

# Mental Well-being in the Workplace

A healthy workplace supports the mental well-being of its employees. All employees have the right to feel mentally safe at work.

**Mental well-being** is a positive idea; it is a state of health in which the person realizes his or her own skills, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and effectively and is part of the community.

**Mental illness** is a recognized illness that results in the loss of an individual's mental, emotional or social abilities. A person can have a diagnosed mental illness and still enjoy good mental well-being.

Evidence shows that one in five Canadians will experience a mental health problem or illness in any given year. Mental health problems are a leading cause of worker disability.

Work stress, work demands and stigma/disrespect can make it difficult to cope on a daily basis and can affect our mental well-being.

## Why should we care?

People who have good mental well-being have;

- self confidence
- good self esteem
- the ability to create and maintain healthy relationships
- sense of meaning and purpose
- balance between work, play, rest and activity
- the ability to concentrate and be productive at work
- the ability to cope with the stresses of life

The benefits of creating a mentally healthy workplace are increased creativity, productivity, employee loyalty, job satisfaction and cooperation. This applies to all workplaces regardless of size, sector or specialization.

**Everyone shares the responsibility for creating and maintaining mental well-being in the workplace**

**CSA\* standard Z-1003-13 - the National Standard of Canada for Psychologically Healthy and Safe Workplaces** was introduced in 2013. The standard highlights 13 key areas of potential risk that can have a profound effect on the mental well-being of all employees in the workplace.

- **The organizational culture** - Is there trust honesty and fairness?
- **Psychological and social support** – Are all employees supportive of each other?
- **Clear leadership and expectations** – Does everyone know what they need to do?
- **Civility and respect** – Are all interactions respectful and considerate?
- **Psychological demands** – Does the workplace value and support employee mental well-being?
- **Growth and development**- Does the workplace support and encourage employee development?
- **Recognition and reward** – Is there is appropriate acknowledgement and appreciation of workers' efforts?
- **Involvement and influence** – Do workplace decisions involve employee input?
- **Workload management** – Can the job can be done successfully in the time allowed?
- **Engagement** – Do workers feel connected and motivated?
- **Balance** – Is there balance between demands of work, family and personal time?
- **Psychological protection** – Do workers feel safe to ask questions, seek feedback, report mistakes and bring forth new ideas?
- **Protection of physical safety** – Does the workplace comply with all regulatory policies, training, and risk assessments of potential hazards?

**Start the Conversation...open the lines of communication!**

**Information adapted from...**

Mental Health Commission of Canada – CSA Z-1003-13 Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace National Standard and Resources <http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/English/node/5346>

Great West Life Centre for Mental Health in the Workplace  
<http://www.workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com/index.asp>

CCOHS – Mental Health at Work [http://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/psychosocial/mentalhealth\\_work.html](http://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/psychosocial/mentalhealth_work.html)

CMHA - Mental Health Works - <http://www.mentalhealthworks.ca/>

**\*Canadian Standards Association (CSA)**