Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health
Center for Work, Health, & Well-being

A NIOSH *Total Worker Health*®
Center of Excellence



Annual Report
Fiscal Year 2026

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HARVARD T.H. CHAN SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH
BOSTON COLLEGE School of Social Work
MIT MANAGEMENT SLOAN SCHOOL
WashU Brown School

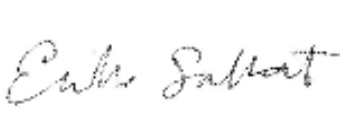
A Message from our Center Leadership Team

We are excited to share the scientific progress and translational activities that have taken place over the past year at the Center for Work, Health, and Well-being. This Annual Report details the work being done as part of the Center's research projects, as well as key outreach and dissemination activities at the Center. Even in the face of challenges, we have made great progress on multiple fronts, as you will read in this report. As we wrap up this fiscal year and begin a sixth year of the current funding cycle, we are optimistic that the coming year will be one in which our research continues to advance the field of *Total Worker Health* through data analysis and dissemination of evidence-based research findings that inform both policy and practice.

The Center for Work, Health, and Well-being seeks to understand the ways in which emerging and longstanding work experiences and exposures impact worker health, safety, and well-being. We have collected primary data within three of our research studies—the *Boston Hospital Workers Health Study*, the *Fulfillment Center Intervention Study*, and the *Thriving Workers, Thriving Workplaces Study*. In collecting these data, we have interacted with thousands of workers through intervention delivery, qualitative interviews, and quantitative surveys, learning crucial information about the ways in which working conditions contribute to the health, safety, and well-being of workers across a range of industries. In September 2024, a fourth research study commenced, the *Older Workers' Health and Well-being Study*, based on multiple waves of the U.S. Health and Retirement Study. In August of 2025, our *Fulfillment Center Intervention Study* concluded, although findings from that research continue to inform manuscripts and presentations. The focus of our ongoing studies during this fiscal year has been on data analysis and manuscript development to help disseminate our scientific findings and inform actions that will help protect and promote the health, safety, and well-being of critical sectors of the workforce through improvements in working conditions.

This year also brought major progress on our translational aims through our Outreach Core. We are collaborating with organizations to support their implementation of a *Total Worker Health* approach, developing educational materials, creating research briefs and issue briefs based on Center publications, and engaging with policy experts. These actions ensure that our research findings continue to be translated into practice and policy to improve working conditions and support worker safety, health, and well-being.

Please join us in celebrating these accomplishments and developments at our Center.



Erika Sabbath
Center Director



Susan Peters
Center Associate Director

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SECTION I
About Our Center

The mission of the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health Center for Work, Health, and Well-being is to improve working conditions through designing, testing, implementing, and disseminating effective and integrated workplace policies, programs and practices that foster a healthy work environment, reduce potential hazardous job exposures, and contribute to the safety, health, and well-being of workers. Since 2007, our Center's research has illuminated the ways in which work contributes to health and well-being, and how these factors in turn shape organizational outcomes.

The Center is a multi-disciplinary and multi-institution collaboration, with projects based at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, Boston College School of Social Work, Brown School at Washington University in St. Louis, and the MIT Sloan School of Management. We also have longstanding collaborations with researchers and employers in Massachusetts and beyond.

We are excited to be celebrating our 20th year as a NIOSH *Total Worker Health* Center of Excellence. Founding Director **Glorian Sorensen** continues to be an Advisor to the Center, while Center Director **Erika Sabbath** leads the Center in collaboration with Center Associate Director **Susan Peters** and Center Assistant Director **Lisa Burke**.

The Center's Research Core includes three primary research studies:

- The ***Boston Hospital Workers Health Study*** is based on a long-standing partnership with a large healthcare system in Massachusetts, and aims to improve the health and well-being of the hospital workforce as well as reduce within-workforce disparities by identifying their root causes in the conditions of work.
- The ***Thriving Workers, Thriving Workplaces Study*** seeks to understand the ways in which work – including working conditions and workplace practices and policies – shapes the extent to which workers thrive and how this impacts organizational outcomes.
- The ***Older Workers' Health and Well-being Study*** focuses on workers aged 50 and older through analysis of six waves of data from the U.S. Health and Retirement Study, exploring working conditions as critical determinants of health and well-being.

In addition to these research studies, the Center's **Outreach Core** develops and disseminates tools and resources grounded in our research findings, to help organizations implement a *Total Worker Health* approach. The **Policy Working Group** helps define policy priorities, determine critical policy research questions, identify public and organizational policy implications of research findings, and craft policy guidelines. The work of the Center is further supported by our **Evaluation and Planning Core**, which provides overall leadership for the Center's administration and strategic planning.

This report provides an overview of the critical work of the Harvard Center, providing evidence-based research findings that inform policy and practice which in turn improve working conditions to better support worker safety, health, and well-being.

