

## **Report from the Research and Policy Knowledge Exchange Forum on Immigration, Work and Health in British Columbia**

**Held on: February 12, 2009, 8:30-4:30**

**Location: Simon Fraser University at Harbour Centre, Downtown Vancouver**

### **Overview: Purpose of the forum**

Immigrant workers are very important to the Canadian labour force, and represent the majority of future labour force growth in Canada. Yet there is some indication that the experiences of these workers can be problematic. Immigrant workers are more likely to work in poor-quality, low-paying jobs. Workers with low job security, poor English language skills and limited familiarity with Canadian social programs (such as our health care or workers' compensation system) may face particular challenges when injured at work. They may not report injuries if they have poor knowledge of their rights or fear losing their job. These workers may also have trouble accessing and navigating the compensation and health care systems after an injury. While immigrant workers may face these challenges, these issues are often magnified for temporary foreign workers (TFW). TFWs may grapple with the above mentioned barriers, as well as with work permits that tie them to specific employers, difficulty accessing health care and a lack of knowledge about their rights and responsibilities in Canadian workplaces.

A team of researchers, led by Dr. Agnieszka Kosny from the Institute for Work & Health in Toronto, has been exploring immigrant workers' experiences after a work-related injury in Ontario. In order to begin examining similar issues in British Columbia, a research and policy knowledge exchange forum was planned. We aimed to convene a group of interested individuals and organizations working around the intersection of immigration/migration and occupational health, safety and rights. The goal for the day was to gather stakeholders from diverse backgrounds and disciplines who were interested in sharing their understanding of immigrants' labour market experiences and health outcomes.

We were able to bring together individuals from the following broad backgrounds:

- Researchers and academics affiliated with post-secondary institutions, independent researchers and researchers working for community-based service organizations and research institutions.
- Community Service and Settlement Service organization employees interested in a range of issues around the health, safety and rights of immigrant and migrant workers

- Government and Policy representatives, including those working for the Province of British Columbia, WorkSafe BC, the Office of the Worker Advisor and the Office of the Employer Advisor
- Trade Unions and Trade Council members who represent the construction industry, the longshoreman, health care workers, hospital employees and the BC federation of labour
- Legal representatives who work with injured workers and with employers

We were also concerned with representing British Columbia's geographic diversity. Thanks to our funders (the Canadian Institute for Health Research and WorkSafeBC), we were able to support travel costs for individuals from across the province. We were thrilled to be able to welcome participants to the forum based in seven cities in British Columbia<sup>1</sup>, as well as three cities in Ontario.

The one-day event was put on with no cost to participants, and was structured as a series of short presentations in the morning, followed by facilitated discussion in the afternoon leading to the prioritization of research, policy and advocacy goals.

We believe that the information exchanged at the forum, combined with the opportunity for interested participants to network during the forum will ultimately strengthen the development of research, policy and advocacy around work-related disability prevention and immigration/migration.

---

<sup>1</sup> Geographic diversity was facilitated through the participation of individuals or organizations from the following cities. In British Columbia: Greater Vancouver; Victoria; Prince George; Penticton; Kamloops; Nanaimo and White Rock. In Ontario: Greater Toronto, Guelph and Hamilton

## **Overview: Speaker Presentations:**

The morning session of the forum featured seven presentations from a range of speakers. Where permission was given, copies of the presentation are available on our study website at [www.iwh.on.ca/immigrant-workers-forum-2009](http://www.iwh.on.ca/immigrant-workers-forum-2009).

A brief recap of each presentation follows below:

- **Agnieszka Kosny**, from the Institute for Work & Health in Toronto provided an introduction to the day as well as a brief overview of an ongoing study examining the experiences of new immigrants to Canada after a work-related injury or illness. The aim of this study is to gain an understanding of new immigrants' experiences after a work-related injury, as well as to examine the context and processes that drive work-related injury trajectories. The study explores injured immigrant workers' (IIW) knowledge of their rights at work; factors that facilitate or impede the filing of compensation claim by IIWs; the experiences that IIWs have with the workers compensation system, with employers and with health care providers at the time of injury and afterwards; and the effects that the injury has on the worker, their family, finances and future in Canada.

