

## PROFILE 4

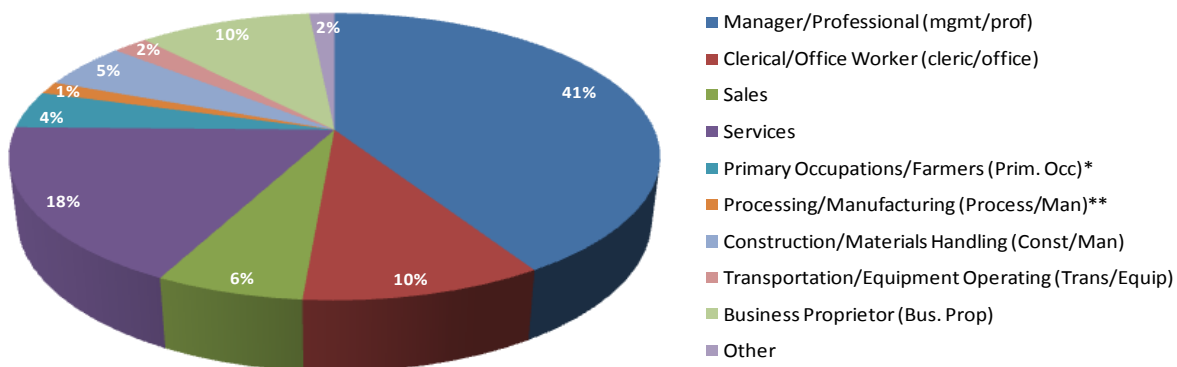
### Addictive Behaviours by Type of Industry and Occupation

In *The Alberta Survey of Addictive Behaviours and Mental Health in the Workforce: 2009*, addictive behaviours (smoking, alcohol use, other drug use and gambling) were assessed in 2817 employed adults. This profile highlights the impact of industry and occupation type on the prevalence of addictive behaviours across the provincial workforce in 2009.

#### ***Distribution of Occupations***

Respondents' occupations were categorized using the National Occupational Classification system produced by Human Resources and Skills Development Canada in 2006 (see Figure 1). The majority of participants were managers or professionals (41%), followed by service personnel (18%), clerical/office staff (10%) and business proprietors (10%).

**Figure 1: Distribution of Occupational Categories**








\***Primary Occupations/Farmers** = oil and gas; fishing/hunting/trapping; forestry/logging; mining; and farming/ranching.

\*\***Processing/Manufacturing** = treat material for use; produce unfinished material for tile, food, newsprint, lumber, cloth etc.

#### ***Does occupation influence the prevalence of addictive behaviours?***

Substantive differences across job categories were found for smoking and alcohol use, while other drug use and problem gambling showed more marginal variations (see Table 1). The lifetime prevalence of smoking was highest amongst construction workers (31%), transportation/equipment operators (34%) and those working in primary occupations (30%). Likewise, problem drinking patterns mirrored the trends noted for smoking; workers in construction (9%), transportation/equipment operation (11%) and primary occupations (9%) showed elevated rates relative to other occupations. In contrast, managers/professionals were least likely to smoke (15%) and less likely to engage in problem drinking (3%). Although clerical/office workers were at the lowest risk (2%) for problematic alcohol use, their rates of mood medication use were highest (13%) in the sample. Sales persons were at greatest risk of illicit drug use and problem gambling. Problem gambling was most common to sales and service staff, as well as those employed in primary occupations.

