Building Healthier Workplaces
National Standard on Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace

Mental Health Commission of Canada

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Background

2006: Senate Committee publishes *Out of the Shadows at Last* – first and largest national study on mental health, mental illness and addictions

2007: The MHCC is created by the Government of Canada

2006: Senator Michael Kirby, Chair of the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology
Mandate

The MHCC is an action-based organization charged with collaborating with stakeholders and partners to help to transform the Canadian mental health landscape.

- Change attitudes and behaviors
- Support system change and improvements to services and support

Three Strategic Priorities

1. To Be a Catalyst
   MHCC is a catalyst for system and social change that leads to improved mental health for Canadians.

2. To Collaborate
   The MHCC collaborates and partners with people and organizations that have a role to play in transforming the mental health system to accelerate change.

3. To Ensure Sustainability
   Financial, Organizational, Social
The Issue

- 2/3 of Canadians are at work 60% of their time
- The costs of not addressing mental health issues in the workplace are significant, both through lost productivity and disability claims.
- Employers are increasingly being held legally responsible for psychological health and safety in the workplace
- Outside of the workplace, this is a broad based public health issue

The Issue (cont.)

- At least 1 in 5 Canadians will experience a mental health problem in any given year, most are adults of working age
- In Canada, mental health is the leading cause of both Short Term Disability (STD) and Long Term Disability (LTD)
- Time off and return to work:
  - The longer someone is off, the less chance there is of a successful return to work
  - 6 months off – 50%, 9 months – 10%;
Workplace and Strategy

The Commission launched the Mental Health Strategy for Canada on May 8th 2012 and priority 1.3 is focused on creating mentally healthy workplaces. The Commission is now working towards catalyzing action on the recommendations.

SD 1 – Prevention and Promotion

Priority 1.3: Create mentally healthy workplaces.

- 1.31: Implement the Psychological Health and Safety Standard in the private and public sectors.
- 1.32: Increase capacity to implement comprehensive approaches to mentally healthy workplaces.
SD 2 – Recovery and Rights

Priority 2.2 – Actively involve people living with mental health problems and illnesses and their families in making decisions about service systems.

- 2.22: Create opportunities for people living with mental health problems and illnesses to take up positions at all levels within the mental health workforce.

Priority 2.3 – Uphold the rights of people living with mental health problems and illnesses.

- 2.33: Review and, where necessary, update legislation and revise policies across jurisdictions and sectors to achieve alignment with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Background

- Global Business and Economic Roundtable on Addiction and Mental Health
- Martin Shain, PhD – seven areas of law trending towards holding employers increasingly responsible for providing a psychologically safe workplace
- Consensus Conference (2009) of business, labour, clinicians and other stakeholders - unanimous consensus

> “It is our vision to see the development of a National Standard of Canada on psychological health and safety in the workplace by December 1, 2011, and uptake by employers resulting in a measurable improvement in psychological health and safety within three years of that date.”

- Vancouver, BC (2010) group came together to address the need for immediate information about providing a psychologically safe workplace
Purpose of the Standard

Help prevent psychological harm from conditions in the workplace

Help promote psychological health in the workplace through support

Why a Standard?

1. Enhanced Cost Effectiveness
2. Improved Risk Management
3. Increased Organizational Recruitment
4. Retention
5. Corporate and Social Responsibility
Who Developed the Standard

COLLABORATORS

FUNDERS

Scope

“...provides a framework to create and continually improve a psychologically healthy and safe workplace ...”

Guiding Principles

Commitment by Senior Management
Participation with all
Integration of PHS
Shared responsibility
Focus on health, safety, awareness and promotion
What is the Standard?

• Voluntary

• Aligned on existing standards and tools

• Intended to provide guidance for changing how mental health and mental illness are approached in the workplace

• It is applicable to any organization

• Intended to enable both employers and employees to measure progress

What is the Standard?

• Five elements 1) policy 2) planning 3) implementation 4) evaluation and corrective action 5) management review and continual improvement

• Four Requirements

• Informative annexes are included to help users develop approach to implementation and integration

• Process – public consultation
Contents

• Preface
• Clause 0 – Introduction
• Clause 1 – Scope
• Clause 2 – Normative References
• Clause 3 – Terms and Definitions
• Clause 4 – Psychological Health and Safety Management System
• Clause 5 – Management Review and Continual Improvement

PHS Management System

4.4 Implementation
Infrastructure and resources
Preventive and protective measures
Education, awareness, communication
Sponsorship, engagement, change management
Implementation governance
Competence and training
Critical event preparedness
Reporting and investigations
External parties
PHS Management System

4.5 Evaluation and Corrective Action
Monitoring and measurement
Internal audits
Preventive and corrective action

5 Management Review and Continual Improvement
Review process
Outcome of the review process

Informative Annexes
Supplemental Background and Context
Resources for Building a PHS Framework
Sample Implementation Models
Case Studies
Sample Audit Tool
Discussion of Relevant Legislation or Regulation as of Sept 2011
Related Standards and Guides
Informative References
Technical Committee

• Volunteer experts from 5 interest categories:
  - Organization interest
  - Employee interest
  - Service provider interest
  - General interest
  - Regulator/Insurance/Policy interest

• Decisions follow rules for consensus - more than a simple majority

Standards Development Process

1. Request/Evaluation/Authorization
2. Meetings/Draft
3. Internal Review
4. Technical Content Approval
5. TC Reaches Consensus
6. Notice of Intent
7. Assign to Committee
8. Public Review
9. Procedural Approval
10. Final Edit/Publication
11. Dissemination
12. Maintenance
What can your organization do?

- Read the Standard and the annexes
- Ensure you have a champion in the organization who will take responsibility for moving forward
- Know where you are now – understand what you are doing and what you need to do – use available tools to assess your current status (e.g. GM@W, the Standard’s audit tool)
- Get senior management and other key leaders in your organization on board and develop a policy statement around workplace psychological health and safety
- Take advantage of other tools such as the Action Guide for Employers, Mental Health First Aid, Workplace Strategies for Mental Health

Employers Action Guide

- 6 steps, 24 employer actions to enhance and protect PH&S
- Actions are:
  - Evidence-consistent
  - Practical
  - Flexible
  - Stand-alone
- Support implementation of the Standard in workplaces of all sizes
- Free access to guide (MHCC website)
What is Mental Health First Aid Canada?

The help provided to a person developing a mental health problem or experiencing a mental health crisis.

Mental Health First Aid teaches people how to:

• Recognize the signs and symptoms of mental health problems
• Provide initial help
• Guide a person towards appropriate professional help

Our numbers continue to grow:

• MHFA Canada joined the MHCC in early 2010
• Instructors increase from 250 to 600+
• First Aiders increase from 19,000 to 50,000+

MHCC Workplace

Committed to becoming a model workplace with regard to employee psychological and physical health

The Commission has dedicated resources toward the promotion and protection of employee mental and physical health and safety. The following elements are in place:

• Employee Committees:
  - Health, Safety and Wellness (primarily physical health)
  - Psychological Health and Safety (mental health)
• Joint physical and psychological health and safety policy statement
• Employee Wellness Survey – Feb. 2012
Coming together is a beginning.
Keeping together is progress.
Working together is success.

~ Henry Ford

Thank you

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