mission and vision to guide the design and implementation of TWH initiatives. Visit the [website](#) to learn more.

These are just a few of the updates from the NIOSH Centers of Excellence for *Total Worker Health*. To learn more about the program and each of the Centers, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/TWH/centers.html>.

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News from NIOSH TWH Affiliates and Partners

American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA) Offers *Total Worker Health* Track at AIHce Conference

The AIHA *Total Worker Health* Task Force established a full, three-day TWH track for the AIHce EXP 2020 this June 1–3, 2020, in Atlanta, GA. This [comprehensive and in-depth track](#), highlighting what you need to know about a holistic approach to worker well-being, will also be part of the virtual conference to provide the greatest audience possible. The

sessions in the track will introduce TWH and the role of industrial hygienists in delivering exposure-based information and acting to promote TWH practices for workers in and out of the workplace.

Distracted Driving Awareness Month: April 2020

Distracted Driving Awareness Month is a united effort each April to recognize and eliminate preventable deaths from distracted driving. The National Safety Council played a pivotal role in having the month chartered by Congress in 2010. Roadway safety entities across the country – including the U.S. Department of Transportation and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration – recognize Distracted Driving Awareness Month, as do employers and the general public. To help others recognize the month each year, the National Safety Council makes available free downloadable resources, including posters, fact sheets, infographics, and videos. The nonprofit organization also hosts webinars, engages with media, and encourages individuals to take its pledge to drive distraction-free. JustDrive is the theme of the 2020 National Safety Council Distracted Driving Awareness campaign. This year marks the 10th anniversary of the observance. Learn more about Distracted Driving Awareness Month and download resources at nsc.org/justdrive.

The NIOSH Expanding Research Partnerships Webinar Series

Registration is now open for the first installment of the NIOSH 2020 Expanding Research Partnerships Webinar Series! This series has been designed to promote the work of innovative and impactful intramural and extramural research partnerships. The 2020 series will feature three webinars, beginning on March 11 at 12:00 pm Eastern Time. This webinar will explore exciting topics on the future of work and implications for occupational safety and health. [Register now](#).

Toward an Expanded Focus for Occupational Safety and Health

In this commentary, mentioned in the Director's Buzz, CDC authors address powerful changes in work, the workforce, and the workplace that require a more holistic view. The authors discuss the need for an expanded focus to prepare for and respond to these changes that will challenge existing occupational safety and health systems. Learn more and view statistics in real time in [the article](#).

U.S. Surgeon General Highlights the Value of Worker Well-Being and TWH Approach

The [NIOSH Science Blog](#) highlighting the U.S. Surgeon General's recent article about the value of worker well-being and the TWH approach was featured in the [EHS Daily Advisor](#) and the [Freelance Hero](#).

Workers and Wearables: NIOSH Webinar Explores "Opportunities and Complexities" of Sensor Technology

The TWH webinar series was recently featured in [Safety + Health Magazine](#), the Official Magazine of the NSC Congress & Expo. The November webinar, "Where Exposure Meets Sensor Technologies: A Look at the Opportunities and Complexities," is also now available on [CDC TRAIN](#).

Women Still Face Barriers to Breastfeeding at Work

The University of Georgia's Workplace Health Group recently published [an article](#) on the barriers to breastfeeding at work, in *Workplace Health and Safety*. The article gained attention from various media outlets, including a feature in [UGA Today](#).

To learn more about the *Total Worker Health* Affiliate program, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/twh/affiliate.html>.