MAJOR SCIENTIFIC ACCOMPLISHMENTS THIS YEAR

The Center's accomplishments in the past year have contributed to its long-term impact and include the following achievements:

- The *Boston Hospital Workers Health Study* (BHWHS) research team has undertaken several analyses using data from both our 2023-2024 survey and our prior surveys that assess the presence and drivers of disparities among hospital workers. In general, these studies have demonstrated socioeconomic and occupational differences in exposure distribution, as well as associations between both established and emerging working conditions and worker health and well-being.
- The Center's *Thriving Workers, Thriving Workplaces Study* continues to analyze *Thriving from Work* data collected during the current project cycle from the *Boston Hospital Workers Health Study* and the *Fulfillment Center Intervention Study*. Linked survey and administrative data enable us to answer research questions focused on understanding how working conditions and organizational policies and practices influence thriving from work, and how thriving from work contributes to enterprise outcomes such as turnover.
- Also pertaining to the *Thriving Workers, Thriving Workplaces Study* the *de Beaumont Foundation* implemented the Thriving from Work Questionnaire in their 2024 survey of the U.S. governmental public health workforce (PH WINS). The Center has collaborated on several analyses as well as supporting their Insight to Action resources suite of resources designed to help state and local public health agencies act on data driven change. Susan Peters and Greg Wagner were co-authors on a publication examining demographic and occupational differences in thriving from work among a weighted sample across about 200,000 U.S. governmental public health workers using PH WINS, in collaboration with the de Beaumont Foundation.
- The *Older Workers' Health and Well-being Study* continues to build on the *Supporting Older Workers* report (publicly available on SSRN) which illustrated trends in employer-provided benefits among Americans between the ages of 50 and 64 years during the decade between 2010 and 2020. Not only does this report serve as the foundation for future efforts, it also provides important findings that describe how older workers' access to some benefits has changed over time.
- The Outreach Core has developed a series of Research, Issue, Data and Implementation Briefs, which are based on Center publications and provide short overviews, augmenting the Center's scientific publications from the Research and Outreach Cores. Available on the Center's website and Harvard DASH, each of the briefs provides a snapshot of a publication's main findings, as well as practice and policy implications of the findings, using language accessible to non-academic audiences.
- Resources available on the Center's website have been downloaded by an ever-growing number of users. These include the Thriving from Work Questionnaires, the Workplace Integrated Safety and Health (WISH) Assessment, and the Center's Implementation Guidelines.

MAJOR SCIENTIFIC ACCOMPLISHMENTS THIS YEAR (CONT.)

- The Center continues to collaborate with Total Worker Health Affiliates in addition to other organizations locally, nationally, and internationally.
- The Center's Policy Working Group provides feedback and guidance to the Center's research studies as well as Affiliated Projects being led by Center Investigators.
- Throughout the year, Center researchers presented at conferences, workshops, seminars, and webinars on topics pertaining to the Center's research studies and unifying themes around conditions of work, and worker health and well-being.
- The Center continued to improve upon our reorganized comprehensive website, responding to feedback from our research partners and other stakeholders as to what would best support their efforts to implement TWH initiatives.

SECTION II

The Research Core

Boston Hospital Workers Health Study (2021-2027)



Erika Sabbath
Project Lead

The *Boston Hospital Workers Health Study* has been the Center's flagship project since the Center's inception in 2007. The study is a longstanding partnership between the Center and the employee health division at a large health system in Massachusetts. Our study utilizes administrative data on all patient care workers at two hospitals—including payroll data, occupational health records, and healthcare utilization records—in conjunction with survey data from a subset of these workers. With a cohort of over 25,000 patient care workers to date across two academic medical centers, we are positioned to address a wide range of research questions about the relationship between working conditions and health in this important group of workers.

In the past, our research has focused on the health impacts of working conditions among clinical workers—nurses and nursing assistants. During the current phase of this study, we have expanded our study population from nurses and nursing assistants to include low-wage service workers at the hospitals, including those working in patient transport, environmental services, and materials management.

YEAR FIVE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

With data collection for this project complete, we are focusing on the publication and dissemination of our research findings.

- One of the areas of focus is c*haracterizing relationships between working conditions and health* by worker characteristics, including occupation and wage level. The research team has undertaken several analyses using data from both our 2023-2024 survey and our previous surveys that assess the presence and drivers of disparities in the population of hospital patient care workers. In general, these studies have demonstrated socioeconomic and occupational disparities in exposure distribution, as well as associations between both established and emerging working conditions and worker health and well-being. During this past year, we have submitted two manuscripts that characterize sociodemographic and occupational differences in workplace exposures and experiences, as well as multiple measures of well-being.

- Our evaluation of the effects of *organizational and public policy* changes on *worker health and well-being* is currently underway; we are seeking to determine whether observed effects vary by worker race, occupation, or wage level. These analyses focus on Massachusetts legislation that implemented a paid family and medical leave plan beginning in January 2021. We have dedicated substantial data resources into creating an analytic dataset comprised of data from human resources and payroll records, by identifying all workers who added a dependent child to their human resources records and then determining the number of weeks of parental leave via payroll codes in the months surrounding the birth. We are now conducting difference-in-differences analyses to test both main effects of the policy and its contribution to disparities in leave-taking. The manuscript is currently in preparation.