**Table 1: Lifetime Prevalence (%) for Addictive Behaviours by Occupation Type**

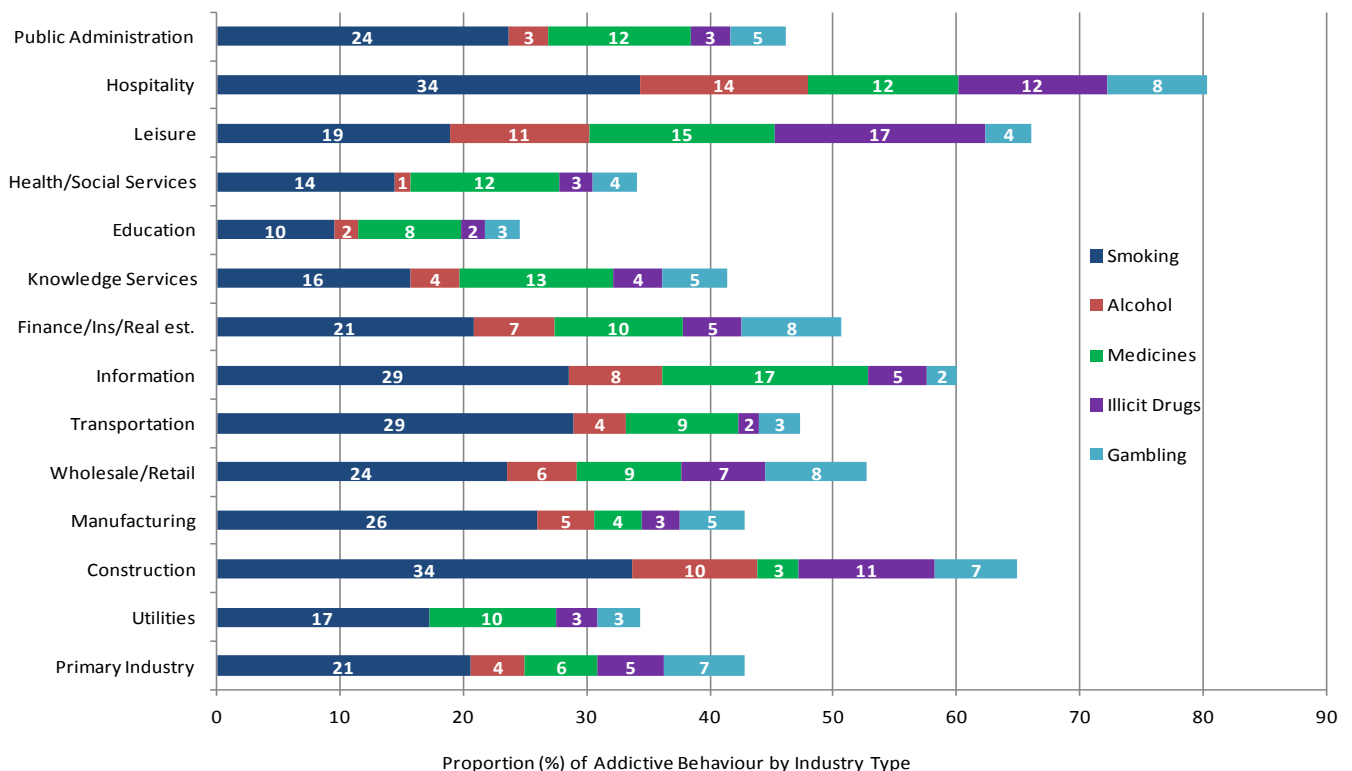
	Mgmt/Prof	Cleric/Office	Sales	Services	Prim. Occ	Process/Man	Const/Mat	Trans/Equip	Bus. Prop	Total
	15%	20%	22%	23%	30%	23%	31%	34%	25%	20%
	3%	2%	6%	7%	9%	3%	9%	11%	4%	5%
	10%	13%	10%	10%	8%	5%	3%	12%	8%	9%
	2%	1%	6%	2%	3%	0%	4%	3%	4%	3%
	4%	6%	8%	8%	8%	5%	4%	3%	5%	5%

From top to bottom the pictures represent: smoking, alcohol use (moderate to severe), medication (mood) use, illicit drug use and problem gambling. Highlighted cells reflect the occupations at greatest risk for each addictive behaviour.

***Does type of industry influence rates of addictive behaviours?***

The prevalence of addictive behaviours varied significantly by the type of industry (see Figure 2). Individuals working in the hospitality industry were most prone to engaging in addictive behaviours, followed by those employed in leisure and construction industries. With the exception of prescription use, professionals in education and health/social services had, on average, a much lower tendency to addictive behaviours.

**Figure 2: The Proportion (%) of Individuals with an Addictive Behaviour by Type of Industry**



**Note:** Response categories were not mutually exclusive; therefore more than one addictive behaviour could be selected by employees.

## **Summary**

- Almost half of the workforce sample was comprised of managers/professionals - an occupational category showing a much lower risk for addictive behaviours.
- Employees most vulnerable to smoking and problem drinking were from construction, transportation/equipment operation and primary occupation sectors. Sales personnel were most likely to use illicit drugs and gamble excessively.
- Hospitality, leisure and construction industries fared worst, while education and health/social services fared best in terms of their employees' engagement in addictive behaviours.

To conclude, the disproportionate number of managers/professionals included in the sample may have lead to an underestimate of addictive behaviours across the Albertan workforce in 2009. When prevalence estimates were grouped by occupation and industry, certain lines of work seemed to be a risk factor for addictive behaviours. This information may be useful for the identification of and intervention for employees struggling with addictions. Furthermore, these results may be used to shape the types of programming and funding invested into targeted workforce prevention and health promotion initiatives. Although occupation and industry type play a role in addictive behaviour prevalence, they are not the only contributors; mental health status (see Profile 3) and other job factors (see Profile 6) also influence individual vulnerability to addictive behaviours.

For a link to the full report, *The Alberta Survey of Addictive Behaviours and Mental Health in the Workforce: 2009*, visit: <http://ihe.ca/publications/library/2011/the-alberta-survey-of-addictive-behaviours-and-mental-health-in-the-workforce-2009/>

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