

# SASWH

**CONNECTS**

*Quarterly Magazine*

2025 - Issue 3

## WHMIS

*What Now?*

Bicycle Safety

# 101

The Return on  
Investment of Ergonomics:  
*Prevention Pays Off*

COLLABORATING WITH SASKATCHEWAN HEALTHCARE  
PROFESSIONALS TO CREATE A SAFER WORKPLACE

**SASWH**  
+

Saskatchewan Association for  
Safe Workplaces in Health





# CONTENTS

Upcoming Events ..... 5

CEO Update ..... 6

Safety Minute: Bicycle Safety 101 ..... 8

Compliance Corner: WHMIS - What Now? ..... 10

Safety Service Highlight: The Return on Investment of Ergonomics ..... 12

Training Program Highlight: TLR® ..... 18

Vendor Feature Article by 3MotionAI: Movement Matters..... 20

Questions?!

Comments?!

We'd love to hear from you!!





# UPCOMING EVENTS!

## CANADIAN SAFETY SUMMIT

June 17, 2025

Toronto, ON

## PTSD AWARENESS DAY

June 27, 2025

## NATIONAL INJURY PREVENTION DAY

July 7, 2025

## HSPC PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE

September 14-17, 2025

St. John's, NL

# CEO UPDATE

**By: Sandra Cripps, MHRM**

SASWH Chief Executive Officer

As we transition into the warmer months, it's a welcome relief to put away the heavy winter coats and embrace the sunny days that come with spring. I hope this season brings renewed energy and protects time for you!

May is a particularly meaningful month, as we take time to recognize and celebrate two vital sectors: occupational safety and healthcare. From May 5–10, we observe National Occupational Safety and Health (NAOSH) Week, followed by National Nurses Week, which runs from May 12–18.

NAOSH Week serves as a reminder of the importance of promoting safety, health, and safe work practices in the workplace. Its mission is to raise awareness and inspire proactive measures to reduce workplace injuries and illnesses. I encourage you to reflect on a safety practice you use regularly that contributes to a safer work environment. Take a moment to share that practice with a coworker, demonstrating its value and motivating them to do the same. Additional resources and ideas on how to celebrate occupational health and safety are available online: [NAOSH Week](#)

National Nurses Week celebrates the remarkable contributions of nurses and highlights this year's theme: "The Power of Nurses to Transform Health". Many of us have been touched by the compassion and dedication of nurses,

whether through personal care or through the experiences of loved ones. Nurses are not only essential members of the health care team, but also tirelessly advocate for understanding that providing safe patient care requires a safe workforce. I want to take this opportunity to express sincere thanks and appreciation to those who have chosen nursing as a profession, who continue to serve our communities here in Saskatchewan, and who remain committed to safe and compassionate patient care while committing to their own well-being.

Considering these important observances, I also encourage everyone to prioritize their own health and wellness. Whether it's through lighthearted fun, nourishing your mental health or reconnecting with activities that bring you joy, self-care is essential! Something as simple as a good night's sleep, planning nutritious meals, or an afternoon spent kayaking on one of Saskatchewan's beautiful lakes can do wonders. Reflect on past hobbies and experiences that brought you happiness and consider reintroducing them into your life.

Wishing you a safe spring and summer season. Let's continue to support one another, take care of ourselves, and, most importantly, play safe!



WORK SAFETY





# SAFETY MINUTE

## Bicycle Safety 101

**By: Eric Sy, MD, MPH, FRCPC, E-AEC**

Associate Professor, University of Saskatchewan & Physician, Saskatchewan Health Authority

### WHY BIKE?

Cycling is an excellent way to stay active, commute to work efficiently, and reduce environmental impact. We know that regular exercise, which can include cycling, is associated with reduced levels of stress hormones in the body, letting you feel more relaxed and energized. Active travel modes, including walking and cycling, can promote a healthy lifestyle and can potentially replace some of the short trips that we make throughout the day. Cycling is also an affordable alternative to driving, potentially reducing fuel costs, saving on parking expenses, and vehicle maintenance expenses. Whether you're riding to work, running errands or exploring local trails, cycling supports both your well-being and the health of the planet.

