

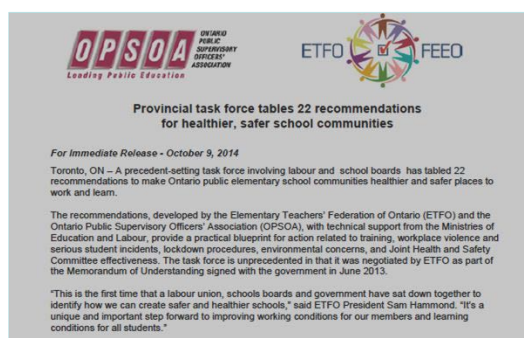
TESTING THE JOINT HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE ASSESSMENT TOOL IN THE EDUCATION SECTOR

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BACKGROUND

- Joint Health and Safety Committees (JHSCs) are critical in ensuring awareness of workplace health and safety issues, and assist in providing greater protections for workers
- Despite ongoing discussions of JHSCs in the education sector, there are currently no established tools to assess their function and effectiveness
- The newly developed *JHSC Assessment Tool*, when tested with single-workplace JHSCs in the health sector, was found to be feasible, had high usability ratings and served as a guide for identifying areas of improvement among participating JHSCs



OBJECTIVE

- To assess the feasibility and usability of the *JHSC Assessment Tool* with multi-workplace JHSCs in the education sector

METHODS

- Ethics approval for this study was received from the University Health Network Research Ethics Board
- 59 participants from three Ontario school board multi-workplace JHSCs were invited to participate
- JHSC members used the tool to assess their JHSC at three different time points:

Pre-meeting

- JHSC members individually assessed their JHSC using the tool

During JHSC meeting

- A week later they worked through the tool as a committee during their regular JHSC meeting

Post-meeting

- A week after the meeting they completed the tool again individually

- Members of the research team observed and recorded the JHSC meeting
- Web-based usability surveys were also conducted before and after the observation meeting
- Quantitative and qualitative analysis methods were used to assess feasibility and usefulness of the tool

ASSESSMENT TOOL

- 21-item, 16-page tool
- Items had a 5-point scale; each point represented a scaled state of functioning
- Participants were asked to identify the state that “best represented” their current committee
- At the end of the tool, participants identified their top 3 priorities for improving JHSC effectiveness

Sample Tool Item

1a) JHSC member identification	There is no list of committee members readily available.	A list of committee members is readily available, but is not posted publicly (e.g. either on a notice board or online).	The list of names of committee members is posted in only one place (e.g. either on a notice board or online).	The list of names of committee members is posted in more than one location (e.g. either on a notice board or online). Changes to membership are <u>not</u> updated promptly.	The list of names of committee members is posted in more than one location (e.g. either on a notice board or online). Changes to membership are updated promptly.
Circle the description that best reflects your JHSC					
Comments					

RESULTS

Response Rate

- 48 participants recruited (81% response rate)
- 24 matched pairs analyzed
 - Pre- and post-meeting responses from the assessment tool and usability questionnaire



Feasibility Testing

- On average, committees completed the *JHSC Assessment Tool* in 60 minutes (Mean=59 minutes, Range=48-69 minutes) and came to consensus on 94% of items
 - Time to consensus for items ranged from 22-666 seconds per question
 - Top three priorities included: improved communication; increased member participation; promoting the JHSC
- ### Usability Testing
- Results were positive with no score falling under 3.4 on the 5-point scale (Table 1)
 - Paired analysis of pre- and post-scores for each item revealed no significant change (Table 1)
 - No significant change between the pre- and post-individual ratings of JHSC effectiveness (Table 2)

Table 2: Paired analysis of assessment scores (n=24)

Table 1: Paired analysis of usability scores (n=24)

CONCLUSIONS

- The *JHSC Assessment Tool* was feasible to use during a regular JHSC meeting and was found to be useful in formative evaluations of JHSC functioning in the education sector
- The paired analysis revealed no significant changes, demonstrating that usability remained stable and did not change with further exposure and discussion.
- Participants were able to identify top priorities for improving their JHSC during the onsite use of the Tool
- Participants suggested several areas where the wording of the tool could be revised to be more relevant to a multi-workplace JHSC

NEXT STEPS

- Creation of a revised and web-based version of the *JHSC Assessment Tool* with added functionality and broad testing across multiple sectors

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