



RESILIENCE: An International Conference on Multiple Chemical Sensitivity (MCS) Day 2

Date: May 2, 2025

Time: 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM EST

**Simultaneous translation (English and French), ASL, LSQ, CART
Captioning, and Zoom captioning are available in several languages**

Zoom Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84498777879>



AGENDA

Moderators:

Robert Lattanzio, Lawyer & Executive Director, ARCH Disability Law Center

Rohini Peris, President & CEO, the Environmental Health Association of Canada and the Environmental Health Association of Québec

9:05 AM – 9:30 AM

INTRODUCTION:

Rohini Peris, President & CEO, the Environmental Health Association of Canada and the Environmental Health Association of Québec

Michel Gaudet, Executive Director of the Environmental Health Association of Canada and the Environmental Health Association of Québec

9:30 AM – 9:50 AM

ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS CANADA:

Dino Zuppa, PhD, CEO, Accessibility Standards Canada

Developing Housing and Built-In Standards

Chief Executive Officer, Dino Zuppa, will share the latest updates on the work of Accessibility Standards Canada and present Air Quality research, and the current development of housing and built-in standards.

9:50 AM - 10:30 AM

Understanding MCS: A Global Perspective

EHAC-ASEC; ASEQ-EHAQ (Canada), **SOS MCS** (France), **CONFESQ** (Spain), **MCS-Aware** (United Kingdom), **AMICA** (Italy), **MCS Rosenheim** (Germany), **Kato Yasuko** (Japan), **Janice Foster** (Scotland), **AESSRA** (Australia)



This video features representatives from various international organizations dedicated to supporting individuals with MCS. Individuals will introduce their organizations, discussing their formation, purpose, and experiences in addressing MCS. The video shares insights into trends in MCS reports, including common social conditions, and challenges faced by individuals in obtaining diagnoses, accessing appropriate housing, and navigating the medical system. The conversation will also explore public awareness, organizational challenges, and potential policies or strategies that could foster a more inclusive environment for people with MCS.

Lived Experience: A Unique Lens from Kwanlin Dün Nation, Yukon

Ian Kuster, Person with Lived Experience of Multiple Chemical Sensitivity (MCS)

10:30 AM - 10:45 AM

Rohini Peris, President & CEO, the Environmental Health Association of Canada and the Environmental Health Association of Québec

Prevalence of MCS

ASEQ-EHAQ will present the prevalence of Multiple Chemical Sensitivity (MCS) based on international sources and the Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS). The presentation will emphasize Canadian data, particularly the challenges in healthcare access, employment, and daily living for people with MCS.

10:45 AM - 11:15 AM

Susan Yousufzai, Medical student at St. George's University School of Medicine, UK, with a Bachelor of Science and a Master of Public Health from Ontario Tech University.

Elaine Psaradellis, Researcher at the Environmental Health Association of Quebec.

Unmasking Misconceptions: Exploring Policy, Institutional, and Social Barriers Faced by Individuals with Multiple Chemical Sensitivity

Individuals with Multiple Chemical Sensitivity (MCS) suffer from serious health effects due to low-level chemical exposures, often resulting in limited access to everyday environments. Our research highlights how policy gaps, institutional failures, and social stigma fuel widespread misconceptions about MCS, further impacting the lives of those affected. Through focus group analysis, we identified sources and impacts of these misconceptions and offered recommendations, emphasizing that improved policies,



institutional compliance, and public awareness are key to better supporting individuals with MCS.

11:15 AM - 11:30 AM: HEALTH BREAK

11:30 AM - 12:00 PM

Nene Diallo, Researcher at the Environmental Health Association of Quebec

Adrianna Trifunovski, Researcher at the Environmental Health Association of Quebec

Research Project: Accessible Indoor Air in the Built Environment

- Identifying barriers to an accessible indoor air

Indoor air quality is often studied from a quantitative perspective. The presence and concentration of pollutants indeed play a central role in air quality assessments, exposure evaluations, and the occurrence of symptoms. However, beyond these pollutants are individuals whose habits contribute to either increasing or reducing their concentration. This includes activities such as cooking, cleaning, and the use of personal care products. The presentation aims to explore the human behaviors of non-disabled individuals that contribute to the presence of specific triggers in indoor air, thereby creating barriers to an accessible environment.