- The research team has conducted multiple analyses of the *ways that healthcare workers experience violence within the workplace*. One paper was published (Suarez Rojas, Hashimoto, and Sabbath, *American Journal of Industrial Medicine*) that used data from hospital incident reports of violence against workers to assess the ways in which mental states of aggressors shape workers' narratives around these reports. Another manuscript has been revised and resubmitted to the *Journal of Health and Social Care in the Community*.

- *Analyses in progress.* We have made major analytic investments in several manuscripts during this project year.
  - Erika Sabbath and Susan Peters are leading multiple analyses of associations between working conditions, thriving from work, and occupational health outcomes.
  - Multiple doctoral students are leading analyses that use study data as part of their dissertations.

LOOKING AHEAD TO NEXT YEAR

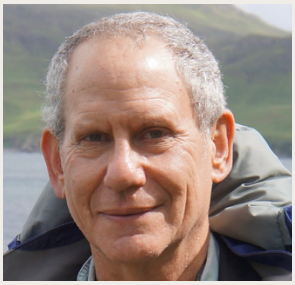
With several manuscripts in progress and ongoing outreach efforts, we are on track to fulfill our scientific and translational goals for the current funding cycle. As our research findings are published, we will share study findings and discuss implications for organizational policy and practice with key stakeholders. In the coming year, we plan to:

- Continue to analyze data in support of study aims
- Publish findings on the impacts among healthcare workers of the Massachusetts paid leave policy
- Focus on data analysis, writing, and submitting manuscripts on associations between working conditions, worker health, and disparities, using 2023 survey data.
- In collaboration with Center policy experts, consider the policy implications of research findings
- Share study findings with stakeholders and prepare for data archiving.

Thriving Workers, Thriving Workplaces Study (2022-2027)



Susan Peters
Project Lead



Gregory Wagner
Project Co-Lead

Work has the power to contribute positively to our lives in profound ways. Yet, the current state of workplace well-being reveals an urgent and ongoing need for change. Gallup's 2025 State of the Workplace Report of over 79,000 U.S. workers found that employee engagement has fallen to its lowest level in a decade, with only 31% of employees engaged—representing 3.2 million fewer engaged workers than the previous year. A National Alliance of Mental Illness 2024 Survey of over 2,000 full-time U.S. employees found that 52% reported feeling burned out in the past year because of their job, and 37% reported feeling so overwhelmed it made it hard to do their job. The economic toll of poor worker well-being is staggering: employee disengagement and burnout costs U.S. employers between $3,999 and $20,683 per employee annually, depending on their role. The *Thriving Workers, Thriving Workplaces Study* addresses this critical challenge by examining the specific workplace conditions and organizational policies, programs, and practices that transform the concerning state of our national workforce's well-being into pathways for worker and enterprise flourishing.

Research from the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health Center for Work, Health, and Well-being conceptualized Thriving from Work across six key dimensions and defined "Thriving from Work" as a state of positive mental, physical, and social functioning in which workers' experiences of their work and working conditions enable them to thrive in their overall lives, contributing to their ability to achieve their full potential at work, at home, and in the community.

Thriving from Work Domains



The Thriving from Work framework, and the valid and reliable versions of the Thriving from Work Questionnaire, form the backbone of the *Thriving Workers, Thriving Workplaces Study*, examining how systems-level factors and workplace conditions can enhance pathways for optimal worker well-being and enterprise outcomes for organizations. This framework recognizes that when organizational policies, programs, and practices are thoughtfully designed to focus on thriving, they create environments where workers don't simply survive their jobs, but truly flourish through them. This enables us to identify actionable strategies for worker well-being that benefit both individuals and organizations. In this fourth year of our study (fifth year of the Center's funding cycle), the Thriving Workers, Thriving Workplaces Study executed a multifaceted research-to-practice approach to advancing worker well-being, conducting rigorous empirical research to identify key workplace factors that enable thriving, developing practical resources and tools for organizations and researchers, sharing findings with academic and practitioner communities through strategic dissemination efforts, and building capacity through training and fellowships that have reached students, researchers, and practitioners locally, nationally, and globally. This reflects our commitment to translating evidence-based research into meaningful action that supports thriving workers and thriving workplaces across the U.S. workforce.

YEAR FIVE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Despite significant challenges experienced during the previous fiscal year and the beginning of this fiscal year due to funding instability, we were able to move forward toward achieving our study goals. In this fourth year of our study (fifth year of the Center's funding cycle), the *Thriving Workers, Thriving Workplaces Study* focused primarily on data analysis, publication, and dissemination of research findings using four data sources: healthcare workers (*Boston Hospital Workers Health Study*), fulfillment center workers (*Fulfillment Center Intervention Study*), U.S. governmental public health workers (PH WINS), and older workers (55+).

