

## **Occupational Disease Specialty Program: Hand-arm Vibration Syndrome (HAVS)**

**Ron House, MD, FRCPC**

**Lori Brown, RN (EC), BScN, COHN**

**Centre For Research Expertise in Occupational Disease (CREOD) & St. Michael's Hospital**

Hand-arm Vibration Syndrome (HAVS) refers to the vascular, neurological and musculoskeletal health effects associated with the use of vibrating tools, a common occupational exposure. The Occupational Health Clinic at St. Michael's Hospital is the main centre in Canada for clinical assessment of HAVS and this has provided us with a unique opportunity for research on HAVS.

This poster synthesizes some key research activities that we have been involved in especially in the areas of:

- (1) Classification and assessment of the components of HAVS
- (2) The Effect of HAVS on upper extremity disability and quality of life
- (3) Underreporting and under-recognition of HAVS

Our research work and related activities indicate that HAVS is associated with considerable upper extremity disability and interference with quality of life. It is a common condition which is under-recognized by health professionals, employers and compensation boards and there is a need for increased focus on this problem with an emphasis on prevention.