SASWH CONNECTS

Quarterly Magazine

Issue 7

Workplace health and safety: a priority for all.

SASWH

MISSION

TO GUIDE THE HEALTH-RELATED INDUSTRY IN THE ELIMINATION OF WORKPLACE ILLNESS AND INJURY.

VISION

WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY: A PRIORITY FOR ALL.

SASWH+

Saskatchewan Association for Safe Workplaces in Health

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CEO UPDATE

Looking Ahead to Sunny Days

By: Sandra Cripps, MHRM
SASWH Chief Executive Officer

Another year, and another successful Annual General Meeting! SASWH held its AGM and Safety Expo on April 15, 2026, and I was so grateful for the opportunity to reconnect with our membership face-to-face. I trust that everyone in attendance enjoyed the keynote presentations, the Safety Expo, organizational updates, and also appreciated the opportunity to network with colleagues and friends.

This year's AGM was especially meaningful as it marked the association's first in-person gathering in more than six years. While virtual meetings certainly offer convenience and allow SASWH to reach a broader audience, there is tremendous value in being together in person, engaging in meaningful conversations, exchanging ideas, and strengthening relationships with like-minded professionals across our community. I would like to extend a special thanks to the SASWH staff, Safety Expo exhibitors, and presenters for their contributions to the event.

As we transition into the spring and summer months, I would like to share some important reminders about extending our commitment to safety beyond the workplace and into our personal lives:

- Early spring often brings increased wildlife activity and changing road conditions. Please remain alert when driving, watch for wildlife, and avoid travelling through flooded roadways!
- As temperatures rise, remember to prioritize sun protection, stay well hydrated, and remain mindful of the risks associated with heat-related illness. Sun Smart Saskatchewan has many online resources on how everyone can enjoy the sun safely this summer.

Spring and summer offer valuable opportunities to take time away from our busy schedules to enjoy vacations, spend time with family and friends, and recharge. Psychological wellness is an essential part of our overall health and safety, so when you have the opportunity to make time for self-care, do so!

That last point is equally true for the team here at SASWH. While the association's work will continue through the summer months, this is also a time when our staff take well-deserved breaks and holidays. As we balance our work and personal commitments, please know that SASWH is still dedicated to providing high-quality services to G22 employers across the province.

Thank you for your continued engagement and support. I encourage everyone to take care, enjoy the season ahead, and most importantly… have a safe and memorable summer!

PROTECT YOUR SKIN

Sun Safety Basics from Sun Smart Saskatchewan

Choose a broad spectrum SPF 30+ sunscreen and reapply regularly.

Wear sunglasses with full UVA and UVB protection.

Seek shade between 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Cover up with lightweight clothing.

Know the signs and symptoms of heat stress.

Stay safe. Stay protected.

2026 AGM

From Compliance to Culture: Leadership and Workplace Safety in Saskatchewan

Thank you to everyone who attended SASWH's AGM and Safety Expo on April 15th, built around the theme ***From Compliance to Culture: Leadership and Workplace Safety in Saskatchewan***. We appreciate the time, participation, and engagement of all those who joined us at the Conexus Arts Centre for a day focused on leadership, innovation, collaboration, and advancing workplace safety across Saskatchewan.

We were honoured to welcome two outstanding keynote speakers. **Drew Dudley** delivered an inspiring presentation, ***More than Words: Creating Cultures of Leadership***, encouraging attendees to reflect on how leadership shapes workplace culture and impacts those around us. **Rocky Ozaki** shared valuable insights during ***The Future is Now and The Influence of AI***, exploring the growing role artificial intelligence will play in our workplaces and organizations.

In addition to these keynote presentations, attendees received important organizational updates, including information on SASWH's collaboration with the EMS sector, as well as the continued progress of the Professional Assault Response Training (PART®) Program© redesign. Attendees also had the opportunity to hear about musculoskeletal prevention research being conducted by presenters Dr. Wayne Albert (University of New Brunswick) and Dr. Michelle Cardoso (University of Moncton), both leaders in the field of human factors and ergonomics. Dr.'s Albert and Cardoso have been longtime advocates for the Vendlet patient turning system's introduction into Canada, and SASWH looks forward to offering ongoing updates on their work to our membership.

