



# Accountability Report

## First Quarter 2015

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*If you have any comments or suggestions, don't hesitate to contact us. We'd love to hear from you!*



**Contact**

# PRESIDENT AND CEO'S MESSAGE

## *A New Approach for Accountability*

**O**n behalf of WorkSafeNB's board of directors, management and staff, I am pleased to present you with our new *Accountability Report*.

While transparency sheds light on an organization's day-to-day operations, accountability provides a measure of performance. As part of our commitment to stakeholder engagement, and being accountable to you, last year we sought your feedback to find out how we could improve this report. Your feedback led us not only to a new layout, but a new approach as well. While you will still find information regarding WorkSafeNB's financials, goals and targets, we are including more feature stories about our staff and clients.

While this report continues to highlight quarterly results towards achieving our goals and ultimately, our vision of healthy and safe workplaces in New Brunswick, it also provides you – our stakeholders – with a glimpse of some of the stories behind the numbers, and highlights not only our successes, but yours as well.

In this issue we will introduce you to Dorine Pirie, WorkSafeNB's new chairperson, and François Angers, our new vice-chairperson. Both bring years of experience and leadership to their respective roles, and I am confident that WorkSafeNB will continue to move forward during their tenure.



**Gerard M. Adams, President and CEO**

We will also take a look at a pilot project started in 2013 by our Program Development and Evaluation Department that allows participating employers to directly refer an injured worker, who suffers a soft tissue injury, to a select group of WorkSafeNB-approved physiotherapists. As a result of its success, we continue to expand the program that now includes 13 employers and all of the province's 65 nursing homes.

On behalf of everyone at WorkSafeNB, we hope you enjoy our new approach to accountability reporting.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gerard M. Adams". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Gerard M. Adams  
WorkSafeNB President and CEO



# QUALITY GOVERNANCE GOAL

**We will demonstrate transparency, accountability, and commitment to our stakeholders through our disciplined governance practices, as we serve the best interests of WorkSafeNB**



**G**ood governance starts with leadership. On March 23, 2015, Dorine Pirie and the Hon. François M. Angers were appointed to the roles of chairperson and vice-chairperson. With distinguished careers in public service, the board is confident that WorkSafeNB will continue to reach its organizational goals, including its quality governance goal.

What is corporate governance? Generally speaking, it refers to the mechanisms, relations and processes by which an organization is directed and involves

balancing the varying interests of our key stakeholders – New Brunswick’s workers and employers.

This is ultimately accomplished through the effective stewardship of WorkSafeNB’s four governing Acts:

- *The Occupational Health and Safety Act;*
- *The Workers’ Compensation Act;*
- *The Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Commission & Workers’ Compensation Appeals Tribunal Act;* and
- *The Firefighters’ Compensation Act.*



# QUALITY GOVERNANCE GOAL

## PHASE I COMPLETE

In 2013, the government initiated a three-year, multi-level review of workers' compensation legislation. In April 2014, Phase I of the review led to the passing of Bill 73 – *An Act to Amend the Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Commission Act*. This resulted in the creation of a separate Appeals Tribunal, with the aim of reducing the time it takes to hear an appeal. These changes give the new tribunal 90 days to hear an appeal and write a decision after the last hearing day or after all required documents are filed. WorkSafeNB then has 30 days from the final hearing to implement the decision.

WorkSafeNB is also in the process of establishing an internal dispute resolution process that will establish a comprehensive system to resolve problems and build relationships with our clients.

## REVIEW MOVES TO PHASE II

Phase II of the review is now underway and will examine WorkSafeNB's corporate governance structure, as well as benefits for injured workers and advocacy services.