Advancing Practice

Over the past year, we developed and expanded resources and tools to support organizations adopting a Thriving from Work approach. These are used by organizations to measure worker well-being and provide a framework for understanding the important dimensions of thriving from work needed to support worker well-being. Key achievements include:

- *Thriving from Work Questionnaire products*
  - Creation and dissemination of a new Translation Guide for those wishing to translate the Thriving from Work Questionnaire into other languages; continued dissemination of the existing Scoring Guide for the Thriving from Work Questionnaire, Thriving from Work Questionnaire User Manual, and FAQs materials.
  - Dissemination of English, Spanish and German validated versions of the Thriving from Work Questionnaire.
- Thriving from Work Questionnaire implementation in practice
  - The de Beaumont Foundation implemented the Thriving from Work Questionnaire in their 2024 survey of the U.S. governmental public health workforce (PH WINS). The Center has collaborated on several analyses as well as supporting their Insight to Action suite of resources designed to help state and local public health agencies act on data driven change. Drs. Peters and Wagner were co-authors on a publication examining demographic and occupational differences in thriving from work among a weighted sample across about 200,000 U.S. governmental public health workers using PH WINS in collaboration with the de Beaumont Foundation. Additional analyses examining work arrangements and workplace determinants of worker well-being are underway.

- In partnership with the *Institute for Work and Health* and our Center Outreach Core, Susan Peters is co-leading a living systematic review on the relationship between AI in the workplace and worker well-being.
- We continue to field technical assistance inquiries for Thriving from Work Questionnaire use across many work sectors in the U.S., including education, public service, healthcare, and knowledge work.

Advancing Research

The research team continues to analyze previously collected *Thriving from Work* data from the *Boston Hospital Workers Health Study* and the *Fulfillment Center Intervention Study*, as well as data from the Public Health Workforce Interests and Needs Survey (PH WINS). Linked survey and administrative data enable us to answer research questions focused on understanding how working conditions and organizational policies and practices influence thriving from work, and how thriving from work contributes to enterprise outcomes such as turnover. Some of our current analyses and publications in preparation are focusing on:

- Understanding variations in worker well-being across different industries with respect to organizational, occupational, and demographic characteristics
- Exploring the relationship between thriving from work and enterprise outcomes (including work-related injury, turnover intent, retention, and client outcomes)
- Exploring how exposure to working conditions such as workplace violence, experiences of discrimination, and harassment impacts worker well-being in healthcare workers.

Advancing Policy:

Dr. Peters participated in a series of invited round tables focused on a strategy to improve global worker brain health and well-being during the United National General Assembly in New York City in September 2026. Dr. Peters also presented in August 2026 as part of Minds Across the Vineyard, discussing the link between brain health and the work environment (indoor or outdoor) using examples from various industries including healthcare, construction, transportation and knowledge work.

LOOKING AHEAD TO NEXT YEAR

In the sixth year of our project–supported by our advisory boards, the Center's Policy Working Group and collaborators–our focus will be on finalizing data analyses, developing research-to-practice products and recommendations, education and training of researchers and practitioners, and collaborating with our Outreach Core to disseminate, educate, communicate and implement research findings into practice and policy. We plan to translate research findings from the *Thriving Workers, Thriving Workplaces Study* into a future research agenda for thriving from work, practice implications and recommendations, and development of trainings and resources. This will include presentations, research briefs and publications. We plan to develop and record a series of short asynchronous webinars to promote utility of the Thriving from Work Questionnaire and its supporting theory and framework, and expect to present findings at the Work, Stress and Health Conference in June 2027 and at other meetings. The Center will ensure all resources and products developed through this project are available on the Center website and also the Harvard DASH (Digital Access to Scholarship at Harvard), making them publicly available for future use.

Older Workers' Health and Well-being Study (2024 – 2027)



Cal Halvorsen
Project Lead



Erika Sabbath
Project Co-Lead

The *Older Workers' Health and Well-being Study* was developed in response to increasing concerns about the health, safety, and well-being of the older workforce and calls from the NIOSH *Total Worker Health* Program and the National Occupational Research Agenda (NORA) for increased research on the aging workforce. By 2050, 24% of the U.S. labor force is projected to be made up of workers aged 55 years and older, up from 13% in 2000, with notable increases in older women's labor force participation rates through at least 2029. This increase reflects the growing total number of older adults in the U.S. as well as increased health and longevity; the earlier movement of younger women into the labor force who are now older workers; and the growing need and desire to work longer for income, benefits, and meaning. As such, our strategic goals for this study were to understand how workplace benefits and policies are associated with older workers' health, mental health, and enjoyment in work over time, and to communicate these findings to practitioners and policymakers.

This project began in Year 4 of the Center's 2021–2027 cycle and is based on the six most recent waves of data from the Health and Retirement Study (HRS), a longitudinal panel study that every two years surveys a nationally representative sample of people aged 50 years and older living in the U.S. The HRS offers a sample size of approximately 20,000 people per wave who are followed over time, the addition of new cohorts every six years to include respondents closer to age 50, a high response rate, and the inclusion of data on work and health.

Our aims include the investigation of associations between workplace benefits and policies and older workers' health, mental health, and enjoyment in work over time; the determination of how age and sex modify the relationships between workplace benefits and policies on older workers' health, mental health, and enjoyment in work; and the advancement of policy and practice across sectors in collaboration with the Center's Outreach Core by disseminating and communicating key findings with policymakers, practitioners, and other key stakeholders.

YEAR FIVE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The *Older Workers Health and Well-being Study* collaborated with the *Thriving Workers, Thriving Workplaces Study* to publish the article, *Thriving from Work Questionnaire: Validation of a Measure of Worker Wellbeing Among Older U.S. Workers*. This article presents results from a validation of the Thriving from Work Questionnaire (TfWQ) in a sample of workers age 50 years and older. The online panel included a sample of 617 older workers and 372 younger counterparts for comparison, all based in the U.S. Our findings suggest that the TfWQ is a useful and empirically sound tool for evaluating older workers' well-being.