Our final shout out is to the outstanding exhibitors who participated in the Safety Expo. Your involvement and commitment help strengthen our organization and support safer, healthier workplaces throughout Saskatchewan!

SASWH 2026 AGM Safety Expo Exhibitors

CONCEPT CONTROLS
A PARADIGM COMPANY

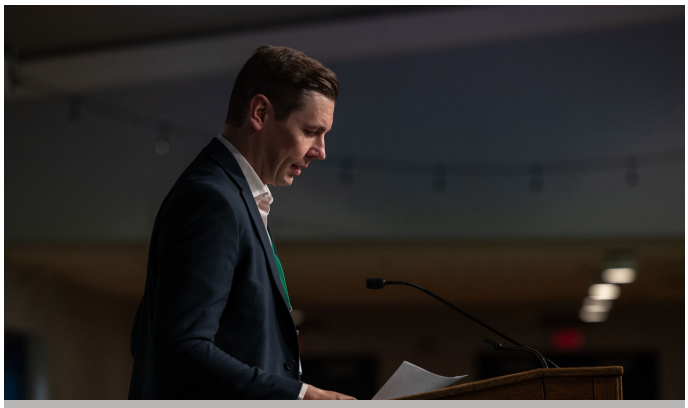
handicare

WorkSafe SASKATCHEWAN
Safety · Health · Well-being

SunSmart SASKATCHEWAN

levittsafety

Afternoon keynote, Rocky Ozaki, speaking about AI.



Mike Edge, Board Treasurer, presenting the finance update.

Participants visiting Safety Expo exhibitor booths.

Opening remarks by Mike Northcott,
Chief Human Resources Officer with SHA.

Jody Palmer and Dana West presenting the new EMS videos.

Dr. Michelle Cardoso and Dr. Wayne Albert,
co-presenting on MSI reduction research.

Participants visiting Safety Expo exhibitor booths.

SASWH staff presenting on the PART® update.

Attendees visiting exhibitors at the AGM Safety Expo.

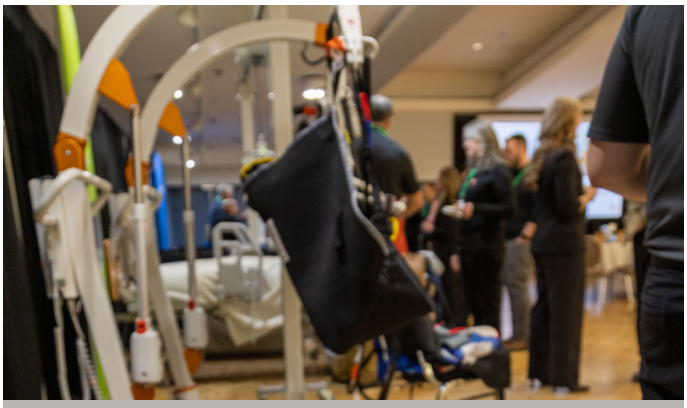
Morning keynote, Drew Dudley speaking about leadership.

Opening remarks by Chad Ryan,
Assistant Deputy Minister, Ministry of Health.

Attendees at the SASWH AGM.

Sun Smart Saskatchewan's exhibitor booth.

Board chair and event M.C., Denise Dick.



Handicare equipment display at the Safety Expo.

Sandra Cripps, CEO.

Click here to access the 2026 AGM meeting materials

SASWH STAFF

Back row (Left to Right): Vince Bell, Tom Dickson, Haley Smith, Linda Szabo, Jeff Schwan

Middle Rows (Left to Right): Tia Hampton, Gem Cheesman, Kat King, Julius Villanueva, Brenda Coben, Megan Santoro, Erin Heimbecker, Aimee Smith

Front Row (Left to Right): Brittany Gosselin, Jody Palmer, Sandra Cripps, Candy Rokosh, Sarah Barker

Thank you

COMPLIANCE CORNER

Frequent Contraventions in Healthcare (G22)

Contraventions are issued by Occupational Health and Safety Officers from the Ministry of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety. The contravention is a notice that employment standards or regulations have been broken, and that corrective action must be taken within a set timeline. While contraventions are issued for employers across all industries, this table is specific to the healthcare sector (Saskatchewan Workers' Compensation G22 rate code).