At the time of the forum, the research team had completed 14 in-depth qualitative interviews with a variety of Service Providers (SPs), and 13 interviews with IIWs. She presented some of the preliminary findings:

- IIWs interviewed expressed a lack of knowledge about standard workplace rules, rights and safety information
- IIWs experienced difficulty with the nuances of language and Canadian occupational health and safety contexts, for example the difference between "being sick" and "being sick from work"
- IIWs explained that the Canadian process of "reporting" an injury could be quite new to them, and had difficulty with record keeping and writing down the events surrounding their injury
- IIWs were at times unfamiliar with Canadian social programs and services such as employment insurance, disability benefits and the workers' compensation system.
- IIWs expressed reluctance to report their injury or to fight for their rights because of a desire to not "rock the boat", risk losing their jobs and jeopardizing their financial security at a time when they were settling in Canada.

Please see: <http://www.iwh.on.ca/researchers/agnieszka-kosny> for more about Dr. Kosny's work. Dr. Kosny's presentation is available at: [www.iwh.on.ca/immigrant-workers-forum-2009](http://www.iwh.on.ca/immigrant-workers-forum-2009)

- **Peter Smith**, from the Institute for Work & Health, presented a study titled "An examination of the working conditions and risk factors for work-related injuries among immigrant workers in

Canada". The study utilized various Statistics Canada databases examining immigrant labour market experiences and injuries between 1993-2005.

The main research questions that this study sought to explore were about the labour market experiences of immigrants to Canada, specifically those related to occupational health and safety risks, and whether immigrants were more likely to sustain work-related injuries.

This research found that there is an unequal distribution of occupational health and safety risks among immigrants to Canada compared to Canadian-born labour market participants. Some of the key conclusions of the study were:

- Recent immigrants (up to 10 years in Canada) were more likely to work in physically demanding occupations and small workplaces. Those in Canada less than five years also were more likely to be in temporary jobs. Physically demanding occupations, small workplaces and temporary work are all associated with an increased occupational health and safety risk.
- Immigrants who had been in Canada up to 20 years were less likely than Canadian-born residents to be members of a union.
- Visible minority status and not having a degree from Canada was associated with working in physically demanding occupations and regular shift work. Physically demanding work and regular shift work are both associated with an increased OHS risk
- The risk of serious work-related injury is twice as high for recently landed immigrant men, as compared to Canadian-born men (although the true risk may be higher, due to under-reporting). Examining the risk of injury among women was hampered by smaller numbers of injuries and lower labour force participation among female immigrant groups.

The study authors made some key policy recommendations, including:

- Resources need to be targeted at accurately estimating the number of work injuries that require health care among immigrants, compared to the Canadian-born population.
- Given the number of occupational health and safety risks that immigrants are exposed to, resources need to be devoted to the developing and translating tool(s) that will increase the knowledge of immigrants about their workplace rights, occupational health & safety, and workers' compensation – ideally before immigrants start work.

An interview with Peter Smith discussing his findings can be found here:

<http://www.canadianimmigrant.ca/careers/workplaceissues/article/1447>

Dr. Smith's presentation is available at: [www.iwh.on.ca/immigrant-workers-forum-2009](http://www.iwh.on.ca/immigrant-workers-forum-2009)

- **Janet McLaughlin** is completing her PhD in Medical Anthropology at the University of Toronto, and currently teaches in Sociology, Anthropology and International Development Studies at the University of Guelph. She presented her research with migrant farm workers in Ontario, focusing on health, healthcare and compensation after a work-related injury. This study

explores some of the ways that structural vulnerability is built into the Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program (SAWP), through, for example, the inability of SAWP participants to change employers without permission or to organize into collective bargaining units.

Her research also examines some of the health concerns raised by participants in the SAWP. These concerns include issues related to general health (sleep, nutrition, weight); sexual and reproductive health issues (pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections); mental and emotional health (depression, anxiety and addiction); exposure to the elements (heat, rain and cold); Pesticide exposure; musculo-skeletal injuries; and concerns around unsafe transportation.

The study also explores the nature of health care coverage for SAWP workers in Ontario, and some of the barriers that workers face in accessing health care or compensation. Some of these barriers include:

- Employers' mediation of health care and employers' relationship with health care providers
- Health card access
- Worker isolation and lack of transportation
- Language and literacy issues
- Fear of reporting injury or illness
- Few rural doctors and occupational health specialists
- Workers' limited understanding of rights/entitlements
- Repatriation of many sick/injured workers (workers sent back home if sick or injured)
- Poor follow-up and lack of regular health care both in Canada and across international borders

The full report can be accessed on our website at [www.iwh.on.ca/immigrant-workers-forum-2009](http://www.iwh.on.ca/immigrant-workers-forum-2009).

