



CPH-NEW

Center for the Promotion of Health
in the New England Workplace



Annual Impact Report 2025

Oct 1, 2024 – Sept 30, 2025

Executive Summary

The Center for the Promotion of Health in the New England Workplace (CPH-NEW) believes in a vision of health, safety, and well-being for all working people. In Fiscal Year 2025 (FY25), that idea came to life across hospitals, schools, correctional facilities, and organizations preparing for crises. Through research, partnerships, and dissemination, CPH-NEW carried forward its mission to create workplaces where safety, health, and productivity thrive together.

This report details research impacts for healthcare workers, K-12 teachers, and workers in other sectors during a challenging economy. With support from CPH-NEW researchers, healthcare workers in Massachusetts helped to define and lead quality improvements to reduce burnout and turnover. They assessed ways to sustain a successful participatory safety and well-being program to ensure long-lasting gains. In six Connecticut elementary schools, CPH-NEW researchers administered large-scale surveys, trained school-based well-being program leaders, and launched the Educator Well-being Program. Employers from multiple industry sectors completed CPH-NEW's new Employer Crisis Preparedness (ECP) eLearning course, gaining knowledge and tools to plan for crises with worker well-being in mind. In the Connecticut Department of Corrections, the CPH-NEW HITEC program is now state-supported. With CPH-NEW support, DOC continues to deliver the HITEC "for workers, by workers" well-being program for corrections staff.

Our *Total Worker Health R-2-P* (research to practice) Hub program had a worldwide impact on professionals and students in occupational safety and health, healthcare, occupational medicine, and human resources disciplines. Our website was viewed over 35,000 times by visitors from 150 countries. Visitors read issue briefs, accessed program tools, webinars, and newsletters. Over 400 professionals completed our online continuing education, gaining knowledge in job stress prevention, ergonomics, crisis preparedness, and *Total Worker Health* practice. We also invested in OSH workforce development by training 15 graduate students, who presented their work at national and international conferences.

These accomplishments have real impacts on workers, employers, and the economy. In the sections that follow, we will explore each of the Center's major projects in greater depth. Read on to learn about our projects' strategic goals and our important accomplishments during the past 12 months. Together, they tell a story of impact in New England, the US, and the world.

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Strategic Goals

The Center for the Promotion of Health in the New England Workplace (CPH-NEW) is a NIOSH Center of Excellence for *Total Worker Health*®. Our vision is health, safety, and well-being for all working people. We pursue this vision through four overarching goals.

Goal 1: Conduct Rigorous Research

We conduct research that addresses urgent worker health challenges such as burnout, stress, and turnover. We study *how* to apply *Total Worker Health* (TWH) principles in a workplace and *the benefits and costs*. Our studies are co-created with workers and employers to ensure findings are meaningful.

Goal 2: Build Capacity and Practical Tools

Research must translate into action. We create practical tools and resources that organizations can adopt immediately. And we train professionals to give them the knowledge and skills to apply *Total Worker Health* approaches in the workplace.

Goal 3: Disseminate Evidence Broadly

We disseminate innovative TWH concepts, research findings, and program materials to the people who need them most. Through presentations, webinars, publications, and partnerships, our resources can be shared widely.

Goal 4: Train a Total Worker Health Workforce

Sustainability depends on preparing new professionals to carry this work forward. Students are deeply involved in all projects and gain experience presenting research nationally and internationally, building skills and networks that will shape the future workforce.

Research

Strengthening the Healthcare Workforce

The SHIFT II Study: Safety and Health in Facilitated Teams

Principal Investigator: Alicia Kurowski, Sc.D., Research Professor, Department of Biomedical Engineering, University of MA Lowell

Healthcare workers face intense stress and burnout driven by long hours, short staffing, and the emotional demands of care, leading to exhaustion, turnover, and even exit from the profession. The SHIFT II project addresses these challenges by embedding participatory problem-solving in a public mental health hospital, giving nurses, aides, and other frontline staff a voice in decisions. This multi-phase participatory action research project tests two approaches to advancing *Total Worker Health*® strategies: an organizational training program that equips staff and leaders to address health and safety challenges collaboratively; and a union-based training program that strengthens worker capacity to do the same through collective action.



