



**INTERNATIONAL FORUM ON  
DISABILITY MANAGEMENT | 2018**

*Challenges and Innovations for Workforce Health*

## IFDM 2018 Canada Declaration

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### Preamble

The purpose of this declaration is to set out a list of key issues to be addressed that would lead to measurable improvements in employment experiences for workers with a disability, reduce liabilities of employers and costs to governments. It is founded on our consensus of what works and what does not.

It began with Codes of Practice which outlined the evidence, the programs and the practice. The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities strengthened the demand and provided a mechanism through which state practices can be evaluated. The International Social Security Association Guidelines proposed an emphasis on the work environment as the focus of action.

With this foundation, the Kuala Lumpur IFDM 2016 declaration set out a framework of values. At this 2018 IFDM in Vancouver, we put forward a practical agenda that will lead to demonstrable improvements. The agenda clarifies the duties of governments, employers, unions and other relevant stakeholders, provides useful support where it is needed and puts government money to work in ways that reduce poverty and unemployment of workers with a disability.

### Identifying the Barriers that still face workers with a disability

1. Poverty of Workers with a Disability.  
People with Disabilities comprise approximately 25% of all people living in poverty
2. Conditions of Work  
Work is not designed with accommodation in mind. Work environments continue to exclude workers with a disability by unintentional design.
3. Attitudes  
Despite major strides in the acceptance of human rights of workers with a disability, stereotypes and stigma bar concrete action at work and in design of workplaces.
4. Inadequate and ineffective supports  
Current income support does not prevent workers from living in poverty. Lack of accommodation and return to work increases financial insecurity and unemployment.

### Compounded by

- Proliferation of non-standard work and workplaces with increased contracting out and non-permanent employment arrangements;
- Migration of workers and employers because of the increasing use of temporary foreign workers and trans nationalism of employers;
- Large informal economic sectors which prevent structural accommodations and stifle fiscal benefit supports;
- Barriers to access of technology.

### The IFDM process has

- Increased recognition of these challenges and developed independent research and practice to address them;
- Built national and international networks and forums which influence national and international strategies;
- Recognized the importance of consensus approaches based on evidence and considering the views of workers with disabilities, their representatives, employers, service providers and government.

## IFDM 2018 Canada Declaration Goals

Therefore, we agree to promote:

1. The adoption of national and regional strategies to address the poverty of workers with a disability which include employers' return to work obligations, program standards and joint workplace committees;
2. Extended protection to workers with intermittent, chronic, reoccurring, and aggravated impairments, and mental illness. Protection should begin before employment is lost through the recognition of the potential challenges of impairment;
3. Disability Management services for workers in atypical employment contracts including those in the grey and gig economies, temporary and part-time employees and migrant workers;
4. Awareness of the demographic challenges facing social security systems and employers and measures to extend the productive working life of older workers with impairments;
5. Support for small business and sub-contractors through supply chain responsibilities and collaborations between small employers and sub-contractors to pool resources and implement practices that are consistent with good Disability Management practice;
6. The provision by social protection and public employment agencies of reliable technical support for small business, sole proprietorships, partnerships, other micro and informal business through funding a network of community-based return to work clinics designed to support workers with an impairment in their efforts to work.
7. The requirement that staff responsible for developing Disability Management programs and supporting return to work are properly qualified and have a relevant professional certification.
8. The provision of fair and adequate income support, health care and return to work services whether provided by government or private, for profit or not, that covers all workers, including those in the informal labour market.
9. Reporting requirements under national and international legislation for companies, regions and states to report on jobs lost, retained and gained as a result of ill-health and disability.