You can read more about Ms. McLaughlin's work here:

<http://www.focal.ca/publications/focalpoint/fp1208/?lang=e&article=article6>

- **Habiba Zaman** is Associate Professor of Women's Studies at Simon Fraser University. She presented research from her work on the project "Asian Immigrants in BC: What does government restructuring mean for immigrants in the labour market?", conducted in partnership between SFU Women's Studies, Centre for Canadian Policy Alternatives and Philippine Women Centre.

The study used interviews and surveys to explore how changes in the Employment Standards Act (ESA), and in wages, working conditions and job security, affected Filipino immigrants in Vancouver. Study participants relayed that they had not been informed about the ESA or about WorkSafeBC regulations. The study also found that immigrant workers helped each

other to become familiar with the work and oriented each other to possible dangers in the workplace. Nonetheless, some participants described working in jobs or in physical positions (such as repetitive tasks in a greenhouse, or prolonged standing) that led to a “cross cutting body pain”.

Further impact on worker health was apparent through examples of:

- Handling dangerous machinery without training, and performing physical job tasks without training
- Inhaling chemical fumes and working without masks or other protection
- Enduring cold outdoor temperatures without shelter
- Working with workplace hazards without WHIMIS training or information
- Workers’ describing their jobs as “stressful, hazardous and monotonous”

In response to these hazards, participants often employed job-hopping as a coping mechanism, quitting their jobs rather than demanding their rights or complaining about workplace violations. However, job-hopping did not seem to improve their workplace conditions. Participants who did quit frequently found new jobs of a similar kind, with similar hazards.

The full report on the project is titled: “Workplace Rights for Immigrants in BC: The Case of Filipino Workers” and is available at: [www.policyalternatives.ca](http://www.policyalternatives.ca)

- **Terry Bogyo**, is the Director of Corporate Planning and Development at WorkSafeBC’s. He presented on WorkSafeBC’s policy, legislation and responses to OHS and newcomer workers.

WorkSafe BC has addressed some of the needs of ‘newcomer’ workers through their multilingual web presence, a language line service, and a focus on young workers. In BC, ‘newcomer’ workers, both those with legal status and without, have the same rights and legal access to workers’ compensation. Mr. Bogyo’s presentation focused primarily on temporary foreign workers in BC. The numbers of temporary foreign workers (TFW) in Canada have more than doubled during the years 1997-2006, and the number of TFWs is increasing in both BC and in Canada.

Research from the United States indicates that TFWs have higher injury rates than citizen workers where there are language differences among workers. WorkSafeBC wanted to explore whether TFWs in BC were being injured at different rates than permanent resident/citizen workers, and if so, what might account for that difference.

- The preliminary analysis conducted by WorkSafeBC demonstrated numerous challenges in assessing injury risk among TFWs using data from compensation claims
- The data from WorkSafeBC claims indicate that the injury rates for TFWs are about 1/3 lower than for all workers

- Based on the available data, it seems plausible that there is a substantial under-reporting of work-related injuries among TFWs

Possible causes of this might include:

- Lack of knowledge of rights
- Injured TFW leave the country for treatment
- Injuries are under-reported or otherwise suppressed

In response to these potential issues, WorkSafeBC has been focusing increasing resources on 'vulnerable workers', expanding their work with TFWs and other groups who may face cultural, social and linguistic barriers to compensation access.

Mr. Bogyo's presentation is available on our website at: [www.iwh.on.ca/immigrant-workers-forum-2009](http://www.iwh.on.ca/immigrant-workers-forum-2009)

More information about WorkSafeBC can be found on their website at: <http://www.worksafebc.com/>

- **Charan Gill**, is the founder and CEO of Progressive Intercultural Community Services (PICS). Mr. Gill gave an account of his personal and professional experience with farm work and with the Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program (SAWP).

Mr. Gill related his primary knowledge of immigrant farm worker conditions, having worked picking berries with his family when he first immigrated to Canada. He began trying to get farm workers organized by talking to his friends and co-workers, and reaching out to established unions for assistance. Mr. Gill found that the difficulty of organizing farm workers was exacerbated by the farm labour contracting systems, and the ways in which powerful interests could come to control 'space'. For example, Mr. Gill described how labour contractors came to operate within Sikh temples, which in turn barred organizing efforts from their temples and provided a way for labour contractors to recruit newcomers.