New Publications and Resources

From CDC and NIOSH

[Drug Overdose in the Workplace and the Role of Opioids](#)

[Hold the Phone: Increasing Physical Activity at Work](#)

[Manufacturing Workers with Eldercare Demands Report More Stress](#)

[Toward an Expanded Focus for Occupational Safety and Health: A Commentary](#) [↗](#)

[U.S. Surgeon General Highlights the Value of Worker Well-Being and the NIOSH Total Worker Health Approach](#)

New Publications and Resources from NIOSH Centers of Excellence for *Total Worker Health*

[A Participatory Action Research Approach to Mental Health Interventions Among Corrections Officers: Standardizing Priorities and Maintaining Design Autonomy](#) [↗](#)

[Cancer Risk from Air Toxics in Relation to Neighborhood Isolation and Sociodemographic Characteristics: A Spatial Analysis of the St. Louis Metropolitan Area, USA](#) [↗](#)

[Defining “Integration” for Total Worker Health: A New Proposal \(2020\)](#) [↗](#)

[Ensuring Organization-Intervention Fit for a Participatory Organizational Intervention to Improve Food Service Workers’ Health and Wellbeing: Workplace Organizational Health Study](#) [↗](#)

[Examining a Comprehensive Model of Work and Family Demands, Work-Family Conflict, and Depressive Symptoms in a Sample of Correctional Supervisors](#) [↗](#)

[Health Links Employer Toolkit: Developing a Communication Plan](#) [📄](#) [↗](#) and [Setting Annual Objectives for Total Worker Health](#) [📄](#) [↗](#)

[Influence of Work Organization and Work Environment on Missed Work, Productivity, and Use of Pain Medications Among Construction Apprentices](#) [↗](#)

[Oregon Organizations Collaborate to Move the Needle Toward Total Worker Health](#) [↗](#)

[Personal, Biomechanical, Psychosocial, and Organizational Risk Factors for Carpal Tunnel Syndrome: A Structural Equation Modeling Approach](#) [↗](#)

[Sex and Gender Role Differences in Occupational Exposures and Work Outcomes Among Registered Nurses in Correctional Settings](#) [↗](#)

[Small Business Employees' Perceptions of Leadership Are Associated with Safety and Health Climates and Their Own Behaviors](#) 

[Stressed Out: Predictors of Depression Among Jail Officers and Deputies](#) 

[Training Supervisors to Support Veterans at Work: Effects on Supervisor Attitudes and Employee Sleep and Stress](#) 

[Work and Health Correlates of Sleep Quantity and Quality Among Correctional Nurses](#) 

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Conferences, Webinars, and Trainings in Support of NIOSH Total Worker Health

March

5th and 6th — Expand your knowledge and network with peers at the Workers Compensation Research Institute's (WCRI) [36th Annual Issues and Research Conference](#)  in Boston, MA. TWH Director Dr. L. Casey Chosewood will present "NIOSH Tackles Total Worker Health" on March 6.

10th — The Campbell Institute will be hosting the [Beyond Safety: Leading Indicators for Health and Wellbeing Webinar](#)  at 11:00 AM Central Time. The purpose of this webinar is to explore leading indicators of health that are more inclusive of wellbeing and to provide indicators that employers in a variety of industries can implement and track to improve health and safety outcomes.

10th — Join University of Illinois–Chicago (UIC) Center for Healthy Work investigators Christina Welter, DrPH, and Elizabeth Fisher, CHES, as they present the keynote address, [Improving Health for Workers Employed in Precarious Jobs](#) , at the Wisconsin Workplace Health Symposium in Milwaukee, WI.

12th and 13th — The Healthier Workforce Center of the Midwest (HWC) will co-sponsor the Heartland Center ERC's [Occupational Health Symposium](#)  in Coralville, IA. This year's symposium will include topics such as FMLA/ADA, de-escalation training, and CBD/marijuana in the workplace.

16th to 19th — Join Center for the Promotion of Health in the New England Workforce (CPH-NEW) researcher Suzanne Nobrega, MS, as she delivers two half-day pre-conference workshops during the [Applied Ergonomics Conference](#)  at the Kentucky International Convention Center in Louisville, KY.

19th and 20th — HWC will present "Protecting and Promoting the Health of Young Ag Workers" at the [North American Agricultural Safety Summit](#)  in Las Vegas, NV.

