

## Psychologically Safer Workplaces and Disability Prevention

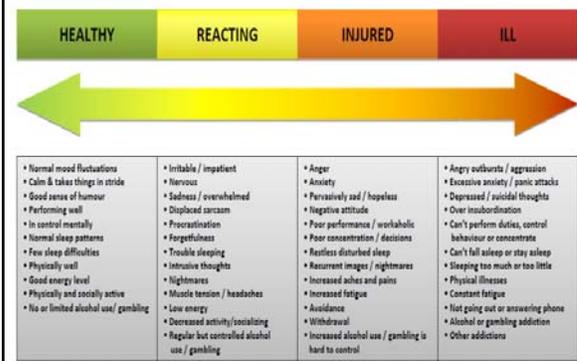
## The Stats

- One in five of us will experience mental illness in our lifetime
- Most will have a significant episode between the ages of 18 and 65
- 2 out of 3 of the people who need help will not get it

## Objectives

- Learn some facts about workplace mental health
- Overview of workplace risks to psychological safety and how to address the same
- Discuss social support in the workplace as a disability prevention/management strategy
- Review practice tools and free resources to support you moving forward

### Mental Health Continuum Model



## Facts and Figures

- Mental illness is the number one cause of disability in the United States. the World Health Organization. The World Health Report 2004: Changing History. Estimates for 2002; A126-A127. Geneva, Switzerland.
- 217 million workdays are completely or partially lost each year due to mental illness Hartig R. & Baker C. The impact of mental disorders on work. Pflger Outcomes Research. Publication No P0002061.Pflger, 2003.
- The economic impact of depression was more than \$210 billion in 2010. Greenberg et al. The Economic Burden of Adults with Major Depressive Disorder in the U.S. (2005 and 2010). Journal of Clinical Psychiatry 2012, 73(2):225-232.

## What is underneath what we see?



## The World of Work

- Changing and increasing workplace demands with fewer resources
- Constant change, new technology
- Faster pace of work
- Ever evolving roles and job duties
- Global competition
- Lack of training and time for managers to deal with complex issues

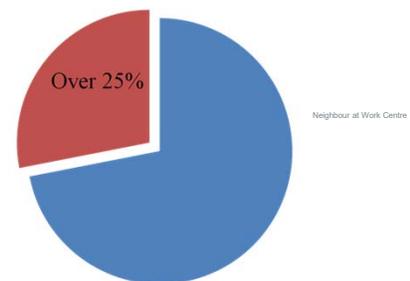
## Mental Injury

*Reasonably foreseeable and significant harm to a fellow worker's mental health resulting in their temporary or long-term inability to function as normal at work and/or at home.*

## OHS in Today's Workplace

- The definition of workplace health and safety includes mental harm prevention
- World Health Organization (WHO) definition of health: "a state of complete physical, **mental**, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity."
- Psychological safety and physical safety are intrinsically linked

## Portion of Total Cost of Mental Disability born by Employers due to Mental Injury



## Basic Human Needs and Mental Health at Work

- Risks to mental health can arise when basic needs at work are not met
  - e.g. needs for physical and psychological safety, need for belonging, need for social justice, need for self-efficacy, need for autonomy
- Not all mental illness is brought to work: sometimes the workplace contributes to it or even causes it, in which case we may call it "**mental injury**"

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## Levels of prevention:

### Primary prevention (at the source)

- redesigning tasks or environments, encouraging participation, creating flexible working conditions and increasing social support

### Secondary prevention (along the path)

- health promotion, relaxation techniques, stress and conflict management skills training, screening for early symptoms/exposures

### Tertiary prevention (at the worker - helping those with problems)

- include internal or external counselling services, stress management services, support services, rehabilitation programs and return-to-work initiatives

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### A psychologically safe workplace is:

- One that allows no [significant] harm or injury to employee mental health in negligent, reckless or intentional ways

### The PF 13

**PF 1: Organizational Culture**  
A work environment characterized by trust, honesty and fairness.

**PF 2: Psychological and Social Support**  
A work environment where coworkers and supervisors are supportive of workers' psychological and mental health concerns and respond appropriately as needed.

**PF 3: Clear Leadership & Expectations**  
A work environment where there is effective leadership and support that helps workers know what they need to do, how their work contributes to the organization and whether there are impending changes.

**PF 4: Civility & Respect**  
A work environment where workers are respectful and considerate in their interactions with one another, as well as with customers, clients and the public.