### MAY IS NATIONAL BIKE MONTH

As the weather warms and spring is in the air, people around Canada will be participating in National Bike Month in May 2025. There will be many different special days during this month:

- Walk and Bike to School Day is May 7th,
- Bike to Work Week is May 12th-16th, and;
- Bike to Work Day is May 16th!

### HAND SIGNALS AND COMMUNICATION

- Left hand turn: Left arm extended straight out to the side.
- Right hand turn: Right arm extended straight out to the side or left arm bent upwards at 90 degrees.
- Stop: Extending left arm downwards bent at 90 degrees with your palm facing back.



# BIKE SAFETY TIPS

Whether commuting to work or enjoying a weekend ride, cyclists and motorists alike share a responsibility to keep roads safe. By promoting safe cycling practices and fostering a culture of shared responsibility, we can enhance road safety for everyone. Here are some common tips:

## BE VISIBLE

Bright clothing, reflective gear, and front and rear lights improve visibility, especially during dawn and dusk.



## WEAR A HELMET

Wearing a properly fitted helmet is one of the most effective ways to reduce the risk of serious injury while riding your bike.



## STAY ALERT

Avoid distractions such as headphones or phone use while riding. Be aware of changing road conditions, including parked cars, potholes, and glass. Exercise extra caution while riding in wet or rainy conditions, as painted lines can be slippery.



## USE HAND SIGNALS AND COMMUNICATION

Use hand signals to indicate turns and stops. This helps motorists and fellow cyclists anticipate your movements and reduces the risk of collisions.



## USE A BELL OR WHISTLE

When sharing the road/paths with other users, using a bell or whistle can signal to others when approaching from behind.



## FOLLOW TRAFFIC LAWS

Cyclists must adhere to the same traffic rules as vehicles. Ride in the direction of traffic, obey traffic signals and stop signs, and stay off sidewalks when possible.

## RIDE WITH OTHERS

Riding with others is not only fun but also can increase the safety of the group. Cycling is a great sport to socialize with others. Consider joining a local bike club and/or explore local group rides in your area.



## ROUTE PLANNING

Route planning on popular apps such as Ride with GPS, Komoot, Google Maps, and Strava can help identify safe routes for cycling and routes with bike lanes.



## ROUTINE BIKE MAINTENANCE

Take your bike to your local bike shop to get it tuned for the upcoming season. Bring a spare tube, puncture repair kit, and hand pump when you ride.



# WHMIS – What Now?

By: Tom Dickson, B.Ed.

SASWH Workplace Safety Specialist - Trainer/Facilitator

At the midpoint of our current decade, Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System – or WHMIS – will be changing once again. Manufacturers and suppliers have until December 14, 2025, to comply with the latest legislation. This will be reflected in their labels and Safety Data Sheets. Workers and supervisors will not see huge changes in their WHMIS experience.

WHMIS became part of the Canadian workplace in 1988. It was designed to standardize the approach to using hazardous chemicals in the workplace. Rules to identify and classify hazards, product labelling, and creating Material Safety Data Sheets all came into force.

WHMIS 2015 was an overhaul of the system. It brought the program into alignment with the Globally Harmonized System of Classification

and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS). The United Nations oversees GHS and makes regular updates. The Canadian Government reviews the GHS changes. In December of 2022, the Federal Cabinet made amendments to update our WHMIS to reflect the GHS revisions. A three-year period was allowed for everyone to comply.

WHMIS 1988 became WHMIS 2015. In 2025, the latest iteration will simply be referred to as WHMIS.

So, what does this mean for frontline workers? They will notice very little has changed. There is a new Physical Hazard class called **Chemicals Under Pressure**. An addition is made to aerosols covering those that are non-flammable – **Aerosol – Category 3**. There are also new subcategories for flammable gases.



Manufacturers and suppliers need to comply with new information for Safety Data Sheets. There are a number of changes and additions. These include items like a measurement of how liquids (mostly oils) flow under the influence of gravity at a certain temperature – kinematic viscosity. Don't worry, this will not be on your WHMIS exam!