The *Older Workers Health and Well-being Study* team is currently conducting analyses to assess how workplace benefits and policies impact older worker health, mental health, and enjoyment in work (an indicator of turnover intentions). This will be the foundation for peer-reviewed articles.

Our work continues to build on the *Supporting Older Workers* report (publicly available on SSRN) that illustrates trends in employer-provided benefits among Americans between the ages of 50 and 64 years during the decade between 2010 and 2020. In it, we showed the proportion of American workers in this age group who had access to employer-provided health insurance and retirement savings programs, and who were able to reduce their work hours, overall and also by sex, race, and ethnicity. Not only does this report serve as the foundation for our future efforts, it also provides important findings that describe how older workers' access to these benefits has changed over time. These types of descriptive statistics are important complements to the more advanced statistical methodologies that we will use as we continue our work. Further, this report meets our objectives of communicating and disseminating our findings with researchers, practitioners, and policymakers. In creating the report, we also focused on using easy-to-understand language and multiple charts to show clear trends and differences in access to these workplace-provided benefits, facilitating research-to-practice (r2p) efforts.

Early findings from our study were shared during the past year at the Gerontological Society of America Annual Scientific Meeting (November 2025). In addition, we have presented results from our initial analysis and collaborations with the Massachusetts Executive Office of Aging & Independence (formerly the Massachusetts Executive Office of Elder Affairs).

LOOKING AHEAD TO NEXT YEAR

In the next year of this study, our team will manage the merged Health and Retirement Study (HRS) dataset, including creating transformed as well as lagged variables. We will analyze multivariable models to assess relationships between workplace benefits and policies and older workers' health, mental health, and enjoyment in work over time, and will include age and gender as interactions within these multivariable models. We plan to draft and submit at least one peer-reviewed article, and publish at least one translational brief about our study's findings in collaboration with the Outreach Core. Our aspirations are that this study spotlights the importance of supporting older workers, a growing part of the U.S. workforce.

SECTION III
Outreach and Dissemination

Outreach Core (2021-2027)



Susan Peters
Project Lead



Lisa Burke
Project Co-Lead

The Center's Outreach Core translates and disseminates evidence-based research findings, best practices and policy recommendations through multiple communication channels to support adoption of a *Total Worker Health* approach. The Center continues to expand its reach, with an increasing number of organizations benefiting from the Center's resources.

YEAR FIVE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Tools and Resources on our Center Website

The Center's website was completely revised and reorganized during the previous fiscal year and the new website was launched in September of 2025. Based on feedback from our Center team, we continue to improve the website to ensure it is user friendly and comprehensive, effectively highlighting our research projects and dissemination activities. Our website serves as a key tool for education, communication, and dissemination of research findings, in addition to descriptions of each research study, a list of publications, and access to our evidence-based resources.

During this fiscal year, the Outreach Core has worked to upload our tools and resources to our Center's section of the Harvard DASH (*Digital Access to Scholarship at Harvard*) to provide additional dissemination opportunities and to provide a unique URL for each resource or publication or brief. This will allow citing of our evidence-based products which will lead to additional dissemination and use.

Resources available for download from our Center website and available on Harvard University's DASH include the following:

- A series of newly developed **Outreach Core Briefs** are based on Center publications, and provide short overviews, augmenting the Center's scientific publications from the Research and Outreach Cores. Each of the research, issue, implementation, and data briefs provide a snapshot of a publication's main findings, as well as practice and policy implications of the findings, using non-academic language.
- The ***Thriving from Work Questionnaires*** provide a comprehensive measure of work-related well-being and are now validated and available in English, Spanish, and German. A *Frequently Asked Questions* document is also available for download, as is the *TfWQ User Manual* and the *Scoring Guide*. During this fiscal year, a *Translation Guide* for translating the TfWQ into other languages was finalized and made available to the public.

- The **Workplace Integrated Safety and Health (WISH) Assessment** measures workplace policies, programs, and practices that focus on working conditions and organizational facilitators of worker safety, health, and well-being. Available to the public since 2018, the WISH is used by employers and researchers to assess the extent of implementation of a *Total Worker Health* approach.
- The Center's Implementation Guidelines, **Implementing an Integrated Approach: Weaving Worker Health, Safety, and Well-being into the Fabric of Your Organization**, has provided a comprehensive reference for practitioners and researchers seeking to implement a *Total Worker Health* approach to worker safety, health, and well-being since 2017. The Outreach Core team has developed a Synopsis of this resource for dissemination to researchers and practitioners who are interested in the content and want to quickly understand key aspects of the guide.
- **Health and Safety Toolbox Talks** are based on the Center's *All the Right Moves* (ARM) project and were developed during the Center's previous funding cycle and continue to be used by construction companies. The Toolbox Talks were created for construction workers, providing a participatory method for companies to determine workers' experiences to drive change.