[Legislative review moves to Phase II](#)

[Click here for more information on the legislative review.](#)

[Workers' Compensation gets a new appeal process](#)

[Click here for more information on the new appeals process.](#)

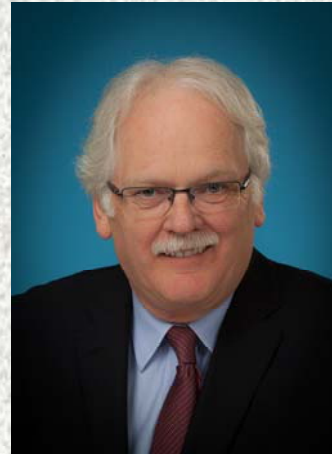


# QUALITY GOVERNANCE GOAL

## *WorkSafeNB is pleased to introduce the Board of Directors' new chairperson and vice-chairperson*



**Dorine Pirie, chairperson**



**The Honourable François M. Angers,  
vice-chairperson**

- Educated at the University of New Brunswick (LLB 1998)
- Practised as a registered nurse in New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Maine for 20 years
- Served two terms as the mayor of Kentville, Nova Scotia
- Has worked for the Human Rights Commission and the New Brunswick Departments of Health, Human Resources, and Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour
- Active member of the Law Society of New Brunswick

- Educated at the Université de Moncton, Collège Saint-Louis, (BA 1968), and the University of New Brunswick (LLB 1976)
- Called to the Bar of New Brunswick in 1976, he first practised with Angers & Cyr where he focused on criminal and civil litigation
- Appointed to the Queen's Counsel in 1992
- Former president of the Law Society of New Brunswick and the Madawaska Bar Association, and former vice-chairman of the New Brunswick Public Utilities Board
- Appointed to the Tax Court of Canada in 2001



# RETURN-TO-WORK GOAL

**We will decrease the time by which injured workers safely return or are ready to safely return to employment**

## ***Pilot project fast-tracks injured workers to physiotherapy – and an early return to work***

**S**oft-tissue injuries – often invisible and difficult to treat – can affect different people in different ways. Generally speaking, workers afflicted by these injuries, also known as STIs, may take longer to recover than others. Each year, they account for more than two-thirds of all lost-time injuries submitted to WorkSafeNB – amounting to lost productivity and millions of dollars in income replacement benefits. These costs are ultimately absorbed by New Brunswick employers in the form of higher assessment rates.

It's a problem that prompted WorkSafeNB to take action. Shelly Dauphinee, vice-president of the WorkSafe Services division, which oversees WorkSafeNB's rehabilitation programs, said the organization wanted to reduce the impact STIs were having on New Brunswick's workforce as a whole.

“When we identify an issue, we take a closer look to determine the root cause. Knowing the impact STIs were having on both workers and employers, we knew we had to develop an innovative approach to dealing with it.”



**Soft-tissue injuries routinely account for more two-thirds of all workplace injuries each year in New Brunswick.**

So in 2012, Pam Wasson, a rehabilitation program analyst with the program development and evaluation department, was tasked with rethinking the existing model for treating STIs. Currently, WorkSafeNB provides injured workers with rehabilitation services to help them return to employment only after the claim is accepted.



# RETURN-TO-WORK GOAL

The solution was a direct access to physiotherapy pilot project with four large employers in the province's southeast region. Wasson said the idea allows the employer to refer an injured worker afflicted by an STI directly to a group of WorkSafeNB-selected physiotherapists before a claim-related decision is made.

“We know that time is an important factor with these types of injuries, so we wanted to create an environment where the injured worker could get faster access to physiotherapy assessments and treatment.”

The program benefits both the worker and employer and leads to improved outcomes for all. It simplifies the referral process by using standardized reporting forms, and using the initial physiotherapy report for claim adjudication. Wasson said the employer agrees to pay for the physiotherapy if the claim is later denied.

“This ensures the worker has early access to rehabilitation and the employer has early functional abilities information on which to base stay-at-work and early return-to-work programs. Ultimately it's a win for both parties.”



**Standardized reporting makes it easy to notify WorkSafeNB of an injury, allowing workers to access physiotherapy without delay.**

One of Wasson's first objectives was to get the necessary health professionals onboard. She invited physiotherapists from the region to submit applications and led the selection and orientation process. Wasson said preference was given to those physiotherapists with a strong expertise in assessing both the worker's clinical condition and their functional abilities.

