Sun at Work: Sun & Heat Safety for Outdoor Workers

The Sun at Work Team

Background & Objective

Outdoor workers have a higher risk of skin cancer and heat stress. Occupational sun exposure is a significant risk factor. There are between 1.5 million[1] and 5.4 million outdoor workers[2] in Canada. Although the need for sun and heat protection has been identified, there is no Canada-wide heat and sun safety program for outdoor workers.

The objective of Sun at Work is to develop nationally-applicable heat and sun safety processes and resources for workplaces to help them implement heat and sun safety programs for outdoor workers.

Design

Phase I—Workplaces

Develop, implement, and evaluate theoretically-driven and evidence-based heat and sun safety (HSS) interventions that build capacity for HSS in 12 parks and utilities workplaces in three regions in Canada (BC, ON, NS/NB). Along with existing evidence-based research, the 3-point evaluation will inform Phase II.

Phase II–Broader Reach

Develop website-hosted tools and resources to help outdoor workplaces implement HSS programs. Raise awareness of the need for HSS programs for outdoor workplaces. Communicate through engagement with workplaces, industry decision makers, and policy advocates. The website includes:

- Interactive planning tool with staged resources
- Project reports
- Summaries HSS and effective prevention strategies
- Policy briefing notes
- Video(s) about worker and employer experiences with HSS

2014 — 2015 — 2016

References

1. CAREX Canada. *Solar radiation-occupational estimate*. 2012; Available from: http://www.carexcanada.ca/en/solar_radiation/occupational_estimate/.
2. Marrett, L.D., E.C. Pichora, and M.L. Costa, *Work-time sun behaviours among Canadian outdoor workers: results from the 2006 National Sun Survey.* Canadian Journal of Public Health, 2010. **101**(4): p. 119-122.
3. Adapted from Harris, J. R., Cheadle, A., Hannon, P. A., Forehand, M., Licheillo, P., Mahoney, S., Yarrow, J. (2012). A Framework for Disseminating Evidence-Based Health Promotion Practices. *Preventing Chronic Disease*, 9.

Acknowledgements

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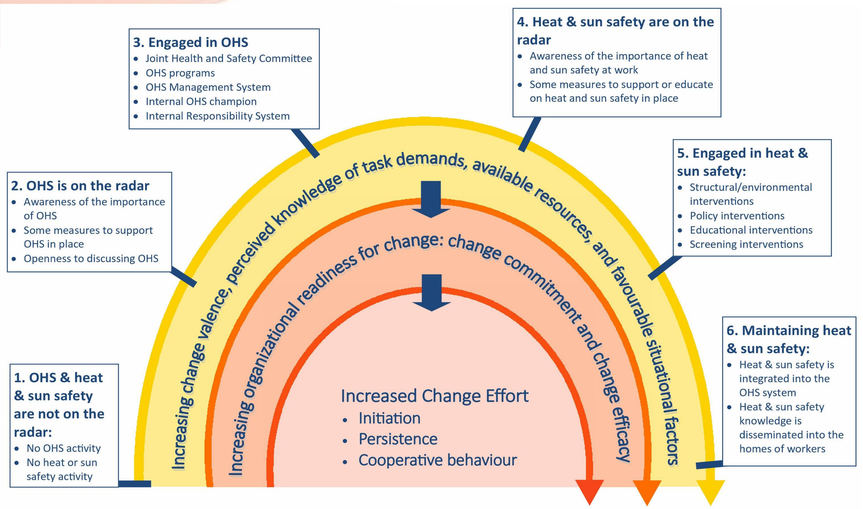
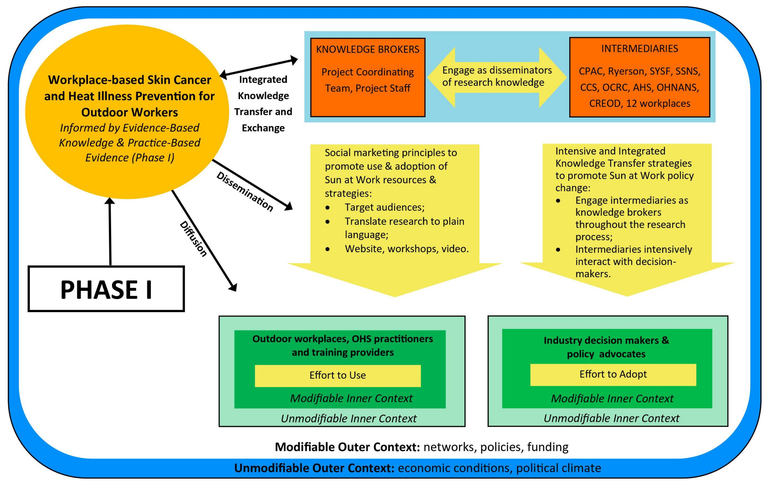
Organizational Readiness to Change Model



Dissemination & Knowledge Transfer Framework[3]



Heat & Sun Safety

Control	Policy	Engineering	Administrative	Personal Protective Equipment	Education & Awareness (includes Skin Examination strategies)
Definition	Adopt workplace policies that minimize exposure	Build into the design of the worksite, equipment, or process to ↓ exposure	Change the way work is done in order to minimize exposure	Helps to ↓ individual exposure. Last line of defense, least effective in ↓ exposure	↑ exposure knowledge including how to minimize exposure
Example	'Working in the sun' policy	Shade structures	Schedule work outside of 11am- 4pm	Long-sleeved coolwear shirts, pants	Toolbox talks on sun and heat safety

A suite of Sun at Work resources (based on Alberta's *Be Sunsible* and Australia's *Queensland University of Technology Outdoor Workers Project)* will be developed. In Phase I, resources will be tailored to each workplace's **Organizational Readiness to Change** and trialed at the workplaces. Through the web-based tool in Phase II, workplaces will be able to download targeted material depending upon their current stage of readiness.

Sun at Work Team

Sun at Work is a CPAC *Coalition Linking Action & Science for Prevention* project.

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