LinkedIn and Center Newsletters

The Center is active on **LinkedIn,** growing our connections by more than 30% for the second consecutive year, with close to 1100 connections. We utilize LinkedIn to keep our community of researchers and practitioners informed about evidence-based resources being developed through our research studies, including new publications and upcoming presentations. We also share news from NIOSH and other Total Worker Health Centers of Excellence. Periodically we email **Center newsletters** to more than 4,000 people, sharing updates from the Center's research projects, details of upcoming events, and links to recent publications.

Collaborations with TWH Affiliates

Center researchers continue to collaborate with **HealthPartners** of Minnesota to examine and disseminate findings from our work, studying the implementation of *Total Worker Health* approaches in organizations. A publication reflecting on our many years of collaboration is underway and will be submitted for publication in the next fiscal year. A collaboratively developed and delivered webinar, *Accelerate health outcomes at your organization with Total Worker Health®*, continues to be available to the public on our website, accompanied by a worksheet for participants to use in identifying working conditions to improve, and action steps to take to implement workplace changes.

The Center continues to collaborate with **SAIF**, Oregon's not-for-profit workers' compensation insurance company. In FY23, the collaboration resulted in the streamlining of key aspects of the Center's Implementation Guidelines to create *Worker well-being in 5 easy steps*, an online suite of Total Worker Health videos, tip sheets, and resources for SAIF consultants to use with their small- and medium-sized clients. This continues to be available publicly; a link to this resource, in English and in Spanish, is available on our website.

The **Policy Working Group**, led by Greg Wagner, plays a critical role within our Center, helping to ensure that our research will inform both organizational policy and public policy. Policy Working Group (PWG) members also provide dissemination recommendations and connect the Center's researchers with scholars and practitioners whose missions align with each research project's aims. Members include Center leadership and external policy experts, researchers, and practitioners. The PWG provides guidance and identifies policy implications for the Center's research and affiliated studies.

Education and Training

Designing, Implementing, and Evaluating Sustainable Interventions in Organizations: The How-To of Improving Worker Health and Well-being, by Karina Nielsen, **Glorian Sorensen**, Nadia El-Salanti, and Michael Munch-Hansen, is now available from Oxford University Press as an e-book and in hard copy. This book offers a systematic approach to fostering worker health and well-being through participatory organizational interventions. It includes key principles and recommendations for undertaking successful participatory organizational interventions; provides an evidence-based and step-by-step process to plan, implement, and evaluate organizational change, promoting health and well-being; and illustrates concepts with two case studies, giving readers concrete tools and methods for different contexts. This approach to building healthy organizational work environments is essential for improving well-being on the job. This book contributes significantly to the field of occupational health, and honors the memory of our friend and colleague Karina Nielsen, who passed away in September of 2024.

Our Fulfillment Center Intervention Study team, led by **Erin Kelly** and **Lisa Berkman** published a guide for managers that explains how a workplace Health and Well-being Committee (HaWC) can reduce turnover and save money for employers. Starting a Workplace Health and Well-Being Committee: A Step-By-Step Guide for Managers includes information on how to prepare for, launch, and run a HaWC, as well as guidance on their structure and leadership and key strategies for success and sustainability. This resource continues to be accessed through a link on our website, in addition to being available through MIT Sloan School of Management.

Greg Wagner continues to incorporate *Total Worker Health* concepts into his Environmental Health courses at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health. **Susan Peters** also taught into several graduate level occupational health courses during this past year.

The Harvard University MOOC (Massive Open Online Course) “Business Transformation through a Culture of Health”, which includes a segment featuring Center Founding Director **Glorian Sorensen** and Harvard Business School Professor Robert Huckman, is available to the public though Harvard’s online courses. More than 95,750 people have enrolled in this free course since 2018.

Mentoring and Training

Mentoring and training health and safety professionals is critical to our capacity-building efforts. Students, post-docs, and junior investigators at our Center participate in planning studies, developing manuscripts, and implementing pilot projects. The Center provided research opportunities and mentorship to the following scholars during this year:

- **Felipe Muñoz Medina, PhD,** completed a one-year post-doctoral fellowship. Visiting from the University of Santiago, Chile, Felipe worked with Susan Peters, focusing on understanding how psychosocial conditions of work influence worker well-being, and the relationship between worker well-being and enterprise outcomes using longitudinal data from two studies.
- **Ricardo Diego Suárez Rojas, PhD,** who earned his PhD from the Boston College School of Social Work in May 2026, conducted a study funded by a Harvard Education and Research Center Pilot Project Grant, “Characterizing Experiences of Workplace Violence among Hospital Patient Care Employees”. He worked with Erika Sabbath on analysis that focuses on narratives written by workers to report experiences of assault occurring in the workplace to assess the relationship between exposure to violence and thriving from work. The publication resulting from this analysis was published this year. See the *Publications* section of this Annual Report for more information.