There were additional barriers to organization. These included:

- Cultural issues (for example, that unions may not be strong, transparent or trusted in workers' countries of origin)
- Issues of access to information (such as rumors that if one joins the union they will be deported)
- Concerns over revenue generation for the unions (farm workers often work 'piece-work' jobs, and are low-income earners, begetting the question of how unions will earn revenue from these workers, and resulting in a diminished interest from the unions)
- Struggles around getting recognition for farm workers in the labour code and under the workers compensation act.

Mr. Gill also spoke about the SAWP in BC. PICS has a program focusing specifically on immigrant and migrant agricultural workers and Mr. Gill spoke about the PICS experience serving these workers. He noted that:

- Workers who come to Canada through the SAWP typically have low literacy and low skill levels
- Immigrant/migrant workers tend to have a limited knowledge of their rights
- There are a multiple agencies and levels of government involved in conducting the SAWP, resulting in complexity (and sometimes confusion) communicating and SAWP oversight.
- There is little occupational health and safety outreach in the program
- There is a lack of both inspection and enforcement in the SAWP
- There are also structural barriers to the SAWP that may make it difficult for workers to invoke their rights. For example, SAWP work permits are usually tied to a single employer, making it difficult for workers to change jobs if their working conditions are poor
- There have been instances where workers have been fired or repatriated after trying to organize.

Further information about PICS services can be found at <http://www.pics.bc.ca/>

- **Mark Thompson** has a Ph.D. in Industrial Relations Labour Law from Cornell University. He is Professor Emeritus of Industrial Relations at the Sauder School of Business, University of British Columbia, He has taught at McMaster University and the University of British Columbia from 1971 to 2002, and has been a faculty member or visiting scholar at universities in the US, UK, Mexico and Australia.

Dr. Thompson spoke about enforcement issues with the Temporary Foreign Worker Program.

- Despite formal protections for migrant workers in Canada none of our legislative frameworks adequately protect foreign workers admitted under TFWP. In essence, these failures are the most controversial elements of the Canadian TFWP.
- Canadian employment standards laws are primarily complaint-driven. Enforcement of the law depends on the willingness of a worker to approach the enforcement agency and allege that the employer has not provided the minimum conditions prescribed in the statute.
- The most obvious problem with the application of this legislation is worker knowledge of their rights. There is limited access to documents in languages other than English or French. In British Columbia, “fact sheets” setting out basic information on the law are available in Spanish, French, Punjabi and Chinese. No information is available in other European or Asian languages.
- The administrative capacity of enforcement agencies to deal with complaints in languages which are not spoken widely in immigrant communities is almost non-existent. Even where fact sheets exist, they are, by definition, written, and many migrant workers in less skilled jobs are not fully literate in their native languages. No well-developed mechanism



for distributing information to migrant workers explaining their rights and the procedures for enforcing their rights exist.

- In some locales, advocacy groups work to assist TFWs to obtain their rights or deal with government agencies. None of these organizations receive government funding, and they are generally not included by governments and labour importers as possible participants in an integrated enforcement systems.
- The federal government has no systematic program for notifying provincial employment standards agencies of the location, occupations and nationalities of TFWs. Thus, even the provincial agencies who are the most enthusiastic about enforcing employment standards are severely handicapped in their efforts to tailor their activities to the needs of TFWs

Dr. Thompson is co-author of the recent CCPA report “Cultivating Farmworkers Rights: Ending the Exploitation of Immigrant and Migrant Farmworkers in BC”, available here:

[http://www.policyalternatives.ca/documents/BC\\_Office\\_Pubs/bc\\_2008/bc\\_farmworkers\\_full.pdf](http://www.policyalternatives.ca/documents/BC_Office_Pubs/bc_2008/bc_farmworkers_full.pdf).

A report by Dr. Thompson on Migrant workers in Canada is available on our website:

[www.iwh.on.ca/immigrant-workers-forum-2009](http://www.iwh.on.ca/immigrant-workers-forum-2009)

## **Discussion Group Notes**

### **Emerging Themes**

For the second part of the forum, participants took part in facilitated small group discussions on some key issues concerning the occupational health and safety of immigrant workers. Participants were asked to self-select into focus groups that best described their backgrounds or current work. These groups included:

- Service providers, community organizations, settlement workers
- Government and Policy workers
- Academics or researchers
- Legal workers, Union, Association or Trade Council workers

The discussion was structured around a series questions:

- What do we already know (where have we done enough research)? Based on the presentations today what do you identify as the key issues affecting the working lives and health of immigrant workers and temporary foreign workers in BC? In Ontario? In Canada?
- Where can we act? How do we apply the research we have? Are there gaps in services, policy and practice that have been identified and need to be addressed? What are these gaps? How can they be addressed? What role can be played by researchers? Policy makers and government? Service providers? Prevention bodies and Unions?
- Are there services, policies and practices that are working well? Which ones?
- What do we still need to know? Where do research gaps exist? What are the most pressing research questions?
- Who should act? Who is best situated to address these research questions? What methods should be used? Who should participate? What are the barriers that you face around participating in research? How can these barriers be overcome?

