Building Mental Health into Operations During COVID-19

RCC Retail Community Video Conference – Sep 16, 2020

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Opening Minds
Mental Health Commission of Canada
Pandemic Impact on Retail Workers

• A lot of extra work
• Pressure to stay healthy
• Customer satisfaction
• Harassment and violence
• Balance
• Access to resources
Dealing with Distressed Customers

• Early detection system
• Train everybody
• Intervene in pairs
• Personalize every issue
• Work with others

“The behaviours, not the disease, are what we can manage.”

Katie Robinette,
Executive Director, Healthy Minds Canada
Preventive Actions

• Reduce stigma
• Recognition of signs and symptoms of mental illness
• Guidance on where to go for support
• Education about trauma and its effects
• Education about the effects of cumulative stress
• Training for managers and supervisors on interpersonal skills and empathy
FUNCTIONAL AREAS OF THE BRAIN

LATERAL VIEW

PARietal lobe
- reading;
- body orientation;
- sensory information;
- understanding language.

FRONTAL lobe
- thinking;
- speaking;
- reasoning;
- problem solving.

Occipital lobe
- vision.

Temporal lobe
- memories;
- hearing;
- behavior;
- generation emotions.

Cerebellum
- coordination;
- balance;
- vestibular;
- attention.

BRAIN stem
- breathing;
- temperature;
- heart rate.
## The Working Mind - Mental Health Continuum Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HEALTHY</th>
<th>REACTING</th>
<th>INJURED</th>
<th>ILL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Normal fluctuations in mood</td>
<td>Nervousness, irritability, sadness</td>
<td>Anxiety, anger, pervasive sadness, hopelessness</td>
<td>Excessive anxiety, easily enraged, depressed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normal sleep patterns</td>
<td>Trouble sleeping</td>
<td>Restless or disturbed sleep</td>
<td>Unable to fall or stay asleep or sleeping too much</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physically well, full of energy</td>
<td>Tired/low energy, muscle tension, headaches</td>
<td>Fatigue, aches and pains</td>
<td>Exhaustion, physical illness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consistent performance</td>
<td>Procrastination</td>
<td>Decreased performance</td>
<td>Unable to perform duties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socially active</td>
<td>Decreased social activity</td>
<td>Social avoidance or withdrawal</td>
<td>Isolation, avoiding social events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No trouble/impact due to substance use</td>
<td>Limited to some trouble/impact due to substance use</td>
<td>Increased trouble/impact due to substance use</td>
<td>Dependence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Suicidal thoughts and/or intentions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MH Continuum Self-Check Tool

The Mental Health Continuum Self-Check tool is a useful way to monitor the mental well-being of your workers (and your organization) and help you identify the impact of your efforts to manage workplace mental health.
Workplace Factors

- Organizational culture
- Psychological and social support
- Clear leadership and expectations
- Psychological demands
- Growth and development
- Recognition and reward
- Workload management
- Engagement
- Balance
- Civility and respect
- Involvement and influence
- Psychological protection
- Protection of physical safety
- Other chronic stressors

Download free:
https://theworkingmind.ca/workplace-resources
Clear Leadership & Expectations

- Communication plan
- Acknowledge feelings, fears and concerns
- Celebrate successes, reward and recognize
- Communicate about:
  - Signs and symptoms of Covid-19 infection
  - Health and safety measures
  - Chain of command
  - Accommodation of high risk workers
  - Expectations to comply with law and guidelines
  - Available resources
  - Sources of information
Protection of Physical Safety

Present when a worker’s psychological, as well as physical safety, is protected from hazards and risks related to the worker’s physical environment.
Protection of Physical Safety

✓ Monitor and manage workload
✓ New of equipment, workstations and processes
✓ Preventive maintenance for protective systems
✓ Work pace and duration
✓ Task variability
✓ Right to refuse unsafe work
Protection for High-Risk Workers

- Consider accommodation for workers who live with anxiety or mood disorders
  - Adjustment to workload or schedules
  - Expedited or increased benefits for mental health support and treatment
  - Systematic check-in, buddy system
  - Additional supports to help with management of symptoms
Protection for High-Risk Workers

• Contamination obsession and cleaning and washing compulsions during pandemic can result in:
  • More intense sensory experiences
  • Over-estimate threat, excessive worry
  • Dry, chapped skin, dermatitis
  • Increased risk of super-imposed skin infection and chemical exposure injuries