OH&S Contraventions

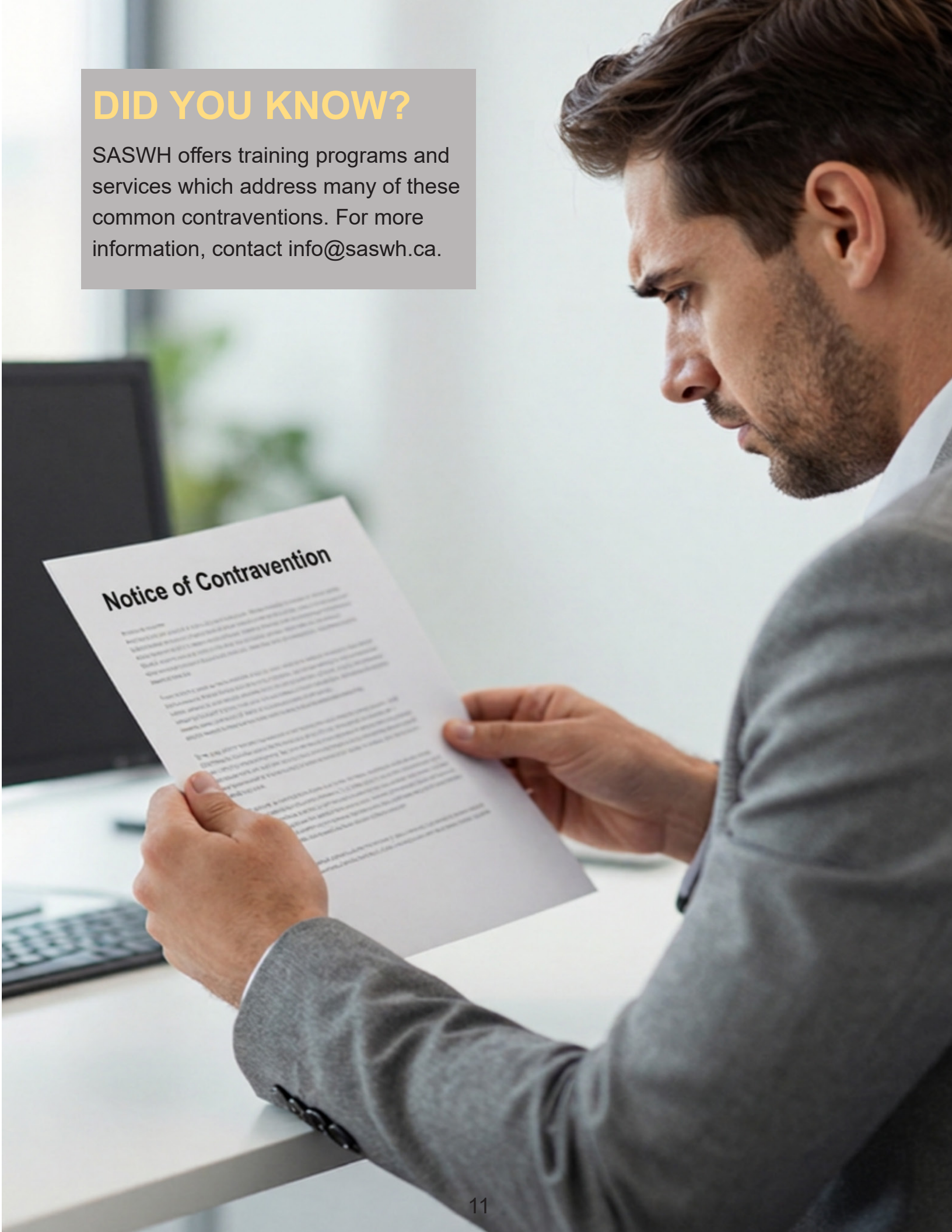
Most Frequent Contraventions for Healthcare (G22) in 2025

REGULATION	CONTRAVENTION DESCRIPTION	#
OHS Reg 4-4	**Frequency of meetings**	28
OHS Reg 31-4	**Patient moving and handling**	28
OHS Reg 3-1	**General duties of employers**	22
OHS Reg 3-8	**Training of workers**	19
OHS Reg 4-9	**Training of representatives, committee members**	16
OHS Reg 3-26	**Violence policy**	12
OHS Reg 22-7	**Workplace label for decanted products**	12
OHS Reg 21-12	**Eye flushing equipment**	11
OHS Reg 4-5	**Minutes**	11
OHS Reg 10-4	**Safeguards**	8
OHS Reg 3-14	**Maintenance and repair of equipment**	8
	Total =	**175**

Source: Ministry of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety

DID YOU KNOW?

