



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / www.healthyworkplacemonth.ca

Healthy Mind, Healthy Body, Healthy Work: Feeling Great about Life!

The Ninth Annual *Canada's Healthy Workplace Month*[®] (*CHWM*) is a four week long celebration designed to introduce workplace health to organizations and support those that are already promoting healthy workplaces.

CHWM is presented by Great-West Life and managed by the National Quality Institute in collaboration with the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety.

The theme for October 2009 is: **Healthy Mind, Healthy Body, Healthy Work: Feeling Great about Life!** Each week, organizations will be challenged to participate in activities based on the weekly themes. The weekly challenge themes are:

- Week 1 - Feeling Great at Work
- Week 2 - Feeling Great with Family and Friends
- Week 3 - Feeling Great at Play
- Week 4 - Feeling Great about Giving Back

CHWM will announce winners for each week, so organizations are encouraged to step up and take the challenge. This year, as part of the activities, *CHWM* will be distributing 20,000 pedometers that have been generously donated by **ParticipACTION**. Watch for activities in the following cities where thousands of pedometers will be given out for free: St. Johns, Halifax, Moncton, Saint John, Fredericton, Ottawa, Toronto, Barrie, Winnipeg, Edmonton, Dawson Creek, Kelowna, Kamloops, Prince George and Behchoko.

Organizations can register at www.healthyworkplacemonth.ca to participate in some or all of the challenges.

Why a Healthy Workplace is Important

Studies show that healthcare costs are increasing at twice the rate of inflation. In Canada, more than 50,000 strokes and 75,000 heart attacks occur every year. Eight percent of workers are taking medication to treat depression and other mental-health conditions. Mental illness costs the Canadian economy over \$50 billion each year. What are companies doing about this?

It's safe to say that many employees feel undervalued and stressed both at home and at work. At the National Quality Institute (NQI), we know that happy, healthy employees are more likely to treat their customers well. They are also more likely to stay with their employers, and a healthy workplace environment improves their health and well-being.

Canada's Healthy Workplace Month[®] is about celebrating employees, their successes, and their accomplishments! During October, every employer is encouraged to take extra time to recognize their employees and show them how vital they are to the success of their organization.

"We hope that employers and employees will take advantage of the challenges and activities each week of the month," says Allan Ebedes, President and CEO at NQI. "Experiencing the joy and sense of well-being from this celebration will hopefully encourage workplaces to initiate and sustain a healthy workplace strategy that incorporates NQI's three critical elements: healthy lifestyle practices, occupational health and safety and the physical environment, and a culture of fairness and respect."

About *Canada's Healthy Workplace Month (CHWM)*, October 5 – November 1:

The Month promotes fostering a workplace culture of trust and respect where people are happy and healthy at work. In a healthy workplace, people look forward to going to work.

CHWM is partially funded by the following sponsoring organizations:

Presenter: Great-West Life, London Life, and Canada Life

Champions of Excellence: Sun Life Financial and The Power Within

Benefactors: Manulife Financial, Ricoh Canada, and ParticipACTION

Advocate: Prince George (Life in Perfect Balance)

Supporters: Hewitt Associates, Region of Peel, Canadian Management Centre (CMC),

Industry: GlaxoSmithKline, ABBOTT, and Ontario Chiropractic Association

Media Sponsor: Your Workplace Magazine

"As presenting sponsor, we are pleased to support this initiative, helping to further raise awareness of the importance and benefits of workplace wellness for organizations and individuals alike. As a leading provider of life and health insurance and as caring members of the communities we serve, Great-West Life takes special interest in supporting innovative programs that address the health and wellness concerns of Canadians." – *Jan Belanger, Assistant Vice-President, Community Affairs for Great-West Life, London Life and Canada Life*

The website for *Canada's Healthy Workplace Month*[®] (www.healthyworkplacemonth.ca) provides short-term practical tools and ideas for organizations to help them participate. As well, it provides case studies and long-term strategies for organizations to adopt as part of a comprehensive and integrated approach to organizational health.

The **goals** for *Canada's Healthy Workplace Month*[®] are to:

- Increase awareness of comprehensive workplace health in Canada
- Build awareness of workplace health research and how its outcomes apply to business productivity
- Generate awareness and use of the *Healthy Workplace*[®] tools and resources, available through www.healthyworkplacemonth.ca to all Canadian organizations
- Increase the number of healthy workplaces in Canada

We hope your organization will join in the 9th Annual *Canada's Healthy Workplace Month*[®] celebration. For ideas, activities, and strategies for the Month and beyond, visit www.healthyworkplacemonth.ca. Let's value our people so our people will value their workplace!

For more information, please contact:

Kathryn Cestnick
Vice-President & COO
National Quality Institute
1-800-263-9648 ext 240, kathryn@nqi.ca
416-220-0135 Cell
Assistant: Bonita Savard ext 233, bonita@nqi.ca

Pour plus d'information, s.v.p. contactez:

Bonita Savard
Adjointe
Institut national de la qualité
1-800-263-9648 poste 233, bonita@nqi.ca