## Return to Work Target

At the end of March 2015 the number of paid compensation days for injured workers with a return-to-work goal is 59.5 days, above the 2015 target of 54.4 days.



Click for more return-to-work data





# RETURN-TO-WORK GOAL

“Not only does the injured worker get the care they need sooner, the physiotherapist can provide the employer with detailed information on their employee’s safe functional abilities. Often the worker is able to continue at either regular or modified duties while they are receiving treatment to recover from the injury.”

## PHYSIOTHERAPIST BUY-IN

Faster access is an idea that has the support of many in the occupational medicine community. According to the Canadian Physiotherapy Association, delays in accessing physiotherapy for acute STIs can result in chronic impairment and costs employers millions in additional staff absences. In short, the sooner a patient receives proper treatment, the better the outcome.



**Warren Mason, a physiotherapist with the CBI Health Centre in Dieppe, says the sooner he can treat an injured worker, the better their prognosis.**

Warren Mason agrees. A physiotherapist with more than a decade of hands-on experience, he’s worked at the Moncton-based CBI Health Centre since 2004. Over the years he’s seen many injured workers come through his doors, sometimes weeks or even months after suffering a sprain or strain. When he was invited to participate in the pilot he wasted no time submitting the application.

“I thought it was an excellent program and I continue to feel that way,” he said.

“The longer it takes a person to get in for treatment, the longer the healing time. Not only can scar tissue and immobility take a toll, but staying at home can have a negative effect on an injured worker’s psychological well-being.”

Mason said physiotherapists have the specialized education and intense focus on musculoskeletal systems to treat STIs quickly and effectively, making them an ideal specialist to treat these injuries.

“We also have an ability to educate clients, provide them with management strategies and let them know that it’s OK for them to go back to work. Research shows that workers who go back to work as part of their treatment plan have much more success than those who don’t.”