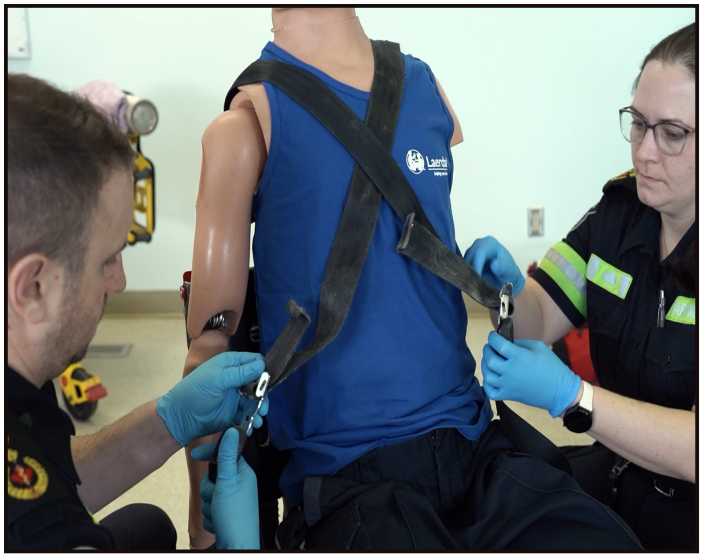
SASWH offers training programs and services which address many of these common contraventions. For more information, contact info@saswh.ca.



NEW EDUCATIONAL VIDEOS FOR TLR® EMS TRAINING

The safe use of equipment handled by emergency medical services workers in the field requires consistent application of established protocols, routine preventative maintenance, and the adoption of standards based on industry best practices. These measures help ensure both worker and patient safety. In addition, applying the principles of safe body mechanics and proper lifting techniques – whether using powered or non-powered equipment – is essential in reducing the risk of injury.

SASWH's **Transferring Lifting Repositioning for Emergency Medical Services (TLR® EMS)** training program is specifically designed for EMS personnel working in uncontrolled environments. The risks that EMS workers face are different than the risks present in traditional patient care settings, such as hospitals and long-term care. The TLR® EMS program addresses these challenges, including:



- Working in uncontrolled environments;
- Ensuring the risk assessment process incorporates not only the patient but self, environment, equipment, object and task;
- The use of equipment unique to EMS; and,
- More frequent use of manual lifting, and reducing the associated risks of injury.

Since TLR® EMS was released in 2020, SASWH has developed a dedicated group of program instructors across both provincial and private EMS organizations that supports over 2,200 EMS workers belonging to 106 ambulance services. The association is grateful for the eager uptake of this program, and continues to work closely with this group to identify and address concerns identified by the EMS community.

ENHANCING SAFETY IN THE FIELD

One of the recently identified needs was for practical EMS equipment use education. Jody Palmer, SASWH Workplace Safety Specialist, responded to this request and collaborated with members of the Saskatchewan Health Authority EMS division to create a series of instructional videos focused on the use of equipment commonly used by EMS workers in the field.

These educational videos demonstrate the safe operation of:

1. Stair chairs
2. Scoop stretchers
3. Rescue seats
4. EMS stretchers

Each video provides clear, step-by-step guidance while reinforcing proper lifting principles from the TLR® EMS program, helping paramedics apply safe patient handling techniques in their work environment. These videos are available to TLR® EMS instructors and trainers for use in their training sessions.

SASWH would like to thank Jody Palmer, Noel Dunn, Dana West, and the paramedics who generously volunteered their time and expertise to participate in these videos. This collaboration reflects the association's ongoing commitment to strengthen workplace health and safety across all healthcare sectors in Saskatchewan.

LADDER SAFETY AND FALL PREVENTION ONLINE EDUCATION

Under Saskatchewan's occupational health and safety legislation, employers are required to ensure that workers who perform at heights receive appropriate education and training to safely carry out these tasks.