“This research has strengthened my ability to do my job roles well...It helps really develop employees. The SHIFT study gives a structured process for problem solving; the facilitation is a different art.”

- Healthcare worker

Action-oriented Research

In FY25, we followed our hospital study partner as they attempted to independently sustain a Healthy Workplace Participatory Program (HWPP) that was the focus of the SHIFT II study. Mental health workers were trained in a “design team” to tackle the most urgent challenges identified by staff, which included workplace violence, physical health habits, and organizational communications. The design team applied a step-by-step process that allowed them to brainstorm, evaluate, and prioritize potential solutions. What made these sessions different from traditional committees was that staff themselves led the way, guided by CPH-NEW’s research-based HWPP facilitation skills training. The results speak for themselves – successful labor-management collaboration has resulted in the hospital taking meaningful steps to improve the work environment.

Making Invisible Challenges Visible Using Art-based Evaluation

We engaged workers in an arts-based evaluation to assess factors supporting or deterring the sustainability of the HWPP. Workers created collages (photo on right) to show parts of the HWPP that were thriving (sun, petals, and leaves) and needed improvement. Staff reported greater engagement, and managers began leading with participatory styles during routine meetings. These results indicate that SHIFT II is helping to institutionalize a culture of collaboration, not just producing temporary interventions.



A collage showing factors supporting and detracting from sustainment of the HWPP.

Healthy Workplace Participatory Program for Unions (HWPP-U)

In FY25, we utilized the union-adapted HWPP materials from FY24 with 20 union staff across the US to identify root causes of staff stress and develop solutions. Participants reported that the process helped them to build community across unions, gave them a structured way to solve problems, and provided tools they could use immediately in their organizations. Three out of four participants said they were very likely to implement the activities in their own unions, even while noting shared challenges such as time pressures and competing priorities.

Accomplishments in FY25

- Strengthened the hospital's capacity to sustain a well-being program that emphasizes worker voices and labor-management teamwork.
- Trained 24 staff from multiple labor unions across the U.S. to lead worker design teams for safety and health improvement.
- Achieved early signs of improved morale, communication, and staff retention in a mental health hospital study site, which will also benefit patient care.

Why It Matters

The accomplishments of SHIFT II represent a shift in how healthcare organizations can address working conditions that lead to staff burnout and turnover. Instead of top-down programs, this study demonstrates that effective solutions can come from the people who understand the challenges best: frontline staff. This not only improves morale and communication but also strengthens retention by showing workers that their perspectives matter. A healthcare system that supports its workers is better able to support its patients. By making staff well-being a central part of hospital decision-making, SHIFT II contributes knowledge about how other hospitals can promote a safer work environment that delivers higher-quality care for communities.

Research

Strengthening the Education Workforce

The Total Teacher Health Study

Principal Investigator: Jennifer Cavallari, Sc.D., C.I.H., Professor, Department of Public Health Sciences, University of CT School of Medicine

Educator mental health is vital, as high levels of stress and burnout undermine teaching quality and student success. Because educators play such a vital role in shaping learning environments, their well-being directly influences the health of schools and communities. Addressing educator stress is essential to sustaining a strong, resilient, and effective education system. This is why the Total Teacher Health (TTH) project was created to understand and improve the conditions that support educator well-being.

Understanding the Problems (and Silver Linings) for School Improvement

In FY25, the project team surveyed over 600 educators across two school districts to assess educators' perspectives on their mental health and working conditions.

The results were striking. Educators reported high levels of stress, anxiety, and depressive symptoms, findings that mirrored the stories administrators had been hearing informally for years. The survey also uncovered something important: protective factors. Teachers who reported stronger supervisor support, recognition, and collegial relationships showed greater resilience and lower intentions to leave the profession.

These results were not only data points; they are a guidepost. District leaders used the survey findings to prioritize interventions, and schools began to see the value of systematically measuring educator well-being.



"[The project helped us] take the time to dive deeper into what was causing stress in our staff. We figured that out and were able to...address that issue."

- Elementary School Educator

Building Solutions: The Educator Well-being Program

Data is powerful, but it must be paired with action to make a difference. In FY25, the study team supported educators as they implemented CPH-NEW's Educator Well-being Program. This participatory program model provides schools with a structured way to identify problems, brainstorm solutions, and implement changes together.