### Goal: Zero Mental Injuries at Work

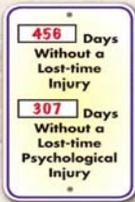


Image: courtesy of Benefits and Pensions Monitor 2009

### The PF 13 (cont.)

**PF 5: Psychological Demands**  
A work environment where it is determined as a matter of course whether any given activity of a job may be a hazard to the worker's psychological wellbeing.

**PF 6: Growth & Development**  
A work environment where workers receive encouragement and support in the development of their interpersonal, emotional and job skills.

**PF 7: Recognition & Reward**  
A work environment where there is appropriate acknowledgement and appreciation of workers' efforts in a fair and timely manner.

**PF 8: Involvement & Influence**  
A work environment where workers are included in discussions about how their work is done and how important decisions are made.

### Workplace Factors

CSA Z1003-13 Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace  
[www.guardingmindsatwork.ca](http://www.guardingmindsatwork.ca)

Psychological & social support	Organizational culture	Clear leadership & expectations	Civility and respect	Psychological demands
Growth and development	Recognition and reward	Involvement and influence	Workload management	Engagement
Work/life balance	Psychological protection	Protection of physical safety	... others identified by workers	

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### The PF 13 (cont.)

**PF 9: Workload Management**  
A work environment where tasks and responsibilities can be accomplished successfully within the time available.

**PF 10: Engagement**  
A work environment where workers enjoy and feel connected to their work, and where they feel motivated to do their job well.

**PF 11: Balance**  
A work environment where there is recognition of the need for balance between the demands of work, family and personal life.

**PF 12: Psychological Protection**  
A work environment where workers' psychological safety is ensured.

**PF 13: Health Physical Environment**  
A work environment in which a worker's psychological as well as physical safety is protected from hazards and risks related to the worker's physical environment.

## Addressing Risks

*Based on survey results*

### Example of Responses

**PF 9 Workload Management**

- Conduct job analyses to define workload demands and areas for improvement
- Conduct job audits for the purpose of evaluating quality of work distribution
- Conduct regular monitoring of individual/team workloads
- Discuss with your staff ways in which they feel their work could be better managed and/or distributed
- Supply time management, planning and prioritization training

### Example of Responses

**PF 4 Civility and Respect**

- Maintain a workplace culture where disrespectful or uncivil behaviour is immediately addressed
- Manage conflict in an effective and timely fashion, and ensure follow-up with all parties involved
- Ensure that supervisors/managers are present, available and in contact with employees to more easily discern and resolve problems
- Promote and reinforce respectful leadership behaviour

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## Psychological & Social Support PSF#1

### Example of Responses

**PF 5 Psychological Demands**

- Perform job analyses involving employees and management to assess *interpersonal, emotional and physical skill demands* of the job
- Compile a comprehensive description of the type of person required (knowledge, skills, abilities, social skills, personal needs, values, interests, personality traits) for specific jobs
- Assess and redeploy personnel to jobs within their personal/interpersonal capability
- Work to develop a culture in which emotional intelligence is understood, valued and used as a key criterion for recruitment, selection, promotion and performance review

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## OBJECTIVE

A work environment where coworkers and supervisors are supportive of employees' psychological and mental health concerns, and respond appropriately as needed.

### Suggested Action Items

- **Work Environment (Norms, Values & Practices)**
- **Training & Development**
- **Communication**
- **Formal Policies & Programs**

### While off work

- We haven't forgotten about you.
- We hope you begin to feel better soon.
- We're looking forward to when you return. How can we help?

### What does it look like day to day?

- Acknowledging
- Valuing
- Inclusion

### When returning to work

- Welcome back. We missed you.
- This is what we've been up to while you were away.
- How can we help you be successful at work?

### In response to observed changes At Work

- I notice  
(describing without judgment)
- I'm concerned  
(describing what the impact is)
- What would be helpful?  
(collaborating on possible solutions)

### Free Resources

- [Guarding Minds@Work](https://www.guardingmindsatwork.ca/)  
<https://www.guardingmindsatwork.ca/>
- [Supporting Employee Success; A tool to plan accommodations](https://www.workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com/pdf/Supporting_Employee_Success_EN.pdf)  
[https://www.workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com/pdf/Supporting\\_Employee\\_Success\\_EN.pdf](https://www.workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com/pdf/Supporting_Employee_Success_EN.pdf)
- Mental Health America  
<http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/workplace-wellness>