For those who employ or supervise workers, just a reminder that Saskatchewan's Occupational Health and Safety Regulations make a distinction between **education** and **training**. Anyone taking an online WHMIS course – such as the one offered by SASWH – is educated. This means they understand how the system works. They will know such things as what different pictograms mean, and how to make sense of a label or Safety Data Sheet. At their work site, employees are to be trained on the specific chemicals they will encounter doing their job. The OHS Regulations include a statement about an employer making sure workers have “all hazard information received by the employer from a supplier” about chemicals they will be using to perform their jobs.

Once a workplace starts using the new WHMIS program, all Safety Data Sheets and applicable information is to reflect the changes.

For a complete comparison of changes between WHMIS 2015 and the amended 2025 edition, readers can go to the Health Canada website. Employers who have questions about WHMIS Trainer certification should contact SASWH.

"Manufacturers and suppliers have until December 14, 2025, to comply with the latest legislation."

Health Canada Website

Email SASWH

## The Return on Investment of Ergonomics:

# Prevention Pays Off

By: Julius Villanueva, B.Sc.(Kin.), CES  
SASWH Workplace Safety Specialist

**"In 2023, WorkSafe Saskatchewan reported that 38.25% of these injuries were related to bodily reactions and exertion."**

Working in healthcare is physically demanding, and Saskatchewan is no exception. The physical challenges associated with this work come at a cost as musculoskeletal injuries (MSIs) continue to affect staff. In 2023, WorkSafe Saskatchewan reported that 38.25% of these injuries were related to bodily reactions and exertion. Among these injuries, back problems are the most common, typically caused by overexertion, repetitive strain or improper handling.

Each of these injuries can result in significant costs due to claims, time off work, modified duties, and negative impacts on staff morale and patient care. In 2025, the Workers' Compensation Board (WCB) ergonomic summary indicated that claims amounted to approximately \$1.2 million, covering around 600 claims.

# Five Recommendations for Employers



## **Assess the Risks:**

Conduct ergonomic assessments of high-risk tasks (e.g. handling linen carts, patient transfers, repetitive or sustained administrative tasks). Use injury data and trends to prioritize areas for improvement.



## **Invest in the Right Equipment:**

Provide workers with well-maintained lifts, adjustable workstations, and carts with low-resistance wheels. Confirm that the equipment reduces the forces, repetition, and awkward postures that employees may experience while performing their tasks.



## **Transferring Lifting Repositioning (TLR®) Program® Training:**

Ensure that staff receive competent training in the principles of safe body mechanics, as well as general and client-moving techniques. Incorporate and apply TLR principles during safety meetings, discussions, and refreshers.



## **Encourage Early Reporting and Follow-up:**

Foster a strong safety culture where discomfort is reported promptly, allowing for early interventions.



## **Track the Impact:**

Monitor injury trends, gather feedback, and share success stories with staff and leadership.

Adopting a proactive approach to ergonomics can lead to fewer claims, lower WCB premiums, and a stronger safety culture. As pressures continue to increase across our system, let's remain committed to investing in proactive solutions.