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Supporting Your Workers

- Workload Management
- Psychological Demands
- Balance
Psychological and Social Support

• Self-care coordinator
• Access to wellbeing and mental health services
• Spiritual care counsellor
• Peer support team
• Mental Health First Aider
• Managers and supervisors trained in interpersonal communication and empathetic listening
Psychological and Social Support

Talking to Someone in Crisis during COVID-19
How can I help my team poster
How am I doing poster
How can I help someone in mental distress poster
The Working Mind COVID-19 Self-care & Resilience Guide
Coping With Stress, Anxiety, And Substance Use During Covid-19
Coping with Stress, Anxiety, and Substance Use During Covid-19: How Animals Can Help
Virtual Care for Mental Health and Substance Use During COVID-19
Managing COVID-19 financial stress
How to manage return anxiety as the lockdown lifts
Caring for Others: Virtual crisis response training
Psychological and Social Support

Wellness Together Canada: Mental Health and Substance Use Support

Introduction
We recognize the significant strain that COVID-19 has placed on individuals and families across the country. Many people are concerned about their physical and mental well-being. Canadians are being challenged in a number of ways because of isolation, financial and employment uncertainty and disruptions to daily life. Wellness Together Canada provides tools and resources to help Canadians get back on track. These include modules for addressing low mood, worry, substance use, social isolation and relationship issues.

What is Included
Wellness Together Canada offers the following at no cost to Canadians:
2. Self-guided courses, apps, and other resources.
3. Group coaching and community of support.
4. Counselling by text or phone.

Where to Start
Click the ‘Get Started’ button below to create an account. You have the option of completing a wellness self-assessment, and then choosing from the full range of no cost options for support. Without an account you can access immediate support by text and other helpful resources below.

For COVID information and a physical self-assessment of COVID symptoms click here.

Get Started  Sign In

Crisis Text Line:
Adults Text WELLNESS to 741741
Youth Text WELLNESS to 686868

Emergency:
Call 911
Transitions Between Stressful Events

- Disassociation
- Deep breathing
- The Pause
  [Link](https://thepause.me/)
- Low impact debriefing
- Access to professional debriefing
Psychological Protection

- Social stigma and xenophobia
  - Education about discrimination and xenophobia
  - Communication of policies and procedures for preventing, reporting, and addressing acts of discrimination, harassment and violence

**Video Resource:**
Social Stigma and COVID-19: Protecting Your Workers. Interview with Dr. Keith Dobson
Resource Hub: Mental health and wellness during the COVID-19 pandemic

Are you creating balance during a pandemic?

As stated in the CAAA's Workplace Mental Health Playbook for Business Leaders, an imbalance between work and family life is a strong risk factor for mental illness. It's been shown to be more detrimental to mental health than work-related stress. This checklist will help employers focus on balancing their employees' energy for optimal psychological and physical functioning in their professional and personal lives.

**Do you...**

- Define flexible work, limits on connectivity and work hours
- Encourage workers to take breaks and to use time off for working and life-related needs
- Empower workers to adjust and to take time for themselves
- Provide access to virtual stretching, exercising and meal plans
- Support
- Uplift
- Define
- Re-evaluate
- Focus
- Erase
- Prioritise
- Guide
- Rost
- Enact
- Prior
- Health
- Elicit
- Cont...
- Other

Mental Health First Aid

MHFA is the help provided to a person developing a mental health problem, experiencing a mental health crisis, or a worsening of their mental health.

More than 400,000 Canadians have been trained since 2007.

The Working Mind

COVID-19

Self-care & Resilience Guide

The Working Mind (TWa) is an education-based program designed to address and promote mental health and reduce the stigma of mental illness in a workplace setting.

This training is aimed to:
- Improve short-term performance and long-term mental health outcomes
- Reduce barriers to care and encourage early access to care
- Provide the tools and resources required to manage and support employees who may be experiencing a mental illness
- Assist supervisors in maintaining their own mental health as well as promoting positive...
Thank you/Merci

For more information or to inquire about training or implementing a workplace mental health strategy, please contact:

Liz Horvath
613-325-3818
lhorvath@mentalhealthcommission.ca

To sign up for email notifications about workplace resources, visit https://theworkingmind.ca/workplace-resources