

1 Q. Further to NP-29, what is Hydro doing to minimize its increasing absenteeism
2 rates?

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4 A. A number of measures have been taken by Hydro to address sick leave
5 including:

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7 1) An Occupational Health Nurse has been recruited. This position takes
8 a pro-active role in the ongoing management of extended (in excess
9 of 5 days) absence due to illness, case management of Long-Term
10 Disability claims, ease back and return to work programs, and
11 preventative measures such as ergonomic assessment of
12 workstations.

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14 2) Hydro has established a Health Advisory Committee to review the
15 status of all current extended sick leave, long-term disability, and
16 Workers' Compensation cases as well as other sick leave/employee
17 absence issues such as incidental sick leave, mandatory employee
18 referrals, wellness initiatives, etc.

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20 3) Audiometric Screening and Pulmonary Function Monitoring Programs
21 have been introduced for all "at risk" employees.

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23 4) A local Occupational Health Services Company (MedServ) has been
24 engaged, as required, to provide assistance in the areas of fitness for
25 work assessment, functional capability analysis, liaison with
26 employees' physicians and assessment of employee medical
27 information, referrals to medical specialists, and task specific
28 employee medical reviews e.g. self contained breathing apparatus.

- 1 5) Hydro has introduced an Employee Attendance Management Program
2 to provide guidance to Front Line Supervisors and other line
3 management personnel in dealing with employees with high rates of
4 absenteeism due to incidental sick leave.
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- 6 6) A number of employee wellness initiatives have been introduced.
7 These include voluntary health risk appraisal clinics, a back care
8 program, and voluntary lunchtime presentations on topics such as
9 stress reduction, diabetes, heart disease, nutrition, etc.
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- 11 7) Hydro has introduced a number of health related programs such as
12 Community based smoking cessation and exercise programs as well
13 as after hours in-house activities such as Aikido, Yoga, Weight
14 Watchers.
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- 16 8) Hydro provides an Employee Assistance Program including such
17 activities as employee financial, family, and stress counselling, critical
18 incident intervention, and traumatic stress counselling.
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- 20 9) Hydro has also recently introduced pilot programs for in-house
21 lunchtime massage therapy and blood test collection services.