

Speaker and Panelist Biographies

Paul Demers, Occupational Cancer Research Centre



Dr. Paul Demers is the Director of the Occupational Cancer Research Centre and a Professor with the University of Toronto's Dalla Lana School of Public Health. He is also the Scientific Director of CAREX Canada, a national environmental and occupational carcinogen surveillance program. He has an MSc in Industrial Hygiene and a PhD in Epidemiology, both from the University of Washington in Seattle. Paul is an internationally recognized expert on the health effects of workplace exposures and sits on many expert panels, including the International Agency for Research on Cancer working groups that evaluated dusts and fibres, firefighting and formaldehyde.

George Gritziotis, Ontario Ministry of Labour



George Gritziotis joined the Ministry of Labour in October 2011 as Ontario's first Chief Prevention Officer (CPO) and Associate Deputy Minister. As CPO, Mr. Gritziotis has been working to prevent and eliminate work-related injury, illness, and fatalities. He is leading several strategic initiatives to improve the health and safety of Ontario workers, including the implementation of the province's first Integrated Occupational Health and Safety Strategy; the implementation of the Mining Health, Safety and Prevention Review; mandatory health and safety awareness training; and standards for working at heights. He is also responsible for the oversight and funding of Health and Safety Associations and occupational health and safety research grants.

Before joining the ministry, he served as founding Executive Director of the Construction Sector Council, a national organization committed to developing a highly skilled workforce to support the human resources needs of Canada's construction industry. Mr. Gritziotis holds an MBA from the University of Ottawa and an economics degree from Concordia University.

Michael Sherar, Cancer Care Ontario



Dr. Michael Sherar is President and CEO of Cancer Care Ontario, a role he was appointed to in 2011. From 2006 to 2011, he was the provincial agency's Vice-President, Planning and Regional Programs, leading the development of Regional Cancer Programs, including capital planning for cancer services across the province.

Dr. Sherar is an Affiliate Scientist at the Techna Institute University Health Network where he carries out research and development of minimally invasive thermal therapy technologies for cancer including radiofrequency ablation.

Dr. Sherar received a BA in Physics from Oxford University in 1985 and a PhD in Medical Biophysics from the University of Toronto in 1989.

Rowena Pinto, Canadian Cancer Society



Rowena Pinto is the Vice President, Public Affairs & Strategic Initiatives for the Canadian Cancer Society (CCS), Ontario Division and is part of CCS's senior leadership team. Her portfolio encompasses advocacy, prevention and health promotion, communications and media, research, cancer information and support programs. She is passionate in her fight against cancer and brings ample experience in social and health issues to her position at CCS. Rowena began her career in Ottawa working for the Correctional Service of Canada and then Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, where she held a number of positions in strategic planning, policy development, communications and community engagement. In 2003, Rowena began her work at CCS as a Senior Manager, Public Issues. Rowena holds a Master's degree in Public Policy and Public Administration from Concordia University.

Lesley Rushton, Imperial College London



Dr. Lesley Rushton is a Reader in Occupational Epidemiology at Imperial College London, where she is involved in multidisciplinary research programmes into occupational and environmental causes of ill health. She is a medical statistician and epidemiologist with an MSc in Statistics from Sussex University and a PhD in methodological aspects of epidemiological studies from the Institute of Cancer Research in London.

Lesley specializes in health studies in various industries, including leukemia and related disease from benzene in the petrochemical industry, studies of lung cancer and silicosis in the silica sand industry, and dermatitis in the printing industry. She led the study to estimate the current and future burden of cancer due to occupation in Britain. She has also carried out several studies in the area of indoor and outdoor air pollution, particularly in relation to children's health.

Chris McLeod, University of British Columbia



Dr. Chris McLeod is the co-research lead of the Partnership for Work, Health and Safety at the School of Population and Public Health at the University of British Columbia. Chris's research focuses on the evaluation of occupational health policies and practices, the causes and consequences of work-related injury and disease, and the relationship between employment, working conditions, and worker health.

Chris is also a content data expert for Population Data BC, a data and education resource facilitating research on the determinants of human health, well-being and development. He is actively working on developing and extending the occupational health data available to researchers through this program.

Chris holds a PhD in population and public health from UBC and an MA in economics from McMaster University, and teaches courses on the social determinants of health, public health, and occupational disease at the University of British Columbia.