Six elementary schools implemented the EWP this year, supported by customized survey reports that translated complex data into accessible visuals. These tools provided staff with a starting point for conversations about stress, workload, and the need for support systems.

Early Signs of Change

While the EWP is still in its implementation phase, the early feedback and results are encouraging. Schools reported stronger morale and teamwork as staff began to see that their concerns were taken seriously. Administrators noted that the EWP helped bridge gaps between teachers and school leaders, creating new avenues for dialogue. Follow-up survey results show declines in work stress and symptoms of anxiety among educators in schools implementing the EWP.

Accomplishments in FY25

- Collected surveys from 600+ educators across two Connecticut school districts.
- Implemented the Educator Well-being Program in six schools.
- Schools utilized data and program activities to inform work changes that address stress resulting from excessive demands and disruptive student behaviors.
- Identified declines in educators' work stress and anxiety among schools implementing the Educator Well-Being Program.

Why It Matters

The accomplishments of the TTH project impact more than just the educators directly involved. They address one of the most pressing public health issues in education: educator stress. By equipping schools with both data and participatory tools, the TTH project helps create healthier environments where teachers and students can thrive.

Featured publication

Cavallari JM, Trudel SM, Charamut NR, Miskovsky MN, Brennan M, Hiner AJG, Gore RG, Sanetti, LMH, Dugan AG. Psychological Well-Being of U.S. Educators Remains a Post-Pandemic Concern: Findings from a Cross-Sectional Study. *Am J Ind Med.* 2025 Jul;68(7):642-650.

Research

Meeting Today's Public Safety Challenges Employer Crisis Preparedness Study

Principal Investigator: Cora Roelofs, Sc.D., Research Professor, Department of Biomedical Engineering, University of MA Lowell

Emergencies test every part of an organization, from supply chains to staffing, and from leadership communication to employee morale. The COVID-19 pandemic made it painfully clear that many employers had plans for operations, but very few had plans for protecting the well-being of their workers during crises. We integrated TWH approaches into crisis management planning efforts by combining business planning and human resources management. CPH-NEW's Employer Crisis Preparedness (ECP) study, completed in FY24, developed an educational program with a planning guide and workbook to close that gap. The course equips organizations with the knowledge and tools to embed *Total Worker Health* principles into crisis planning for business and workforce continuity.



"The course was very well designed. It introduces a manager to the concepts of emergency preparedness. Too often we let 'perfect' get in the way of 'good' and fail to put plans into place."

- Human Resources Professional

Launching a New eLearning Course in FY25

In June 2024, CPH-NEW launched a new eLearning course that became the centerpiece of the ECP initiative. The course was designed for employers and safety professionals across all industry sectors. Its goal was straightforward but transformative: help organizations prepare for crises in ways that safeguard both people and operations.

As of October 2025, 406 professionals have completed the training. Participants included safety officers, HR professionals, insurance brokers, and managers responsible for emergency preparedness. The course combined evidence-based guidance with practical exercises, making it easy for learners to apply *Total Worker Health* principles to their own organizational context.

Participant Feedback and Impact

The response to the course was overwhelmingly positive. Evaluations showed extremely high satisfaction (90% excellent or very good), and 9 out of 10 participants reported they would recommend it to colleagues, an important sign of its value.

Cross-Sector Reach

The ECP course reached participants from multiple sectors, including healthcare facilities still grappling with post-pandemic challenges, manufacturing companies facing natural disaster risks, and schools dealing with safety concerns in increasingly complex environments. By tailoring lessons to be flexible and adaptable, the course ensured that *Total Worker Health* principles could be applied in any context.

The diversity of participants also created cross-sector learning. Participants heard how other industries approached crisis planning, sparking new ideas they could bring back to their own workplaces.

Accomplishments in FY25

- *Total Worker Health* eLearning courses completed by 406 professionals responsible for emergency preparedness across multiple sectors.
- Evaluations showed very high satisfaction, with many participants intending to recommend the course.
- Organizations embedding worker well-being into crisis planning, strengthening workforce resilience, and continuity.