- **Bruna Lopez,** PhD student at the Boston College School of Social Work, cleaned and analyzed nationally representative data from the Health and Retirement Study to examine trends in access to workplace-provided benefits among older workers. Along with her advisors, Erika Sabbath and Cal Halvorsen, she published these results and presented on strategies for analyzing these data. See the *Publications* section of this Annual Report for more information.
- **Zoe Can,** a PhD student from University of Sheffield, U.K., is advised by Susan Peters. Zoe is exploring mental health and well-being in healthcare workers.
- **Stephanie Neidlinger, PhD,** successfully defended her doctoral dissertation in May 2025 in Work and Organizational Psychology at Helmut Schmidt University, Hamburg, Germany, and was advised by Susan Peters. After spending a year at the Center as a visiting scholar, Stephanie has continued to work closely with Center researchers as she studies remote work and thriving.
- **Maren Wright Voss, PhD,** previously a Research Associate at the Harvard Chan School of Public Health, received a Harvard Education and Research Center Pilot Project Grant to study "Thriving from Work: Assessment and Impact of Older Worker Preferences". Dr. Voss was mentored by Susan Peters (PI) and Cal Halvorsen. This project builds on existing survey tools to pilot a valid measurement approach of older worker preferences as predictors of thriving from work and retention, to support the validation of the Thriving from Work Questionnaire with this demographic. See the Publications section of this Annual Report for more information.

Other Outreach Collaborations

The Center's Thriving from Work Questionnaire was included in **the Public Health Workforce Interests and Needs Survey (PH WINS)**, conducted by the **de Beaumont Foundation** and the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials. The Fall/Winter 2024 data collection marked the fourth time the government public health workforce was surveyed to capture public health workers' demographics and perspectives on key issues related to their work. Collaboratively with the de Beaumont Foundation, the collected data has been made available to **Susan Peters** and her team for analysis; their work will provide critical insights on the well-being of the U.S. public health workforce.

Cal Halvorsen continues to collaborate with the **Karolinska Institute** in Stockholm, Sweden, after spending 10 weeks there in the summer of 2025 as a visiting scholar. Funded by the Swedish Research Council for Health, Working Life, and Welfare, the grant for this appointment supports Cal's work with a multidisciplinary and international team of scholars at the Karolinska Institute.

Susan Peters and collaborators from the **Institute for Work & Health** in Canada are conducting a living systematic review on Artificial Intelligence in the Workplace. Led by Arif Jetha and funded by WorkSafe BC and the Workplace Safety Insurance Board, Canada, this review will be updated annually, summarizing emerging and critical impacts of AI in the workplace on worker well-being.

LOOKING AHEAD TO NEXT YEAR

For year six of this grant award, the Outreach Core, under the leadership of **Susan Peters** and **Lisa Burke**, in collaboration with **Greg Wagner**, **Barrak Alahmad** and **Cal Halvorsen**, will continue to build on our strong foundation for ongoing outreach and dissemination activities, and we look forward to growing our communication, implementation, policy, and education efforts through multiple resources and activities, including:

- Expanding our collection of Research, Issue, Data and Implementation Briefs, based on Center published manuscripts, reflecting an array of research findings along with policy and practice implications.
- Development and publication of a retrospective overview of the Center's 20 years of NIOSH-funded research and dissemination.
- Development and publication of a manuscript in collaboration with other *Total Worker Health* Centers on stakeholder engagement, based on each Center's work over the years.
- Organizing a panel presentation at the Work, Stress & Health Conference in Boston, MA in June of 2027 that includes our Center and three other TWH Centers of Excellence discussing collaborations with practitioners that resulted in translation and dissemination of our Centers' research.
- Promotion of *Designing, Implementing, and Evaluating Sustainable Interventions in Organizations: The How-To of Improving Worker Health and Well-being*, by Karina Nielsen, Glorian Sorensen, Nadia El-Salanti, and Michael Munch-Hansen, along with the development of resources based on content and related dissemination.
- Continued dissemination of the Thriving from Work Questionnaire, User Manual, Scoring Guide, and Translation Guide, working with collaborators to further expand the use of these resources.
- Development and dissemination of Thriving from Work asynchronous webinars.
- Continued collaboration with HealthPartners of Minnesota, including the development and submission of a manuscript reflecting their many years of collaboration with the Center.
- Completion of a case study based on the Center's collaboration with SAIF of Oregon, based on the development of SAIF's *Worker well-being in 5 easy steps*.
- Continued collaboration with other organizations interested in implementing TWH approaches, especially those that are *Total Worker Health* Affiliates.
- The Policy Working Group will continue to provide guidance to our ongoing Center research projects and the direction of the Center moving forward.
- Center researchers will continue to present at seminars, webinars, conferences and courses.
- The Center will promote our new streamlined website and DASH presence in communications and presentations.

Selected Conference, Course, and Seminar/Webinar Presentations

In October 2025, **Susan Peters** presented at the University of Valencia Invited Presentation (sponsored by IDOCAL), *From Stress to Strength: Advancing Brain Health and Worker Wellbeing in 21st Century Workplaces*. University of Valencia.

In November 2025, **Cal Halvorsen** and PhD Student Bruna Lopez presented *Disparities in employer-provided benefits among older Black and Hispanic workers* at the Symposium at the Gerontological Society of America Annual Scientific Meeting in Boston, MA.

In November of 2025, **Cal Halvorsen** was a symposium discussant for a session at the Gerontological Society of America Annual Scientific Meeting in Boston, MA, *Building capacity for community-engaged research: Frameworks and methods for successful aging science*.