24th — HWC will present an *Introduction to TWH* webinar for [The Wellbeing Partners](#)  at 11:45 AM Central Time (WELLCOM has recently merged with Live Well Omaha).

24th and 25th — Registration is now open for the [Musculoskeletal Disorders Symposium 2020](#) in Brisbane, Queensland, Australia. The theme is “Safety by design” and will feature international and national experts, interactive workshops, industry case studies, and more.

26th — The Center for Health, Work & Environment (CHWE) will host its [Annual Research Day Symposium](#) in Westminster, CO, to celebrate research and network with those in the field of environmental and occupational health. This year’s theme is “The future of work and the environment: assessing the changing nature of work, climate change, and emerging diseases in the 21st century.”

April

3rd — In collaboration with The Heartland Center ERC, Great Plains Center for Agricultural Health, and University of Iowa Injury Prevention Center, the HWC will co-host the [5th Annual Occupational Health and Safety Student Research Conference](#) in Iowa City, IA. Lorraine Conroy, ScD, CIH, Director of the Center for Healthy Work, will present the keynote.

6th to 8th — Oregon Healthy Workforce Center’s Dr. Leslie Hammer will be presenting at the [14th European Academy of Occupational Health Psychology Conference](#) in Cyprus. The conference theme is “Promoting healthy and sustainable work.”

16th — HWC will present at the [Missouri Council for Activity and Nutrition \(MOCAN\)](#) conference centered on the theme of “Building a Healthy and Productive Missouri Workforce.” Diane Rohlman will present the keynote, “Using *Total Worker Health* to Address Worker Health across the Lifespan,” and Laura Keniston and Jaime Strickland will present an afternoon active learning session, “Mapping Your Way to a Healthier Workforce.”

20th — Join the TWH team for a presentation on the “Future of Work: Opportunities for Human Resources” at the [Human Resources Virginia Annual Conference](#) in Hot Springs, VA.

22nd to 24th — Join HWC investigators Diane Rohlman and Laura Keniston as they present at the [Iowa-Illinois Professional Development Conference](#) in Dubuque, IA.

23rd to 25th — The [35th Annual Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology Conference](#) will be held in Austin, TX. Attend the workshop along with several members of the Oregon Healthy Workforce Center (OHWC).

28th and 29th — Join CPH-NEW Investigator Suzanne Nobrega, MS, as she presents a masterclass with Michelle Robertson, PhD, CPE, entitled “Using the ‘IDEAS Tool’ to create a business case and win management support for ergonomics interventions,” at the [13th International Symposium on Human Factors in Organisational Design and Management \(ODAM\)](#) in Stratford-upon-Avon, UK.

30th — The St. Louis Business Health Coalition (BHC) is hosting the [BHC Spring Forum](#), which will focus on mental well-being in the workplace. The community-based event will take place from 8:00 AM to 12:00 PM and will closely examine new trends, as well as identify ways employers can support their workforces.

May

5th — Join members of the TWH team at the Luminary Session Panel, “Opportunities in Advancing Worker Well-Being,” during the [American Occupational Health Conference](#) in Washington, DC.

13th to 15th — This Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health Executive and Continuing Professional Education course is taught by Center for Work, Health, & Well-being investigators and researchers. [Work Health and Well-Being: Achieving Worker Health](#) provides participants with skills to implement policies, programs, and practices focused on working conditions impacting safety, health, and well-being outcomes for both workers and employers.

29th — Join the OHWC for the [Spring Symposium](#) on Workplace Aggression: A Deeper Dive, in Wilsonville, OR. This topic was chosen on the basis of feedback from last year's attendees and their strong interest in learning strategies to address workplace aggression.

31st to June 3rd — The American Industrial Hygiene Association's [AIHce EXP 2020 Conference](#) will take place at the Georgia World Congress Center, in Atlanta. The conference will feature a *Total Worker Health* track of presentations, featuring a number of [courses](#) taught by CPH-NEW investigators Jennifer Cavallari, ScD, and Suzanne Nobrega, MS.

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