12:00 PM - 12:30 PM

Caroline Barakat, PhD, Associate Professor in the Faculty of Health Sciences at Ontario Tech University

Raising Awareness and Reducing Exposure: Educating for Safer Environments

This presentation explores the health risks associated with harmful chemicals such as parabens, phthalates, triclosan, lead, and perchloroethylene (PERCs), commonly found in personal care products, household cleaners, and industrial processes. These substances have been linked to endocrine disruption, neurotoxicity, and other long-



term health effects, posing particular risks for individuals with Multiple Chemical Sensitivity (MCS), who experience heightened reactions to environmental toxins. I will discuss the development and evaluation of an awareness toolkit designed to educate individuals about these risks and promote safer consumer choices. Additionally, I will present our latest findings on how targeted knowledge dissemination can effectively drive behavior change, reduce exposure to environmental toxins, and support vulnerable populations affected by multiple chemical sensitivities.

12:30 PM - 1:00 PM

John Molot, MD, Environmental Medicine. Adjunct Professor, Faculty of Medicine, University of Ottawa

The invisibility of MCS and the barriers and bias observed in society, health care, research, policy, and litigation

MCS will be examined through the lens of an invisible disability accompanied by multiple barriers to access. Bias and discrimination towards MCS found in various social domains, such as employment, health care, government policy, research and litigation will be reviewed.

1:00 PM - 1:45 PM: LUNCH BREAK

1:45 PM - 2:15 PM

Robert Lattanzio LLB, Executive Director, ARCH Disability Law Centre.

Understanding Ableism within Policy and Law

The presenter will explore key themes related to the impacts of systemic discrimination and underlying ableism that continue to create barriers through policy, regulatory, and legislative frameworks and schemes. The discussion will include examples from case law and case studies that examine decision-making at all levels of government and will offer



reflections and considerations on how to address the underlying ableism that continues to inform decision-making contrary to domestic and international human rights law.

2:15 PM - 2:30 PM

Melissa Pagliaro, Researcher, Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work (CCRW)

Inclusive employment for workers with Multiple Chemical Sensitivity: Best practices and insights from employment services for workers with disabilities

This presentation emphasizes the significance of workplace accessibility and disability inclusion, focusing on Multiple Chemical Sensitivity (MCS) and its impact on employment. Disability, MCS, and their interrelationship are defined and explored. Best practices for accommodating workers with MCS, such as implementing scent-free and low-emission policies, improving air quality, and providing flexible work arrangements, are highlighted. The challenges in accommodating MCS, such as unmet accessibility needs, limited data, and employer barriers are addressed. Strategies to overcome these challenges, including promoting inclusion and accessibility and leveraging supports and resources, are discussed.

2:30 PM - 2:45 PM: HEALTH BREAK

2:45 PM – 4:00 PM

Civil Society Panel Discussion

Rohini Peris, President and CEO of the Environmental Health Association of Canada and the Environmental Health Association of Québec

Michel Gaudet, Executive Director, Environmental Health Association of Canada and the Environmental Health Association of Québec

Maureen Haan, President and CEO of the Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work.



Bill Adair, Executive Director at Spinal Cord Injury Canada

Melanie Langille, President and CEO of NB Lung

Freda Uwa, National Executive Director of Independent Living Canada

Jamie McCleary, Executive Director of Autism Canada

Shelley Petit, Chair of the New Brunswick Coalition of Persons with Disabilities

4:00 PM - 4:30 PM

Lawyer Paul-Claude Berube, LLB, Former president of Accessibility Standards Canada

The Time to Act is Now!

This closing address reflects on the progress, setbacks, and urgent need for action in addressing Multiple Chemical Sensitivity (MCS). Delivered by a long-time advocate, the speech underscores the disconnect between growing awareness and the lack of meaningful societal and institutional change. It calls for official recognition of MCS, improved healthcare training, legislative reform, and inclusive policies that ensure economic, medical, and social support for those affected. With a strong emphasis on equity, dignity, and the responsibility to act, this speech challenges all sectors—government, healthcare, industry, and civil society—to turn awareness into action and make this moment a turning point in the fight for justice and inclusion.

4:30 PM - 4:50 PM

Recognition Ceremony

The Environmental Health Association of Canada and the Environmental Health Association of Québec recognize Caroline Barakat, and Robert Lattanzio for their continued efforts to pioneer innovative research to develop a biological understanding of MCS. These two individuals have consistently initiated the inclusion of MCS in their respective fields.

Caroline Barakat, Associate Professor in the Faculty of Health Sciences at Ontario Tech University



Robert Lattanzio LLB, Executive Director, ARCH Disability Law Centre.

4:50 PM - 5:00 PM

Conclusion

Robert Lattanzio, Lawyer & Executive Director, ARCH Disability Law Center

Michel Gaudet, Executive Director of the Environmental Health Association of Canada and the Environmental Health Association of Québec

Rohini Peris, President & CEO, the Environmental Health Association of Canada and the Environmental Health Association of Québec