A number of themes emerged during the discussion. These themes are best described as:

- Structural (concerned with or affected by politics or the economy)
- Legislative (concerned primarily for the legislative or law-making branches of government)
- Linguistic (issues of language barriers or language comprehension)
- Geographic
- Educational/Informational (concerned with access to knowledge or information, or the appropriateness of information and how it is delivered)
- Worker Concerns
- Employer Concerns

1. Knowledge, Service and Policy: What do we know, what don't we know about immigrant and migrant worker OHS concerns?

- One theme emerging clearly from the discussion was that both employers and employees require greater awareness of their rights and responsibilities (**Worker & Employer Concern, Information/Education**).
- Following from the above point, it seems that even though a legal framework for workers to invoke their rights exists, workers are often not able to do so. The necessary tools are not reaching workers, and enforcement is often lacking in workplaces (**Worker Concern, Structural, Legislative**)
- We know that language barriers hinder worker reporting of injury (to both employers and compensation boards), as does fear and economic insecurity (**Worker, Linguistic, Structural**)
- There is a lack of linguistically appropriate, easily accessible information and support services for new immigrant and migrant workers (**Structural, Education/Information, Linguistic Issues**)
- Further research is required to determine the scope of the problem facing immigrant and migrant workers in Canada. We don't know what percentage of immigrant and migrant workers are reluctant or unable to report OHS risks. We don't know what percentage of workers are unaware of their rights at work (**Structural, Legislative, Linguistic, Educational/Information**)
- Available data on injury to immigrant and migrant workers is not always accurate or usable. Statistics can only capture what is reported and we have seen that workers do not always report their injuries. As such, there may be discrepancies between official data and 'on-the-ground' reality (**Linguistic, Information, Legislative, Structural**)
- Workers in general, but especially immigrants and migrant workers often are not informed about OHS or about the compensation system until after they experience an injury. Workers need to receive this information in a timely manner, and cannot always depend on employers to provide this information (**Worker and Employer Concern, Education/Information, Legislative**)

2. Occupational Health and Safety Programs: How do we design and build better OHS programs, now and in the future?

- There is a lack of funding for programs that serve the needs of TFW, and a concomitant lack of services available to these workers (**Structural**)

- Resources are scarce and many organizations face barriers to participating in research. For example, the resource commitment (both time and money) required by a community organization to partner equally with academics or government in research can be unfeasible and community organizations are often not appropriately compensated for their contributions to research (**Structural**)
- There may be too much emphasis placed on front-line workers in social service and settlement organizations. How can governments connect directly with workers and employers? (**Structural**)
- Workers Compensation is a highly complex, evolving system and many immigrant serving organizations do not have the resources (both financial and human) to administer programs that target compensation issues (**Structural, Education/Information**).
- There is a lack of coordination among different groups of policy makers (e.g. immigration, employment standards, compensation etc). This makes it difficult to enact changes or work with researchers or service providers (**Structural, Legislative**)
- There can be a lack of alignment and communication about the goals and programming of different federal and provincial agencies (e.g. CIC, HRSDC, etc.) (**Structural, Legislative**)
- There can be geographic barriers to coordinating action or services. For example, it can be difficult to access and talk to employers and workers who are located in remote areas. There is also a concern that there may be a geographic bias as to who is consulted during the process of policy development (**Geographic, Information**)

### 3. Areas for future research around OHS and immigrant/migrant workers

- What are the best practices in services and programs for new immigrant and migrant workers across jurisdictions? (**Structural, Legislative**)
- What is the situation for undocumented workers who get injured on the job? Do they have access to benefits? What happens to these workers? (**Legislative**)
- Are translation services effective? What is the quality of linguistic services in social service organizations and at the compensation board? What are users' experiences with these services? (**Linguistic**)