## TIP # 1

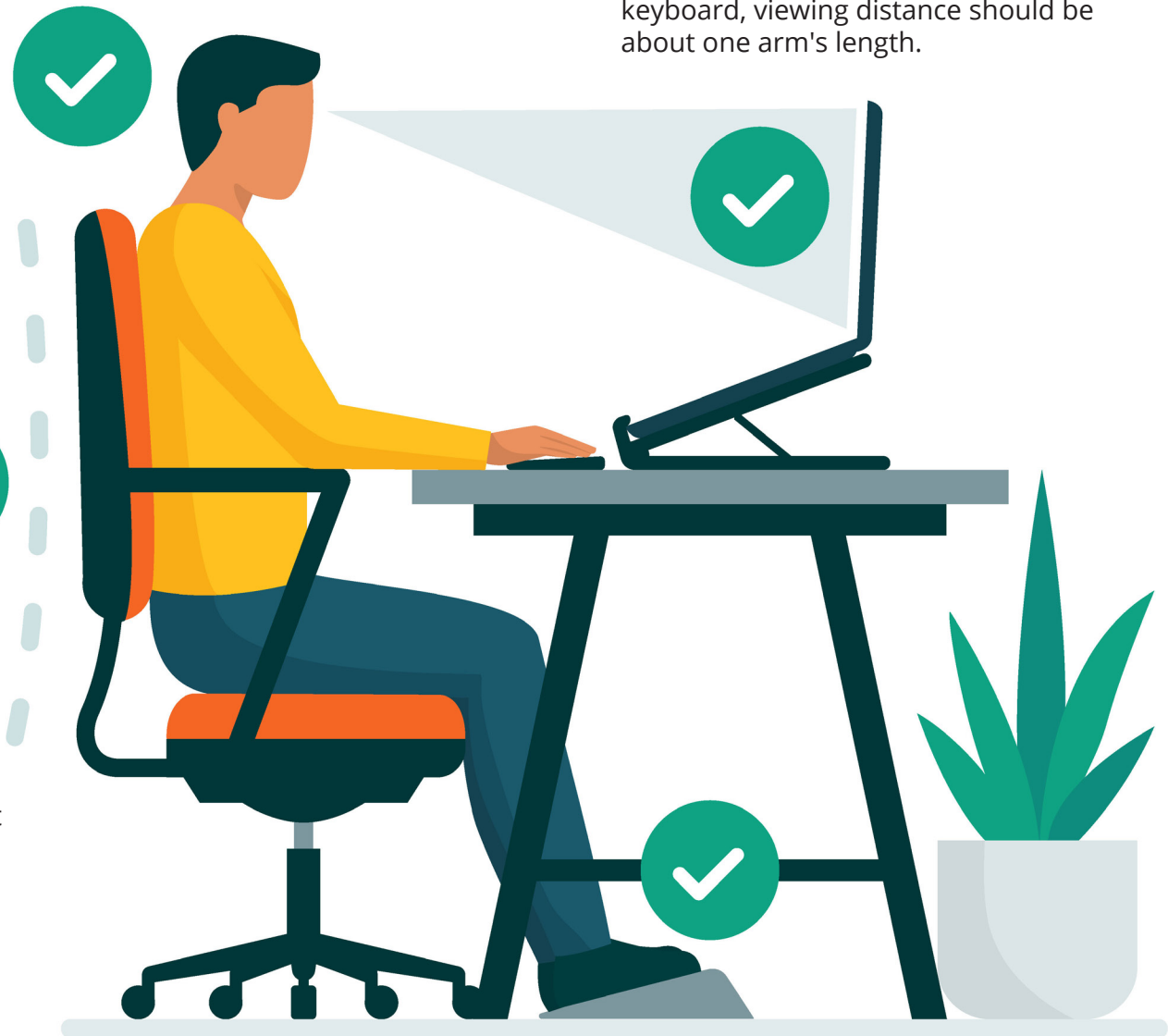
Sit directly in front of the monitor(s) and keyboard/mouse with the top of the screen at, or below, eye height. Remember to take microbreaks or adjust your position throughout the day.

## TIP # 2

When seated comfortably in front of the keyboard, viewing distance should be about one arm's length.

## TIP # 3

The chair back should be between 90 to 130 degrees, with the backrest supporting the lower back.



## TIP # 4

Feet should be flat on the floor or a footrest (if needed).

## WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF AN ERGONOMIC ASSESSMENT?

The purpose of an office/industrial ergonomic assessment is to identify risk factors or ergonomic hazards and to recommend solutions to reduce or eliminate the risk of identified hazards.

**Problem:** Identify the problem and the reason for the assessment.

**Purpose:** An assessment of the office/work area and the varying components to create preventative measures for safer work processes for the employee.

**Scope:** An assessment of the employee's individual office/work area and the varying components of job tasks, environment, work structure, and workstation, and the interdependent connection with each other.

**Approach:** The workstation assessment will include interview/discussion, taking measurements, pictures, completion of assessment forms and assessment of equipment, tools, and devices.

**Desired Outcome of the Assessment:** Provide the worker with solutions that reduce the risk of injury by eliminating the hazard or reducing the risk associated with the hazard. Once the solutions are in place for a time, the Certified Ergonomic Specialists (CES) will check in with the worker to confirm that the solutions are working and to address any questions or concerns they might have.

## DID YOU KNOW?

SASWH offers ergonomic assessments for low to no cost. Interested in booking an assessment? Please click the button below to request additional information.

REQUEST ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

## OFFICE ERGONOMICS

# Working at the computer

While working at the computer, your posture can often be the cause of backaches, neck pain, elbow discomfort, etc., particularly if you spend a large part of your time doing so. How can the risk of developing pain and discomfort be reduced?