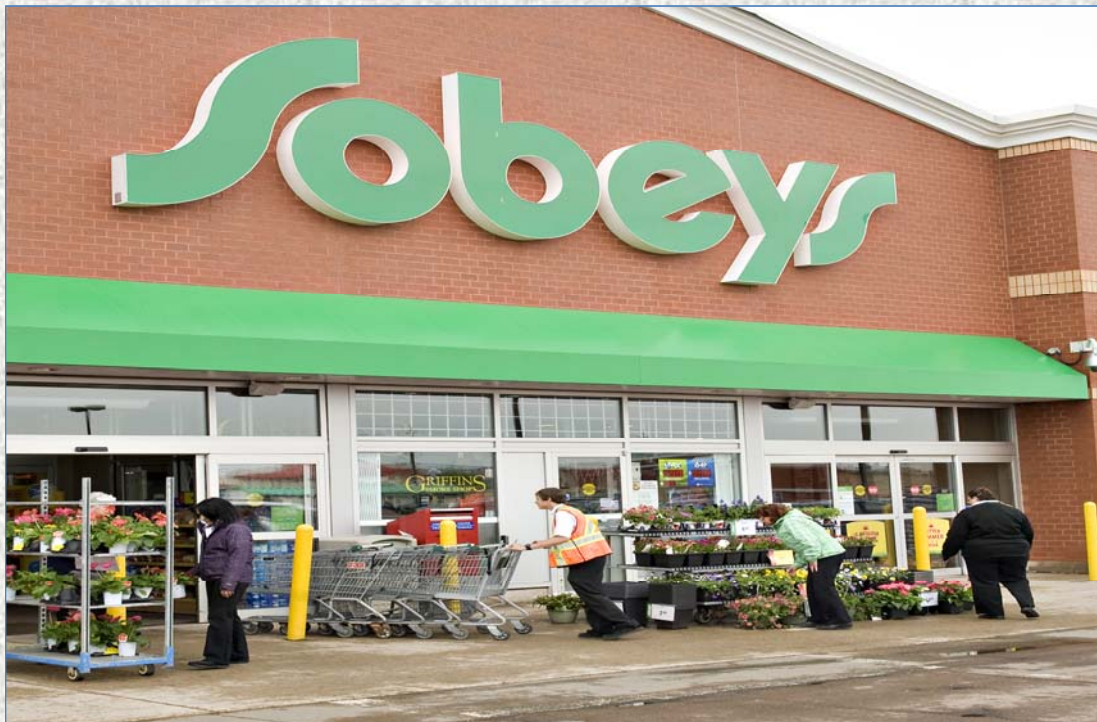


# RETURN-TO-WORK GOAL

Workers like Sandy Black. The mother of two is the administrative manager at the Sobeys supermarket on Mountain Road in Moncton where she has worked since 1987, first as a cashier before being promoted to her current position in 2011. The workday on Friday, November 28, 2014 was fairly typical. Black was taking inventory, a monthly task that involved sorting and weighing dozens of 13-kilogram boxes. As the day progressed however, Black said the routine task that she had performed many times without issue, this time turned to pain and discomfort.

“That particular job involves twisting and turning and movement up and down ladders and as the day went on my back started to flare up. I didn’t have a history of injuries so I finished my shift, but by the next day was in a lot of pain.”

That pain prompted her to report it to the store manager when she clocked in the next day. Fortunately, Sobeys was one of the employers originally involved in the WorkSafeNB pilot project. By Tuesday, she found herself at the CBI’s Dieppe clinic for an assessment, where the physiotherapist diagnosed her with a lumbar strain and started treatment right away.



**The Sobeys on Mountain Road in Moncton was one of the first employers involved with the direct access physiotherapy pilot project.**



# RETURN-TO-WORK GOAL



**Sandy Black is back on the job, thanks in large part to the direct access to physiotherapy pilot.**

Under the old model, Black would have required a doctor's referral to see a physiotherapist. This extra step would have delayed the process, increasing the chances of aggravating the injury, something Black wanted to avoid at all costs.

"I'm a big advocate for this program," she said. "Personally I would much rather take a proactive approach to my treatment and remain active with my employment than be put off work for a week."

## **EMPLOYERS BENEFIT TOO**

While this is of obvious benefit to the worker, Sobey's points out that it's also a win for employers. Sherri Leger is the ability manager for Sobey's locations in New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island, where she is responsible for managing workers' compensation claims and short- and long-term disability claims, including Black's. Leger said Sobey's thought it was important to be involved when they heard the project would be coming to New Brunswick.



# RETURN-TO-WORK GOAL

“Sobeys knew that this would be a win for our employees and for the business. Having WorkSafeNB’s support in connecting employees with physiotherapists has been an integral part in the success of minimizing the length of time an employee is required to be off work and decreasing recovery times.”

Sobeys has always recognized the value experienced employees bring to the company and ensures they are supported properly in getting back to work following an injury. Leger said the program is a good fit because the worker can seek treatment almost immediately and then provide Sobeys with the physiotherapist’s analysis on their safe functional abilities. This allows Sobeys to modify the employee’s duties as they continue to seek treatment.

“They really appreciate the benefits of being treated almost immediately, especially when they otherwise may not be able to get in to see their physician or may have to wait long hours in the emergency room. Our employees are happier because the impact to their hours and pay are minimal.”

In Black’s case, she didn’t miss any time from work and, in conjunction with three visits to physio, was able to follow a rehabilitative exercise program at home.

*“I can’t stress enough how well the program worked for me. I am an advocate for getting into treatment right away.”*

**- Sandy Black**

Her claim was approved and WorkSafeNB covered her medical costs. Today, while she is always cognizant of how suddenly an STI can arise and has taken corrective measures to prevent a re-occurrence, she says she is as good as new.

“I can’t stress enough how well the program worked for me. I am an advocate for getting into treatment right away. In my case, the whole process from injury to the final appointment with the physiotherapist took less than two weeks.”

