

EXPAND WORKSAFE COVERAGE

HEALTH CARE AND COMMUNITY SOCIAL SERVICE WORKERS ARE OFTEN ON THE FRONT LINES OF HIGH-STRESS, TRAUMATIC EVENTS AND VIOLENCE



PRESUMPTIVE COVERAGE MEANS THAT WHEN A MENTAL HEALTH INJURY HAPPENS AS A RESULT OF WORK, THE WORKER IS ABLE TO GET WORKERS' COMPENSATION WITHOUT BEING FORCED TO PROVE THAT WORK WAS THE CAUSE. PRESUMPTIVE COVERAGE IS ALREADY IN PLACE FOR SELECT PROFESSIONS, INCLUDING EMERGENCY DISPATCHERS, NURSES, AND HEALTH CARE AIDS.

HSA IS ASKING THE BC GOVERNMENT TO EXPAND PRESUMPTIVE COVERAGE TO ALL HEALTH CARE AND COMMUNITY SOCIAL SERVICE WORKERS FOR MENTAL HEALTH DISORDER CLAIMS.

“ Driving into work in the morning, I never know what my day is going to be like. I take time during the drive to prepare myself for what may come. As a respiratory therapist my average work day includes being a part of the worst day of someone's life. Maybe today I am initiating life support on a person who may never again live without that machine or I am securing the airway and breathing of a premature baby who may or may not survive being born too early.

For the most part, it is a tremendous honour to be a trusted care provider in such dire circumstances, but there are times when the armour wears thin and the case of the day hits a little too close to home. I go into work every day expecting psychological adversity and trying to provide the best care I can. When I leave my shift at the end of a hard day and head home, I try to leave it all at work, but I know that I haven't. And I know that even if I think it's not, it is still a part of me.

I make sure that I treat my mental health as something that needs maintenance and with that I feel pretty good about where I'm at in my life. On the whole, my experience has been more good than bad, and I would not trade my career or life for any other. I also know that not everyone is so lucky.

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TREVOR WHYTE, RESPIRATORY THERAPIST, PEACE ARCH HOSPITAL