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To All Members,

## **Training Opportunity: Surviving Shift Work**

When negotiating our latest Collective Agreement, we recognized that there were many years of contract development that were needing to be worked on. We focused on things like wages and other areas of our work environment that needed to grow and change. One of the key areas was mental health and wellness. Increasing support and member wellbeing is something identified through our strategic plan and was brought forward at various conventions; meetings and it was something we recognized as a key priority with a need for significant improvements.

During the last round of bargaining, we were able to secure Substance Use support funding to assist members get help during this difficult situation, in a timely manner. The CIS program became a negotiated part of our Collective Agreement to ensure support and stability for this cornerstone of our psychological health and safety program. This included time to recover from post-traumatic exposure, if requested. Also, regarding support and resources, we negotiated fatigue education funding for all members. This is an area of safety that is long overdue to get a better understanding and increased knowledge on.

Since 2017 we have been working with experts in this field to better understand the impacts of fatigue on our health and safety. In 2018 we helped develop a two-day training program with Circadian expert Dr. Glenn Landry. We piloted this program with key leaders, including participation from the Employer, with hopes to have it delivered across the province. The knowledge and understanding impressed and impacted all that were able to participate.



Understanding circadian dysregulation, factors of organizational fatigue and the activities that we do outside of work which have either a positive or negative impact on our ability to get appropriate sleep and recovery, are the foundation for creating a safer workplace.

Governing bodies like worker's compensation boards and standards organizations such as CSA are currently developing safety regulations and risk management frameworks for fatigue across all industries. They are looking at ways to identify, assess and control fatigue. In order to do that we need to identify key factors like whether or not the risk of harm increases when workplace hazards of fatigue are present? Is the only real safeguard relying on personal alertness and not organization factors that cause fatigue? Are there mitigation or workplace accommodations for fatigued workers? Due to the nature of our work we need to understand if workers, patients and the public are protected if fatigue is present. Our measurement of fatigue cannot just be about hours away from work and how well you sleep. Education is the foundation for all of this.

Financing was secured for training of our entire membership. We were able to obtain a substantial sum of \$100,000 that was Union controlled in how it is applied. When COVID-19 hit there were many initiatives and activities that were placed on the back burner such as face to face training. A by-product of this is that

training organizations needed to look at virtual platforms to reach their audience. Dr. Landry did just that. He created an online program with all the content from the original training program. This format actually made it easier to reach everyone where they lived.

With that, we are pleased to offer every member of APBC access to enroll in this critically important course, at no cost and on your own schedule! Whether you are new to the Dispatcher and Paramedic lifestyle or whether you have been suffering the effects of fatigue for many years, this course has something valuable for you. It will give you an understanding and the ability to improve your work and homelife. The content will help safety reps understand fatigue and how it may relate to safety initiatives, incident investigation and reporting. It will help us develop safe work practices to mitigate and prevent fatigue. It will also help everyone improve your sleep, your health and your wellbeing!

You can access the program from a link on our webpage in the members area at <https://www.apbc.ca/members-area/> or the links on our Facebook pages. You must use your APBC email address to register and currently we are receiving 0.5 CME credits, but have a request submitted for review to increase.

Steps to Enroll: Click "Get Started Now" and then create a new account:

- Click on the "Purchase (\$495)" button
- Create an Account using your APBC email and sign up
- At checkout, enter this coupon code: rp-apbc

Follow the link for the Presidents message: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yBSizmYYfg>

I encourage you to take advantage of this amazing sharing of knowledge that will assist you, the work that you do and the life you live. This will be a corner stone to improving our fatigue risks and work-place health and safety. If you have any questions on this program reach out to Bob Parkinson at [robert.parkinson@apbc.ca](mailto:robert.parkinson@apbc.ca) or Warren Leeder at [warren.leeder@apbc.ca](mailto:warren.leeder@apbc.ca) and they will be able to assist you.

On behalf of the Provincial Executive Board, thank you to everyone who has been instrumental in bringing these supports and this training to fruition. Be safe, kind and resilient.

Sincerely,



Troy Clifford  
Provincial President  
Ambulance Paramedics & Dispatchers of BC  
CUPE Local 873

TC/sb/MoveUp