SASWH is pleased to announce the release of two new self-guided online courses, which are available to G22 members at no cost. This education is suitable for workers at every level within an organization. A certificate of completion is issued at the end of each course.

LADDER SAFETY LEARNING OBJECTIVES

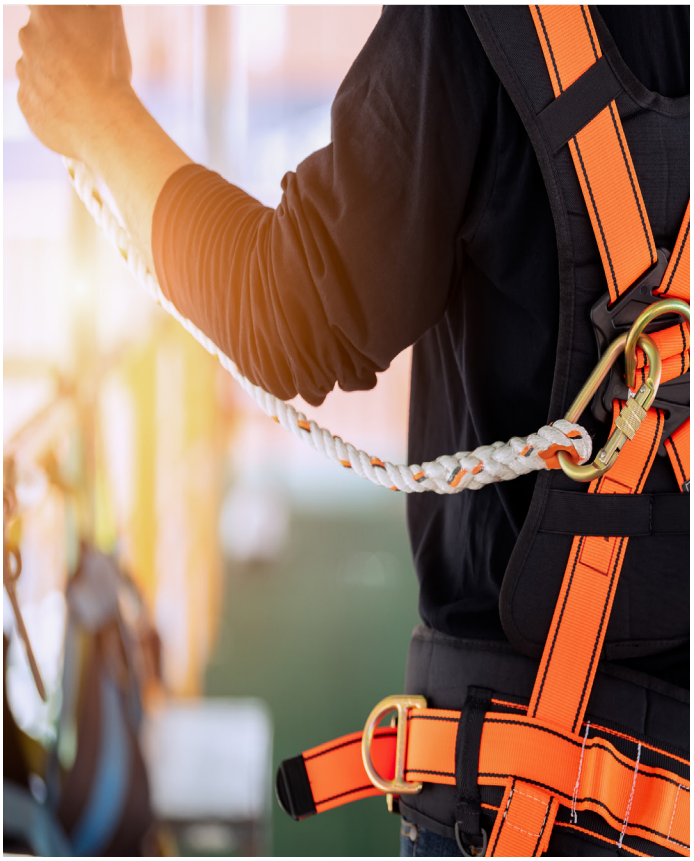
- Describe and apply fall protection legislation in the workplace.
- Recognize common hazards and risk factors and appropriate controls.
- Understand ladder types, basic limitations, and manufacturer requirements.
- Conduct environmental risk assessments and inspections to determine if it is safe to proceed with the task.
- Apply safe climbing and working principles, including maintaining stability and three-point contact.

To complete either educational course, visit https://ecampus.saswh.ca/ and either log in using existing credentials or by creating a new account. Once in eCampus, members can access Ladder Safety and Fall Protection and Prevention. eCampus support is available at learning@saswh.ca.

PLEASE NOTE: These online modules are education only, and do not replace the training required under Saskatchewan's occupational health and safety legislation. In addition to this education, employers are required to designate supervisors at their workplace who offer workers on-site training including individual evaluation in the safe use and inspection of equipment, hazard recognition, and who are responsible to witness safe work practices.

FALL PROTECTION AND PREVENTION LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Describe and apply fall protection legislation in the workplace.
- Understand the purpose and application of a fall protection program.
- Identify fall hazards at the worksite and appropriate controls.
- Select appropriate equipment for the intended use.
- Develop an emergency response and rescue plan.
- Properly inspect, fit, and connect fall protection systems.



GUEST ARTICLE

BEYOND FALL PREVENTION:

WHY HEALTHCARE ORGANIZATIONS NEED A FALLS MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

By: Amber Slay, RN, BSN, MBA

Amber Slay, RN, BSN, MBA, is Clinical Director of the Savaria Clinical Academy for North America. She works with hospitals, long-term care organizations, and healthcare systems across the United States and Canada to advance safe patient handling, mobility, and pressure injury prevention through clinical education and program development.

In my role as a clinical director working with healthcare organizations across North America, I spend a great deal of time talking with frontline clinicians about safety. Whether I'm visiting hospitals, long-term care homes, or community care environments, one topic comes up almost everywhere I go: falls.

Research shows that while safety initiatives have improved many areas of hospital safety, progress in reducing falls has been relatively modest. In Canada, falls remain the **leading cause of injury among older adults**, with approximately **20–30% of seniors experiencing a fall each year** (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2014). Falls also account for **85% of injury-related hospitalizations among older adults** and the majority of hip fractures in this population (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2014).