- What is the role of temporary work agencies in the labour market experiences of new immigrants? What are the OHS implications for workers in temporary work agencies? (**Structural, Legislative**)
- How much variation is there in the experiences of TFWs? Are some temporary workers more vulnerable than others? What impact do different types of contracts, different sorts of industries have on worker vulnerability and safety? (**Structural**)
- How do labour shortages and labour market structure contribute to the ‘need’ for TFWs? What alternatives are there to the TFW programs? Should workers be allowed to immigrate permanently to Canada? How does the immigration ‘points system’ meet (or not meet) Canadian labour market needs? (**Structural**)
- Other than labour recruitment, what is the role played by various national consulates in the TFW program. Do the governments of labour exporting countries have a sense of responsibility (or a legal obligation) for their citizens working in Canada? (**Structural**)
- How do we determine ‘fair’ compensation to migrant workers?
- How do employment standards bear on labour contracts for TFWs? Are contracts binding when workers sign without complete understanding or appraisal of their rights and responsibilities? Are contracts designed to be accessible, informative and linguistically appropriate? (**Linguistic, Information, Legislative**)

### **Final Thoughts from the Forum and Forum Evaluation**

The research team in Toronto found the forum to be informative and energizing. Our hope now is to continue our Ontario-British Columbia connection with forum participants and other interested parties in BC, with the goal of collaborating on future research around the working health of immigrant and migrant workers in BC.

We have submitted a report on the forum to CIHR, as well as an interim report on the project to WorkSafeBC. Both reports were well received.

Over the coming months, the team from the Institute for Work & Health plans to keep identifying research gaps in our knowledge around policy and services for immigrant and migrant workers in BC. One way we intend to do this is through conducting in-depth one-on-one interviews with a range of service providers in BC, some of whom were unable to attend the forum. Our goal is to have the broadest possible conception of the OHS concerns facing immigrant/migrant workers in BC today. We also plan to maintain relationships with interested participants who did attend the forum, in order to

developed partnership opportunities between BC stakeholders and the Toronto based team for the submission of future research grant proposals.

Agnieszka Kosny, the principle investigator on this project is currently on maternity leave. Upon her return in 2010, we plan to travel and re-connect in person with participants from the forum who are interested in moving forward with research proposals on particular topics around OHS and immigrant/migrant workers.

If there are issues around immigrant worker health and safety that you are interested in, but have not been highlighted in this report, we invite you to connect with our team. We are invested in collaborating with stakeholders from across the spectrum, and would like to hear your thoughts and ideas.

Thank you all for joining us, we look forward to connecting with you soon.

## Forum Evaluation Results

- We received a total of 25 completed forms. The breakdown of results is as follows:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The Forum was informative and useful				12 (48%)	13 (52%)
The Forum addressed important issues in my work or studies			2 (8%)	12 (48%)	11 (44%)
Based on this Forum, I will make changes or consider new issues in my work, advocacy and/or studies			6 (24%)	14 (56%)	5 (20%)
I plan to contact people I met today to follow-up on ideas we discussed			5 (20%)	15 (60%)	5 (20%)
I plan to collaborate in some way with people I met today			4 (16%)	15 (60%)	6 (24%)
The Forum met or exceeded my expectations			2 (8%)	17 (68%)	6 (24%)
The Forum provided me with opportunities to engage with other parties interested in these issues				8 (32%)	17 (68%)

### Selected Comments:

What was the best part of the forum?

- Connecting with new people who have similar interests; Networking
- Great presentations and sharing of knowledge/discussions
- The cross-section of participants- all were present (policy makers, legal and community workers, union and academic/research)
- Participation in the small group sessions
- Useful comparison between Ontario and BC

The worst part of the forum?

- Being part of a “silo” group to discuss the way forward- being with people whose background is more similar to ones’ own instead of having the benefits of more cross-fertilization in our discussion
- Some people were dominating the questions, not leaving much time others

- The realization of many overwhelming challenges
- Needed tighter facilitation

What changes should we make for future forums?

- Have a discussion group focusing on TFW; Have TFWs attend
- Include employer groups
- Greater cross section of representation from the community, including management organizations, thereby getting a more diverse debate
- Mix up the discussion groups (rather than segregating by sector)- learn from each other, have a more diverse dialogue
- Focus the discussion groups more re: conclusions and actions and reporting back- one main priority for research, one main priority for service providers, one for policy
- Make it a 2-day forum