Why It Matters

Emergencies are inevitable, whether they come in the form of pandemics, natural disasters, acts of violence, or workplace accidents. What matters is how organizations prepare to respond. The accomplishments of the ECP initiative mean that more employers now have tools to protect both operations and people when crises strike.

By embedding *Total Worker Health* principles into crisis planning, organizations can ensure that workers are protected as critical partners in resilience. For communities, this translates into safer schools, stronger hospitals, and more reliable services during emergencies.

The Employer Crisis Preparedness project demonstrates that worker well-being is not separate from preparedness; it is central to it.

Outreach

Translating Research to Action

The *Total Worker Health* Research to Practice (R2P) Hub

Principal Investigator: Suzanne Nobrega, Ph.D., Outreach Director, Department of Biomedical Engineering, University of MA Lowell

Research matters most when it reaches the people who can put it into practice. Our *Total Worker Health* R2P Hub is the bridge between CPH-NEW's science and action by workers, employers, policymakers, and unions to build healthier workplaces. In FY25, CPH-NEW Outreach activities disseminated resources broadly, engaged new audiences, and expanded our digital footprint worldwide.

Building Professionals' Knowledge and Skills

This year, CPH-NEW investigators delivered 18 educational workshops and symposia. These presentations translated complex research findings into actionable insights for practitioners across a broad range of industry sectors. Over 400 completed our online continuing education on topics of job stress prevention and control, ergonomics, crisis preparedness, and *Total Worker Health* practice. Online educational materials on the [CPH-NEW YouTube Channel](#) were disseminated to over 2600 users.



Broadcasting our education widely ensured that CPH-NEW's science reached audiences from union halls to boardrooms to academic forums.

Building Global Access to Critical Worker Safety and Well-being Resources

CPH-NEW's digital dissemination continued to grow in FY25. The CPH-NEW website recorded approximately 35,000 views from 20,000 visitors in 150 countries. This global reach demonstrates the universal relevance of worker well-being and the resonance of CPH-NEW's resources. The most visited pages focused on the [financial](#) and [health](#) effects of job stress and the [Total Worker Health® Facilitator Training course](#), reflecting urgent concerns among practitioners. With 1,210 followers across social media channels, research findings, products, and training announcements had a worldwide reach.

Building Employer Capacity with Tools for Professionals and Leaders

CPH-NEW's [Healthy Workplace Participatory Program \(HWPP\)](#) is a nationally and internationally recognized employer toolkit that transfers *Total Worker Health* knowledge into action. In FY25, we completed development of new tools designed to support the vital role of organizational leaders as they oversee implementation of a Healthy Workplace Participatory Program (HWPP). What's unique about the HWPP is its focus on engaging workers in creating effective, sustainable solutions to difficult workplace safety and well-being concerns. The [HWPP online toolkit](#) now has the [Organizational Readiness Toolkit](#) and the [Champion Toolkit](#), which includes the powerful new [Program Champion Manual](#). These resources enable executives and middle managers to lead the program with confidence and to ensure the resources are in place for success. These resources facilitate employers adopting participatory problem-solving processes more effectively.

Disseminating Programs that Work – Well-being for and by Corrections Staff



Corrections work is one of the toughest professions, with high stress, burnout, and a life expectancy 12 years shorter than average. The HITEC program was designed to address these challenges by empowering correctional staff to take an active role in addressing health and safety challenges.

In Connecticut, the CPH-NEW HITEC program brought officers, unions, and leaders together to improve mental health, stress, nutrition, sleep, and fitness. Its success led the State of CT to appropriate funding in 2021 to sustain the program. Today, CPH-NEW continues to support CT DOC in integrating HITEC into agency structures, training, and practice; the state program website, HITEC-DOC.com, was launched in 2024.

HITEC's impact extends nationally through the National Corrections Collaborative, a consortium to advance safety and well-being across the U.S. corrections sector.