### 1. Adjust your chair to ensure that the design reference posture is used

- Feet placed flat on the floor
- Thighs horizontal with the floor
- Clearance behind the back of the knees
- Ankles, knees and hips at approximately 90 degrees
- Back in a vertical position or slightly inclined to the rear
- Back firmly placed on the back of the seat and resting against the lumbar support
- Shoulders relaxed
- Hands out straight, aligned with the forearms
- Arms close to the body
- Head held straight or slightly lowered
- Trunk and neck facing straight ahead (not twisted)

### 2. Adjust the other parts of the workstation, making sure the design reference posture is maintained

#### A WORK SURFACE HEIGHT\*

- Should not interfere with the arm rests
- Must allow you to rest the forearms (if working directly on work surface)
- Must allow sufficient space for your legs

#### B KEYBOARD AND MOUSE HEIGHT\*

- Must allow the arms to remain close to the body with the hands out straight, aligned with the forearms

#### C MOUSE PLACEMENT

- Must allow the arms to remain close to the body (if not supported), and to be as symmetrical as possible

#### D SCREEN HEIGHT AND PLACEMENT

- Must permit reading without difficulty
- Must allow head to remain straight and looking forward: the line of sight should never be above the horizontal, eyes are aligned with the top of the screen (the screen can be lower for those who wear bi-focal glasses)

*\*If the work surface or the keyboard support is too high to allow the design reference posture to be used, compromise by slightly raising the chair height and adding a footrest. In any case, look into solutions for lowering the work surface, keyboard, or mouse height prior to considering this alternative.*

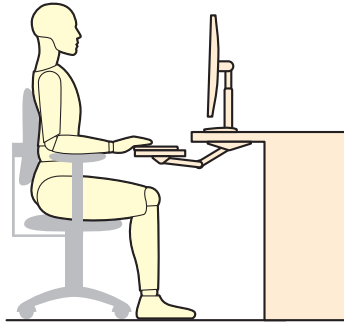


## ORGANIZING THE WORKSTATION

In all of the following situations, the arms lean on the armrests or on the work surface

### A Adjustable height keyboard

This adjustment enables all aspects of the design reference posture to be followed.

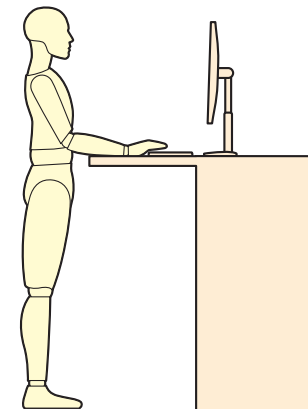


### B Keyboard on the work surface

Remove or lower the chair's armrests so they do not interfere with the work surface. The forearms are therefore placed further in front of you.

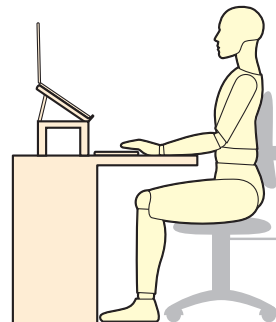


### C Standing



### D Laptop

Use a separate, stand-alone keyboard and mouse, using only the laptop's screen.



## OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS TO REDUCE RISK

- Take frequent breaks and mini-breaks
- Vary your tasks and your postures
- Divide heavy loads into a number of lighter ones (ex.: use three small binders rather than one big one); store them within reach and slide them instead of lifting
- Remember to move!



SASWH has Certified Ergonomic Specialists available to assist members with ergonomic assessments. For more information, contact SASWH at:

- [info@saswh.ca](mailto:info@saswh.ca)
- 306.545.5595

# TLR®:

## Two-Worker Transfers and Following Risk Assessment

**By: Jody Palmer**

SASWH Workplace Safety Specialist

Transferring clients and patients is a frequent task in healthcare. Moving tasks include assisting clients to stand, transferring to a wheelchair or commode, or ambulating down a hallway. Unfortunately, these duties come with a potentially high cost: recent statistics from the Saskatchewan Workers' Compensation Board show that client/patient handling is the top source of injury to workers in healthcare in the province.