**Participant List and Contact Information  
Forum on Immigration, Work and Health in BC  
February 12, 2009**

Name	Organization	Contact
Aaron Gill	Employers Advisor Office	<a href="mailto:agill@eao-bc.org">agill@eao-bc.org</a>
Adriana Paz	Justicia for Migrant Workers	<a href="mailto:eutrapelia_delsur@yahoo.ca">eutrapelia_delsur@yahoo.ca</a>
Alexandra Charlton	Settlement Orientation Services/ Inland Refugee Society	acharlton_sos@vrsa.ca
Baljit Sethi	Immigrant & Multicultural Services Society- Prince George	balgit@imss@shawcable.com, imss.pg@shawcable.com
Barbara West	Association of Service Providers for Employability and Career Training (ASPECT)	<a href="mailto:bwest@aspect.bc.ca">bwest@aspect.bc.ca</a>
Bob March	Construction & Specialized Workers' Union, Local 1611	<a href="mailto:info@cswu1611.org">info@cswu1611.org</a>
Brenda Martin	Immigrant & Multicultural Services Society- Prince George	<a href="mailto:brenda@imss.ca">brenda@imss.ca</a>
Charan Gill	(PICS) Progressive Intercultural Community Services Society	<a href="mailto:charan.gill@pics.bc.ca">charan.gill@pics.bc.ca</a>
Cheryl Nordquist	Employers Advisor Office- Prince George	<a href="mailto:cnordquist@eao-bc.org">cnordquist@eao-bc.org</a>
David Hendry	Alliance for People's Health	<a href="mailto:dhendry7@gmail.com">dhendry7@gmail.com</a>
Dean Homewood	Construction & Specialized Workers' Union, Local 1611	<a href="mailto:info@cswu1611.org">info@cswu1611.org</a>
Ed McCloskey	WorkSafeBC- Policy and Research	<a href="mailto:Ed.McCloskey@worksafebc.com">Ed.McCloskey@worksafebc.com</a>
Ellen MacEachen	Institute for Work & Health	<a href="mailto:emaceachen@iwh.on.ca">emaceachen@iwh.on.ca</a>
Erika Del Carmen Fuchs	Little Mountain Neighborhood House	<a href="mailto:erika_fuchs@lmnhs.bc.ca">erika_fuchs@lmnhs.bc.ca</a>
Fred Jay	Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 500	<a href="mailto:admin@ilwu500.org">admin@ilwu500.org</a>
Gurpreet Singh Pabla	PICS	<a href="mailto:gurpreet.pabla@pics.bc.ca">gurpreet.pabla@pics.bc.ca</a>
Habiba Zaman	Womens Studies, SFU	<a href="mailto:hzaman@sfu.ca">hzaman@sfu.ca</a>
Hilde Schlosar	Central Vancouver Island Multicultural Society	<a href="mailto:hschlosar@cvims.org">hschlosar@cvims.org</a>
Iggy Kosny	Institute for Work & Health	<a href="mailto:akosny@iwh.on.ca">akosny@iwh.on.ca</a>
Janet McLaughlin	University of Guelph	<a href="mailto:janet.mclaugh@gmail.com">janet.mclaugh@gmail.com</a>
Jeanette Robertson	Thompson Rivers University	<a href="mailto:jrobertson@tru.ca">jrobertson@tru.ca</a>
Jennifer Efting	Hospital Employees Union	<a href="mailto:jefting@heu.org">jefting@heu.org</a>
Jim Sayre	The Workers' Compensation Advocacy Group	<a href="mailto:jsayre@clasbc.net">jsayre@clasbc.net</a>
Joe Barrett	Building/construction Trade Council	<a href="mailto:jbarrett@bcbuildingtrades.org">jbarrett@bcbuildingtrades.org</a>
Karli Brotchie	Researcher, Social Policy and Research Council of BC	<a href="mailto:kbrotchie@sparc.bc.ca">kbrotchie@sparc.bc.ca</a>
Kelly Best	Labour Market Development Branch, Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development	<a href="mailto:kelly.best@gov.bc.ca">kelly.best@gov.bc.ca</a>