Emile Tompa, Institute for Work & Health



Dr. Emile Tompa is a labour and health economist at the Institute for Work & Health. Emile's research interests include the consequences of occupational health and safety system design on the health and well-being of individuals and populations, the economic evaluation of workplace interventions for improving the health and well-being of workers, the economic burden of adverse health conditions and disability, and the analysis of disability policy systems.

Emile holds appointments as an Associate Professor in the Department of Economics at McMaster University, an Assistant Professor at the Dalla Lana School of Public Health at the University of Toronto, and a mentor with the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) Strategic Training Program in Work Disability Prevention, also at the University of Toronto. He is co-Director of the Centre for Research on Work Disability Policy.

Donna Pasichnik, Canadian Cancer Society



Donna Pasichnik manages tobacco control, media and government relations for the Canadian Cancer Society in Saskatchewan. In the past 12 years she has successfully advocated for provincial and municipal policies to reduce tobacco use and youth exposure to UV radiation, and for a provincial on-line asbestos registry for all government owned and operated buildings. Donna is also CCS's media spokesperson on all cancer control issues. She believes the key to CCS's advocacy successes is aligning and collaborating with like-minded partners and health organizations.

Donna's background is in journalism with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and as a journalism professor at the University of Regina.

Alec Farquhar, Office of the Worker Adviser



Alec Farquhar is the Director of the Office of the Worker Adviser (OWA). The OWA is an agency of the Ontario Ministry of Labour with the mandate to advise, represent and educate non-unionized workers in their workplace insurance claims, as well as non-unionized workers who may have suffered reprisal for exercising their health and safety rights.

Alec previously held the positions of Managing Director of the Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers, Director of the Occupational Health and Safety Branch of the Ontario Ministry of Labour, and Senior Policy Advisor to the Chair of the WCB. Alec is a graduate of Princeton University and the University of Toronto, Faculty of Law.

Joanne Kim, Occupational Cancer Research Centre



Joanne Kim is the lead Research Associate for the *Burden of Occupational Cancer in Canada* project at OCRC. She developed an interest in occupational health while working as a volunteer, and later as a research student, at the St Michael's Hospital Occupational and Environmental Health Clinic. She has an MPH in Occupational and Environmental Health from the University of Toronto. Joanne is responsible for many aspects of the burden project, including coordination, methods development, and analysis.

Colin Murray, WorkSafe BC



Over the past 25 years Colin's career in Risk Management has spanned the manufacturing, financial, consulting and public service sectors. Initially working in the UK for a multinational corporation, covering 300 locations and 68,000 workers around the globe, he was responsible for the development and maintenance of the global risk management and financing programs. Colin moved to a global risk management and insurance consultancy based in London, England to assist many international clients and eventually transferred to the Vancouver office in 1996 to establish a new business consulting division.

In 1998 he joined WorkSafeBC and has predominantly worked in the prevention and occupational disease sections providing strategic, operational and technical support services to internal and external stakeholders. He is currently the Senior Manager, Risk Analysis Unit which is made up of analytical, technical and quality assurance professionals who focus on new, emerging and high profile risks.

Jean-Paul Mrochek, United Steelworkers Union



Jean-Paul (J.P.) Mrochek is a proud member of United Steelworkers Union Local 6500, which represents 2600 operational and maintenance workers and approximately 10,000 retirees at Vale's (formally Inco Ltd.) surface and underground operations in the City of Greater Sudbury, Ontario.

J.P. is currently a full time Workplace Safety and Insurance Board worker advocate with specialized knowledge of occupation disease in the nickel producing industry. Since 2006, he has assisted approximately 200 pensioners or their estates with their WSIB occupational disease claims. Past and present workers in the nickel mining industry were exposed and are potentially exposed to multiple known carcinogens and toxins which have been proven to be detrimental to health. J.P. is also actively lobbying the Ontario government for the protection of WSIB benefits of widows of occupational disease victims and the protections of worker's benefits for those who are 63 years of age and older.

Vic Pakalnis, MIRARCO Mining Innovation



Vic Pakalnis is the President and CEO of MIRARCO, a non-profit organization that develops innovative solutions for the mining industry and its challenges. Vic has a rich and diverse background in applying public sector policy as well as in training and organizational design, based on years of experience at the senior executive level within the Ontario Public Service. His research interests are in applied sustainability, seabed mining, engineering and public policy.