Featured articles for professionals

[Promoting Workplace Inclusion for Autistic Individuals Through Universal Design](#) Contributed by Sara Namazi, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Johnson and Wales University, Providence, Rhode Island

Accomplishments in FY25

- Reached 20,000 website visitors from 150 countries.
- Trained 406 professionals on job stress, crisis preparedness, ergonomics, and *Total Worker Health* practice approaches.
- Conducted a national assessment of *Total Worker Health* education curricula.
- Disseminated an [Organizational Readiness Toolkit](#) and [Champion Toolkit](#), which includes the [Program Champion Manual](#), for organizational leaders to guide the implementation of a participatory, *Total Worker Health* program.

Why It Matters

CPH-NEW's outreach activities moved research into action to benefit the workplace. When a corrections officer downloads a toolkit or when an employer accesses our issue briefs, they can use research-based knowledge or practice to benefit their workers.

For the public, CPH-NEW's outreach activities ensure that taxpayer-supported research translates into real-world benefits. Outreach connects workers and employers with evidence-based tools they can use immediately, strengthening safety, health, and resilience for the U.S. workforce.

Training the Next Generation

Preparing for Tomorrow's *Total Worker Health* Professionals

Workforce health and safety depends, in part, on preparing new leaders who understand both the science of occupational health and the lived realities of work. CPH-NEW integrates students into every project, giving them the chance to contribute to meaningful research while developing the skills they will need as future professionals.

In FY25, 15 graduate students were employed by CPH-NEW as research assistants or received academic credit for research and outreach roles. Students helped design surveys, facilitated focus groups, analyzed qualitative and quantitative data, and developed educational materials that communicated research-based information to professionals.

For example, in the Total Teacher Health project, students administered an all-employee survey in six schools and prepared customized reports. In SHIFT II, students worked alongside staff to prepare and facilitate an arts-based program evaluation and analyzed the content of collages and narratives. In the Outreach project, students prepared eLearning education materials, digital health communications, and employer toolkits that reached thousands of practitioners.

These experiences developed students' technical skills and relational skills that are vital for serving workers, employers, and community stakeholders. Students produced infographics, manuscripts, reports, and presentations that now form part of their professional portfolios.

Presenting at National and International Scientific Meetings

Student accomplishments extended well beyond the classroom. They authored abstracts and presented presentations and posters at major conferences, including the European Academy of Occupational Health Psychology and the Society for Total Worker Health Annual Meeting. These opportunities gave trainees experience in communicating research to diverse audiences and expanded their professional networks.

Mentorship and Professional Growth

Beyond technical training, CPH-NEW emphasized mentorship and professional development. Students participated in Center retreats, created individualized development plans, and received guidance from faculty and staff on career planning. They were encouraged to see themselves not only as researchers but also as future leaders who can bridge the gap between science and practice.

Accomplishments in FY25

- Trained 15 graduate students in research and evaluation methods, program management, and curriculum development.
- 10 students contributed to manuscripts and/or presented at scientific conferences in the US and internationally.
- 25 students participated in two semi-annual student research symposia



CPH-NEW Student Research Symposium, January 2025, University of Massachusetts Medical School Campus, Worcester, MA

Why It Matters

Training is one of CPH-NEW's most enduring accomplishments because it ensures the sustainability of the *Total Worker Health* approach. Students bring the skills they learn into the workplace to become the occupational health professionals, researchers, and leaders of tomorrow.

For the public, this matters because it strengthens the national workforce devoted to worker safety and well-being. The impact of training does not end when a project closes; it continues through the graduates who will shape healthier workplaces for decades to come.

Closing

FY25 was a year of progress, partnership, and proof of concept. Across sectors, CPH-NEW demonstrated that worker well-being is not a secondary concern; it is central to resilience, productivity, and public health.

Across all projects, the output of FY25 was tangible and practical. The intermediate outcomes showed that stakeholders are already adopting and applying our research-based resources. And the ultimate outcomes of improved morale, engagement, resilience, and workforce sustainability directly support lasting economic and public health benefits.

For the public, our accomplishments translate to safer hospitals, healthier schools, and better working conditions. For the federal government, our accomplishments demonstrate that investment in our *Total Worker Health* Center of Excellence is producing measurable impacts in the day-to-day lives of workers.

Taken together, CPH-NEW is on track to meet our goals of conducting rigorous research, building capacity and practical tools, disseminating valuable evidence, and training a *Total Worker Health* workforce to achieve our vision of health, safety, and well-being for all working people.

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