## **INITIAL RESULTS SHOW PROMISE**

Back at WorkSafeNB, Wasson said while the program’s final results are still being evaluated, the preliminary findings are encouraging.



# RETURN-TO-WORK GOAL

“We are seeing fewer workers missing time at work, and those who do are returning sooner than they had in the past.”

“This helps to protect the worker from further injury and allows a valuable resource to remain at work. In turn, Sobeys reduces the severity of its claims and reduces experience ratings with WorkSafeNB.”

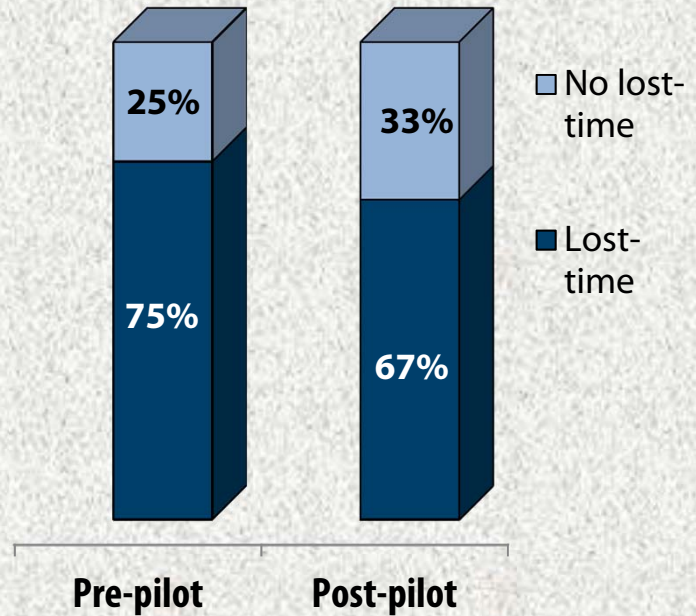
Leger said Black’s ringing endorsement is the shared sentiment among Sobeys’ employees who have also gone through the program.

As a result of successes like this, WorkSafeNB expanded the program last year to include 13 employers and all of the province’s 65 nursing homes, an industry challenged by STIs.

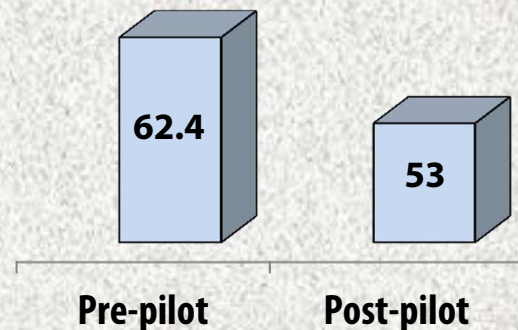
New Brunswickers can expect WorkSafeNB to continue working with its partners to develop creative programs and services to not only meet their needs, but to exceed them, Dauphinee said.

“Returning injured workers quickly, but above all else, as safely as possible to meaningful work is one of our major goals, and achieving it is truly a team effort. This program is a great example of how innovation and collaborative partnerships give workers a chance to be treated sooner, and hopefully an opportunity to return to their jobs sooner as well.”

## Accepted Claim Type



## Claim Duration



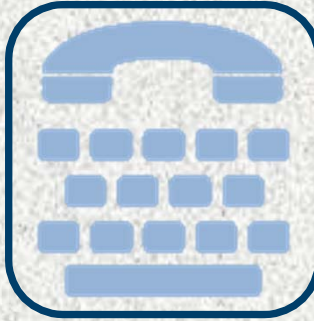
Case-managed claims in N.B. nursing homes (paid days as at Dec. 31, 2014)



# MORE DETAILS



**Quick Facts**



**Contact**



**Financials**



**Quality Governance**



**Balance**



**Safety**



**Return to Work**



**Service**



**Staff Satisfaction and  
Engagement**



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