Vic has a Bachelor's Degree in Mining Engineering and a Master's Degree in Engineering, both from McGill University, as well as an MBA from Queen's University. He has worked at Falconbridge Nickel Mines Ltd., Iron Ore Company of Canada, Inco Ltd., and Kerr Addison Mines, as well as the Ontario Ministry of Labour where he held the positions of Provincial Director of Mining and Director of the Industrial Health and Safety Branches.

Cheryl Peters, CAREX Canada



Cheryl Peters is an occupational exposures advisor at CAREX Canada, a national workplace and environmental exposure surveillance project. She started working with CAREX Canada at the beginning of the project in 2007. She is also a Postdoctoral Fellow at Carleton University in Ottawa, where she works on projects in environmental and occupational epidemiology and exposure assessment. Cheryl has an MSc and PhD in occupational and environmental hygiene, both from the University of British Columbia. Her research interests include occupational exposure assessment (particularly for solar UV radiation), the effects of sex and gender on occupational carcinogen exposures, and exposures in the construction industry. Cheryl also holds a BSc in earth and ocean sciences and geography, and her interest in environmental and occupational health stemmed from her work as a geologist in northern BC and the Yukon.

Natalia Mozayani, Radiation Safety Institute of Canada



Natalia Mozayani is the Executive Director at the Radiation Safety Institute of Canada (RSIC), a national non-for-profit organisation that is independent of government and industry and solely dedicated to radiation safety and the prevention of occupational cancers.

Natalia is responsible for the execution of the RSIC overall strategic direction, partner network development and key client relations. Since joining the organization in 2009, Natalia has led numerous awareness and prevention initiatives of the Institute. She is in charge of the delivery of the RSIC Workplace Information Service in Radiation Safety, a unique prevention offering funded by the Prevention Office of the Ontario Ministry of Labour.

Prior to joining RSIC, Natalia worked in the field of international relations. She managed regional teams supporting the implementation of European Commission development projects and held a position with the United Nations Refugee Agency.

Anne-Marie Nicol, CAREX Canada



Anne-Marie Nicol is the principal investigator of CAREX Canada, a national workplace and environmental exposure surveillance project. She is also an assistant professor in the Faculty of Health Sciences at Simon Fraser University. Her areas of research include knowledge translation, occupational and environmental health and risk assessment. Anne-Marie's work also includes exploring novel ways to communicate information to the public, including the use of popular culture as a vehicle for creating and disseminating risk messages.

Anne-Marie holds a BA in Communication from Simon Fraser University, an MES from York University focused on Environmental Communication, and a PhD in Epidemiology from the University of British Columbia.

Christine Williams, Canadian Cancer Society



Christine Williams is the Chief Mission Officer & Scientific Director of the Canadian Cancer Society. She is passionate about supporting and communicating the value of scientific research and the use of evidence-based programs and policy change to improve human health. Christine has a PhD in Immunology from the University of Toronto and completed post-doctoral training in Boston. At the Canadian Cancer Society, her primary responsibilities include national oversight for the Society's mission to reduce the burden of cancer through strategic investments in research, policy development, advocacy, and prevention and support programs. She is also responsible for the Society's partnerships and international work. She serves on many national committees, including co-chairing the Canadian Cancer Research Alliance.

Linda Rabeneck, Cancer Care Ontario



Dr. Linda Rabeneck is Vice President, Prevention and Cancer Control, Cancer Care Ontario. She is Professor of Medicine at the University of Toronto and Senior Scientist at the Institute for Clinical Evaluative Sciences (ICES) in Toronto.

Dr. Rabeneck received her medical degree from the University of British Columbia. She completed post-graduate training in internal medicine and gastroenterology at the University of British Columbia and the University of Toronto, respectively. She received her Master's degree in Public Health from Yale University, where she trained as a Robert Wood Johnson Clinical Scholar.

In her current role, Dr. Rabeneck is accountable for cancer prevention and screening in Ontario. Dr. Rabeneck played a leadership role in launching ColonCancerCheck in Ontario, Canada's first organized, province-wide colorectal cancer screening program. Dr. Rabeneck leads an active research program focusing on the quality and effectiveness of colorectal cancer screening. Dr. Rabeneck currently serves as Chair of the World Endoscopy Organization (WEO) Colorectal Cancer Screening Committee.