Liisa Cormode	L.Cormode & Associates Research Services	<a href="mailto:lcormode@telus.net">lcormode@telus.net</a>
Lydis Garcia	Kamloops Immigrant Services	<a href="mailto:lidys@telus.net">lidys@telus.net</a>
Mabel Sun	Progressive Intercultural Community Services	<a href="mailto:mabel.sun@pics.bc.ca">mabel.sun@pics.bc.ca</a>
Marcia Bearance	Labour Market Development Branch, Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development-Immigration partnerships and Initiatives	<a href="mailto:Marci.Bearance@gov.bc.ca">Marci.Bearance@gov.bc.ca</a>
Marcy Cohen (or Jennifer Whiteside)	Policy and Research, Hospital Employees Union	<a href="mailto:mcohen@heu.org">mcohen@heu.org</a>
Mark Thompson	Prof. Emeritus, Sauder Business School	<a href="mailto:mark.thompson@sauder.ubc.ca">mark.thompson@sauder.ubc.ca</a>
Marni Lifshen	Institute for Work & Health	<a href="mailto:mlifshen@iwh.on.ca">mlifshen@iwh.on.ca</a>
Michael Tanner	Labour Policy and Legislation Branch Ministry of Labour and Citizens' Services	<a href="mailto:Michael.Tanner@gov.bc.ca">Michael.Tanner@gov.bc.ca</a>
Michelle Tew	Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers	<a href="mailto:mtew@ohcow.on.ca">mtew@ohcow.on.ca</a>
Mieke Koehoorn	Dir. Centre for Health and Environment Research, UBC	<a href="mailto:mieke.koehoorn@ubc.ca">mieke.koehoorn@ubc.ca</a>
Nanette Longo	Central Van.Island Multicultural Society	<a href="mailto:nlongo@cvims.org">nlongo@cvims.org</a>
Peggy MacDonald	WorkSafeBC	<a href="mailto:peggy.macdonald@worksafebc.com">peggy.macdonald@worksafebc.com</a>
Peter Smith	Institute for Work & Health	<a href="mailto:psmith@iwh.on.ca">psmith@iwh.on.ca</a>
Ramona Soares	Office of the Worker Advisor	<a href="mailto:rsoares@wao-bc.org">rsoares@wao-bc.org</a>
Reasha Wolfe	Penticton & Area Women's Centre	<a href="mailto:outreach@pawc.ca">outreach@pawc.ca</a>
Richard Saunders	Construction and Specialized Workers Union, Local 1611	<a href="mailto:rsaunders@lms1611.org">rsaunders@lms1611.org</a>
Saleem Spindari	Outreach Program Coordinator, MOSIAC	<a href="mailto:sspindari@mosaicbc.com">sspindari@mosaicbc.com</a>
Sharon Pannu	Immigrant & Multicultural Services Society- Prince George	<a href="mailto:settlement.imss@shawcable.com">settlement.imss@shawcable.com</a>
Sheila Moir	BC Federation of Labour	<a href="mailto:ohs@bcfed.ca">ohs@bcfed.ca</a> ; <a href="mailto:exec@bcfed.ca">exec@bcfed.ca</a>
Terry Bogyo	WorkSafeBC- Director of Corporate Development and Planning	<a href="mailto:terry.bogyo@worksafebc.com">terry.bogyo@worksafebc.com</a>
Tony St-Pierre	S.U.C.C.E.S.S. Immigrant Trades Training Initiative	<a href="mailto:tony.stpierre@success.bc.ca">tony.stpierre@success.bc.ca</a>
Vicky Baker	RIMM-Metropolis	<a href="mailto:ybaker@geog.ubc.ca">ybaker@geog.ubc.ca</a>
Victor Porter	Office to Combat Trafficking in Persons, Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General	<a href="mailto:Victor.Porter@gov.bc.ca">Victor.Porter@gov.bc.ca</a>

For more information please contact:

**Agnieszka Kosny, PhD**

Scientist

Institute for Work & Health

481 University Ave., Suite 800

Toronto, ON. M5G 2E9

Canada

p: 416.927-2027 x2167

f: 416.927.4167

e: [akosny@iwh.on.ca](mailto:akosny@iwh.on.ca)

**Peter Smith, PhD**

Scientist

Institute for Work & Health

481 University Ave., Suite 800

Toronto, ON. M5G 2E9

Canada

p: 416.927-2027 x2226

f: 416.927.4167

e: [psmith@iwh.on.ca](mailto:psmith@iwh.on.ca)

**Marni Lifshen, M.A.**

Research Associate

Institute for Work & Health

481 University Avenue, Suite 800

Toronto, ON. M5G 2E9

p: 416-927-2027 x 2227

f: 416-927-4167

e: [mlifshen@iwh.on.ca](mailto:mlifshen@iwh.on.ca)

Visit the injured immigrant worker study website: <http://www.iwh.on.ca/iw.php>

Visit the Forum on Immigration, Work and Health website: <http://www.iwh.on.ca/immigrant-workers-forum-2009>

Funding for this forum was generously provided by WorkSafeBC and the Canadian Institutes for Health Research.