In December of 2025, Center Founding Director **Glorian Sorensen** was featured in a book launch event with both in-person and virtual attendance of more than 50 researchers and practitioners. She presented on her book, Designing, Implementing, and Evaluating Sustainable Interventions in Organizations: The How-To of Improving Worker Health and Well-being. **Erika Sabbath** facilitated a Q&A and discussion following the presentation.

In March of 2026, **Cal Halvorsen** presented *Employment and volunteering in later life: A good thing for you and society* for AmeriCorps Seniors / University of Maine Workforce Development Research Project cohort.

In May 2026, **Susan Peters** presented as part of a Keynote Panel, *Reimagining Work Disability Prevention and Integration (WDPI) After 20 years of Research* at the 7th International Work Disability Prevention and Integration Conference in Vancouver, Canada.

Susan Peters was a contributing scientist on *The Collapsing Collective: Designing for Thriving Teams in the AI Era*, a report coming out of a June 2026 meeting of leaders, researchers, and practitioners at the Texas Brain Economy Summit convened by Google Experience Institute and HKS, an interdisciplinary global design firm.

Susan Peters presented at the Wellbeing Think Tank Educational Intensives, a professional learning series focused on advancing workplace well-being through evidence-based approaches in July 2026. Her presentation, *From Surveys to Strategy: Making Data Work*, explored how organizations can use evidence-based surveys and well-being data to better understand how work impacts people's lives, both on and off the job. This free session was part of an ongoing effort by the Wellbeing Think Tank to bring together researchers, practitioners, and organizational leaders across industries to consider worker health and well-being strategies.

Selected Center Publications

Center

Nielsen K, Sorensen G, El-Salanti N, Munch-Hansen M. Designing, Implementing, and Evaluating Sustainable Interventions in Organizations: The How-To of Improving Worker Health and Well-being. 2025. Oxford University Press: New York, NY.

Boston Hospital Workers Health Study

Suárez Rojas RD, Hashimoto D, Sabbath, EL. The Mental States of Aggressors: A Biopsychosocial Analysis of Workplace Violence Reports in Hospitals. American Journal of Industrial Medicine 69 (2026): 132-143.

Stelson E, Sorensen G, Berkman L, Ballou S, Hashimoto D, Kubzansky LD, Sabbath EL. Physical Health Consequences of Vicarious Trauma: Prospective Relationship Between Hospital Patient Care Worker Vicarious Trauma Symptoms and Gastrointestinal Disorders. J Occup Environ Med 2025 August, 67(8):p 654-665.

Boston Hospital Workers Health Study and Thriving Workers, Thriving Workplaces Study

Boden LI, Peters SE, McTernan M, Pan Y, Wagner GR, Hashimoto D, Sabbath EL. Work-related Well-Being, Turnover Intention, and Completed Turnover in a Cohort of U.S. Patient Care Workers. Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine 2026 March 23. doi: 10.1097/JOM.0000000000003713. Epub ahead of print.

Thriving Workers, Thriving Workplaces Study

Peters SE, Temurnikar M, Popalis ML, Neidlinger SM, Castrucci BC, and Wagner GR. Thriving from Work in Public Health: Evidence from the Front Lines of Worker Well-Being. Am J Public Health, 2026, e1-e12.

Peters SE, Neidlinger SM, Alahmad B, Wagner GR. Healthy Work, Healthy Heart? The role of job characteristics in promoting heart health. Cardiology Clinics. 2026; 44, 179-191.

Voss MW, Halvorsen CJ, Yadav K, Neidlinger SM, Wagner GR, Peters SE. Thriving from Work Questionnaire: Validation of a Measure of Worker Wellbeing Among Older U.S. Workers. Int J Environ Res Public Health 2025; 22(9):1428.

Fulfillment Center Intervention Study

Siebach KF, Díaz-Linhart Y, Kubzansky LD, Berkman L, Wang M, Ge L, Kowalski AM, Rahmandad H, Kelly EL. Effectiveness of a Participatory Voice Intervention on Psychological Well-Being Among Warehouse Workers: Results From the Fulfillment Center Intervention Study, United States, 2021–2023. Am J Public Health. 2026;116(4):522-532. doi:10.2105/AJPH.2025.308352

Older Workers' Health and Well-being Study

Halvorsen CJ, Lopez BC, Sabbath E. Beyond the Generations: Building a High-Quality Workplace for an Age-Diverse Workforce. Generations. June 24, 2026. https://generations.asaging.org/beyond-the-generations-building-a-high-quality-workplace-for-an-age-diverse-workforce/

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b = Outreach Core
c = Boston Hospital Workers Health Study
d = Fulfillment Center Intervention Study
e = Thriving Workers, Thriving Workplaces Study
f = Older Workers' Health and Well-being Study

Center External Advisory Board, 2021- 2027

Members of the External Advisory Board provide guidance on project implementation to maximize impact; identify key priorities for future research and education; and facilitate relationship building with key regional and national resources.

The Center fondly and gratefully remembers our dear friend, colleague, collaborator, and member of our External Advisory Board, Karina Nielsen, who passed away on September 24, 2024.

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