This reflects a reality many clinicians recognize in practice: prevention strategies can reduce risk, but they cannot eliminate falls entirely, particularly in populations experiencing frailty, mobility limitations, cognitive impairment, or complex medical conditions.

For this reason, I often encourage healthcare organizations to expand their thinking beyond fall prevention alone and focus on building a **comprehensive falls management strategy.**

FALLS ARE ALSO A CAREGIVER ISSUE

When a patient falls, the immediate priority is assessing the individual for injury and ensuring their safety. But what happens next often introduces another significant risk: musculoskeletal injury (MSI) among caregivers.

Healthcare workers experience some of the highest rates of musculoskeletal injuries across all professions, and patient handling tasks are a leading contributor. According to the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety, patient handling activities expose healthcare workers to strain injuries caused by repetitive lifting, awkward postures, and high-force exertion (Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety, 2025).

In many facilities, staff still attempt to manually lift patients using a sheet, gait belt, or multiple caregivers. While well-intentioned, these approaches can expose staff to substantial injury risk.

From an MSI prevention perspective, fall recovery should not be an improvised event. It should be a **planned component of safe patient handling and mobility programs.**

BUILDING A FALLS MANAGEMENT PORTFOLIO

One concept I frequently discuss with healthcare teams is the idea of a **falls management portfolio.** Every fall scenario is different. Some patients may be alert and able to assist with transfers. Others may be weak, injured, fearful, or unable to participate. Environmental factors also influence how a patient can be safely assisted.

Because of this variability, no single solution will work in every situation.

Organizations that are well prepared typically have access to a range of safe patient handling and mobility technologies, such as:

- ceiling lift systems
- mobile floor lifts
- sit-to-stand devices
- dedicated floor recovery systems

These technologies are designed to reduce the need for manual lifting and minimize the physical forces placed on caregivers during patient handling tasks.

RAIZER II

Raizer II Lifting Chair: Innovative Fall Management Solution for Healthcare Professionals

One technology that is gaining attention in fall recovery is the Raizer II.

Raizer II is a portable device designed to assist a person safely from the floor to an upright seated position following a fall. The device is assembled around the individual while they remain on the floor, and the system gradually lifts the person into a seated position in a controlled manner.

From a caregiver safety perspective, this approach can significantly reduce the physical strain associated with manual lifting. Traditional recovery often requires multiple staff members attempting to lift or reposition a patient. With a device like Raizer II, the lifting process is mechanical rather than physical, helping reduce the forces placed on caregivers, and raising the patient from the floor to a stable seated position in just a few minutes with minimal physical effort.

CLINICAL ASSESSMENT REMAINS ESSENTIAL

As with any clinical intervention, the use of a fall recovery device requires appropriate **clinical assessment and judgment.**

Before assisting a patient from the floor, caregivers should evaluate the individual for potential injuries. If a patient has suspected fractures, spinal injuries, severe pain, or other medical concerns, the appropriate response may involve additional medical evaluation or emergency services rather than immediate lifting.

When clinical assessment indicates that it is safe to assist the individual from the floor, devices designed for fall recovery can provide a safer alternative to manual lifting.

Clear protocols, training, and appropriate use guidelines are essential to ensure that these tools are used safely and effectively.

MOBILITY AS A PREVENTION STRATEGY

Another important observation from my work with healthcare systems is that **mobility itself should be viewed as a fall prevention strategy.**

Patients who remain inactive for extended periods often experience rapid declines in strength and balance. Even short periods of bed rest can contribute to muscle loss and functional decline. Research shows patients can lose **1–3% of muscle strength per day of bed rest** (Kortebein, 2009).

As strength declines, fall risk increases, and patients become less able to assist with transfers, increasing the physical demands placed on caregivers.

Safe patient handling and mobility programs that encourage early and progressive mobility can help maintain strength, improve balance, and allow patients to participate more actively in their own movement.

In this way, mobility supports both **fall prevention and caregiver injury prevention.**

KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR HEALTHCARE ORGANIZATIONS

Organizations that successfully reduce **both falls and caregiver injuries** often focus on several key principles:

- Recognize that **fall prevention alone is not enough.**
- Develop **structured fall response protocols** so staff are not forced to improvise.
- Invest in **safe patient handling technologies** that reduce manual lifting.
- Include **floor recovery devices** as part of a falls management portfolio.
- Support **patient mobility programs** that maintain strength and independence.