Assisting in mobilizing clients involves many risks, and at any moment during this task there is the potential for injuries to both the worker and the client. Some of the risks associated with client transfers are the unpredictability of clients and patients due to physical instability, pain, lack of communication, cognitive ability, and urgency of the moment.

SASWH's Transferring Lifting Repositioning (TLR®) Program© focuses on eliminating or reducing the risk of injuries to workers by training them to follow a risk assessment process prior to, during, and after any task. This comprehensive risk assessment combined with applying the principles of safe body mechanics is fundamental

to safe client transfers. A recently developed SASWH Safety Talk - [TLR® Standing Transfer with Belt Including Walking](#) – focuses on the safe use of transfer belts and the risk assessment process to ensure the safest move during standing transfers.

The key takeaways of this new Safety Talk are the importance of workers always assessing themselves, their environment, equipment, and client before performing a standing transfer, including walking. Workers must eliminate or manage any identified risks prior to performing the task. The risk of injury is further reduced by using safe body mechanics, clear communication with other workers and the client throughout the task, and obtaining assistance for further assessment as required.

It is imperative that workers' hands remain on the transfer belt for the duration of the move – including walking – and that mobility assistive devices are available and used when needed.

Questions about the TLR® program and moving tasks can be directed to [info@saswh.ca](mailto:info@saswh.ca).





# Movement Matters

The future of AI-powered workplace performance starts now!

Smarter, safer and better performance in a flash.

## Introducing FlashAI



**Scan the QR code** and activate FlashAI now.

When it comes to workplace safety, one statement holds true: movement matters. It's not just about completing tasks; how we move directly impacts productivity, and long-term well-being. For large enterprise and government organizations, reducing injury risks and enhancing performance can lead to more than just better outcomes for individuals. It can transform the efficiency, safety, and cost-effectiveness of entire teams and operations. This is where 3motionAI, an industry leader in motion analysis, steps in with its groundbreaking product, FlashAI.

By redefining how human performance is assessed and optimized, 3motionAI combines cutting-edge AI-powered technology with actionable insights to help people move better and reduce injuries. At the workplace, improving human function isn't just a goal for 3motionAI; it's a commitment to leveraging the power of movement to transform lives and optimizing performance. Movement matters and our solutions help make performance data more accessible, easier to understand and faster to act upon for better outcomes.



## FlashAI—Smarter Solutions and Deeper Insights at Your Fingertips

FlashAI provides real-time movement insights, flagging risks and enabling proactive programs to enhance productivity, well-being, and cost efficiency. Accessible and easy to use, it helps enterprises and GOEs reduce injuries, cut claims, and boost workforce performance—all from your mobile device.



### Optimizing Performance in Three Easy Steps

FlashAI incorporates an innovative three-step strategy to address the **What**, **Why**, and **How** of interpreting data for informed decision making with precision and confidence. Taking care of your workforce leads to better outcomes for all.

**STEP #1 - WHAT:** FlashAI uses video analysis to provide a clear visual summary of joint positions and risks, simplifying complex data and research into easy-to-understand insights.

**STEP #2 - WHY:** Advanced Analysis is a paid upgrade offering rich, research-driven insights into overall musculoskeletal risk. Dive into our detailed overlay video and PDF report outlining joint postures, reach distances, joint kinetics, and optional industry-standard assessment tools.

**STEP #3 - HOW:** PredictAI is a paid upgrade to transform analysis into predictive action with trends analysis and forecasting, improvement strategies, and tailored suggestions. It helps teams work smarter, prevent injuries, and enhance performance in the workplace.

### Why FlashAI Matters

For enterprises and GOE's\*, achieving optimal worker performance is a priority. FlashAI delivers compelling results with:

- ✓ Real-Time Insights: Instantly identify risks and receive actionable data for immediate decision-making.
- ✓ Boost Productivity: Improve safety and performance with seamless workflow integration.
- ✓ Reduce Costs: Minimize injury risks, insurance payouts, and workplace disruptions.

### Ready to Transform Performance

**Scan the QR code** and let's get started today.

\*GOE = government-owned entity



**Fresh new look,  
same trusted  
source.**



Saskatchewan Association for  
Safe Workplaces in Health

**Workplace health and safety:  
a priority for all.**



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in Health