

EMPLOYER OBLIGATIONS

Under the **Act respecting occupational health and safety** employers are obliged to protect the health, safety and physical and mental well-being of their workers. → AOHHS

They must therefore provide proactive and structured support to mitigate the consequences of PTEs. Just as they would for physical first aid, they must provide **psychological first aid** → PFA which lowers the risk of developing PTSD. Trivializing or failing to treat PTEs constitutes a breach of the law.

THE CNESST IDENTIFIED PTEs AS A MAJOR RISK.

HSR

Feel free to call on your union team or your **health and safety representative** so that steps are taken with the **health and safety committee** at your institution to find solutions tailored to your centre of activities. → HSC

ACTIVITIES THAT HELP

Some activities can help with PTE treatment and promote recovery:

- physical exercise
- relaxation
- unwinding
- grounding exercises
- sensory stimulation
- eating healthy
- good sleep hygiene
- maintaining a social network
- etc.



Learn more



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WORK-RELATED TRAUMA: IT'S TREATABLE AND PREVENTABLE

Understanding potentially traumatic events in healthcare settings PTE

OCCUPATIONAL
HEALTH AND
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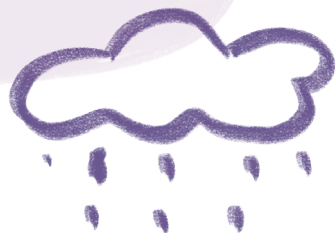


WHAT IS A PTE?

Potentially traumatic events in care settings are often seen as part of the profession and, as such, not falling under OHS. The risk of being exposed to PTEs is however very real and can have lasting psychological impacts, even lead to post-traumatic stress disorder. → PTE

A PTE consists of direct, indirect or repeated exposure in a workplace to an event that seriously threatens a person's integrity, such as an assault, serious injury, sexual violence, death threat, sudden death or suicide.

FOR EXAMPLE, WHEN A HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONAL IS HIT BY AN AGGRESSIVE PATIENT.



FIGURES THAT SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES

IN CANADA:

Nurses rank third, with a prevalence of PTSD of 25%. By comparison, this rate is 9.2% in the general population.

Women are almost 2% more likely to develop PTSD symptoms than men.

Prevalence is an epidemiological measure indicating the total proportion of people with a disease or condition in a given population, at a specific point in time or over a defined period. It includes both new and existing cases, thus reflecting the total burden of disease.

IN QUEBEC:

Across all sectors, injuries related to PTEs increased by 38% between 2020 and 2024.

During the same period, in the healthcare and social assistance sector, there was a 56% rise in injuries attributable to violence. With a 57% increase, patients are the most common cause of these injuries.

PREVALENCE OF PTSD: 4 TOP PLACES

- | | | |
|---|-----------------------|-------|
| 1 | emergency dispatchers | → 31% |
| 2 | paramedics | → 26% |
| 3 | nurses | → 25% |
| 4 | correctional officers | → 22% |

NORMAL REACTIONS

Following a PTE, there are many possible reactions and, above all, they are normal in response to an abnormal situation.

When an important event happens during work, it is recommended that you consult a doctor and request to open a file at the CNESST, even if you keep working.



When reactions last more than 30 days

→ IT IS REFERRED TO AS PTSD.

You may therefore experience anxiety, dissociation, flashbacks, avoidance, hypervigilance and changes in your thoughts and mood. These reactions may last a few days to several months. It is also possible that you won't have any of these reactions.