DESIGNING SAFER SYSTEMS

Across Canada, healthcare organizations are caring for an aging population with increasing mobility challenges. In this environment, preventing every fall may not always be possible.

What is possible is designing systems that help teams respond safely when falls occur.

When healthcare organizations combine fall prevention, mobility, safe patient handling, and appropriate recovery technologies, they create safer environments for both patients and caregivers.

Falls may remain a reality in healthcare environments. But preventable caregiver injuries should not be.

Equipping teams with the right tools and training allows them to respond safely, protect their own health, and support patients with dignity when they need help getting back up.

Handicare is a part of Savaria Corporation.
For product inquiries, contact:
Steven Perron, Account Manager for Saskatchewan
steven.perron@handicare.com

SLIDER SHEETS:

A SAFER APPROACH TO PATIENT REPOSITIONING

By: Haley Smith, SASWH Workplace Safety Specialist

Musculoskeletal injuries (MSIs) remain one of the most common workplace injuries in the healthcare sector. Among healthcare workers, repositioning patients in bed during the delivery of care is associated with the highest rate of shoulder and back injuries, highlighting the importance of safe patient-handling practices.

The Occupational Health and Safety Regulations, 2020, defines a musculoskeletal injury as:

"an injury or disorder of the muscles, tendons, ligaments, nerves, joints, bones or supporting vasculature that may be caused or aggravated by any of the following:

a. Repetitive motions;

b. Forceful exertions;

c. Vibration;

d. Mechanical compression;

e. Sustained or awkward postures;

f. Limitations on motion or action;

g. Other ergonomic stressors."

The use of repositioning sheets is considered best practice across the province.

Is it a best practice in your facility?

For additional information, please contact info@saswh.ca.

The regulations also outline the employer's responsibilities surrounding the need for site policies and procedures, the communication of risks to the worker associated with completing the task, the provision of effective equipment and training to reduce these identified risks, and the appropriate use of available equipment.

When elimination of risks related to a work task is impossible, efforts for reduction are key and begin with effective risk reduction strategies. SASWH's Transferring Lifting Repositioning (TLR®) program provides healthcare workers with user friendly techniques to ensure safe body mechanics to reduce the risk of MSIs. Patient handling involves multiple variables, and successful injury prevention depends on a combination of proper body mechanics, thorough risk assessment, effective communication, and the appropriate use of available equipment. Ensuring adequate staffing levels is also critical in reducing MSIs: the TLR® program recommends a minimum of two workers when repositioning a patient.

One essential piece of equipment that significantly improves safety during patient handling is the repositioning sheet; or "slider sheet". These devices are designed to reduce the physical effort required to reposition patients in bed, and this decreased friction reduces the risk of injury to the healthcare worker while also improving patient comfort during the moving task.

Repositioning sheets come in a couple of different designs. The first option is two cotton rectangular sheets with a slippery backing that can be placed slippery side to slippery side and positioned underneath a patient in bed between the shoulder and hips. The second option is a repositioning sheet that is a fitted bed sheet with a slippery strip down the centre of the sheet, and one rectangular sheet placed under the patient (slippery side to slippery side with the fitted sheet), positioned between the patient's shoulder and hips. This use of repositioning sheets, along with proper body mechanics and adequate staff needed for the task, can drastically reduce the occurrence of MSIs related to patient repositioning.

Reference: *The Occupational Health and Safety Regulations, 2020, s. 6-18*

UPCOMING EVENTS!

Canadian Injury Prevention Day

July 6, 2026

International Conference on Medicine and Infectious Diseases

September 19-20, 2026 in Montreal, QC

World Patient Safety Day

September 17, 2026

Canadian Nurses Association Conference 2026

September 21-23, 2026 in Winnipeg, MB

PACE 2026 (Paramedics Across Canada Expo)

September 16-19, 2026 in Victoria, BC

SASWH's Programs and Services Guide is now available!

Click the photo below to view the flipbook version.

QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS?

WE'D LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU!!

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SASWH Connects - Issue 7
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