

# SUPPORTING EMPLOYEES WITH ABI IN THE WORKPLACE

## EMPLOYER PERSPECTIVES

In Fall 2023, the Return to Work team held focus groups with employers to learn more about their experiences supporting employees with acquired brain injury (ABI) at work.

### What We Heard

#### Experiences Navigating the Return to Work Process

Participants shared:

- There have been gaps in communication from healthcare providers
- Navigating WSIB claims can be confusing and delays can be challenging
- External, environmental and physical accommodations were easily put into place e.g. a quiet work place
- Accommodations related to executive functioning, workload and stress were more challenging

#### Need for Awareness and Education on ABI

- Some participants shared that they are not familiar with ABIs and how to accommodate them effectively
- Participants acknowledged the importance of understanding ABIs are often invisible disabilities and to refrain from using “you look fine” language
- There is a need for awareness and education on how to support employees living with the effects of ABIs

#### Mental Health and Well-Being Supports

- Some workplaces are able to offer their employees comprehensive wellness programming
- Long-term mental health support for employees is limited
- Stigma around mental health has improved, however, it is still present

#### What Worked Well?

- Providing reassurance and support in a compassionate manner
- Acknowledging ABI recovery is not linear
- Preparing for setbacks before they occur
- Accessing additional support and resources

#### Interested in learning how to support employees living with ABIs?

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