



▶ WORKPLACE MENTAL HEALTH TRAINING

More than one in four Canadian workers say their daily lives are highly stressful, according to a 2011 Statistics Canada report. More than 60 per cent of those “stressed” report work-related issues as the main problem.

This epidemic is taking a heavy toll. In any given week, as many as 500,000 Canadians will miss work because of mental illness.

Affected workers are suffering irritability, anxiety, depression and other mental injuries. Research also suggests stress is a significant contributing factor to health impacts ranging from the common cold and musculoskeletal disorders to heart disease and cancer. In fact, stress is currently listed as a high-priority exposure for review by the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC).

For businesses, mental illness is estimated to cost the Canadian economy in excess of \$50 billion dollars annually. Mental illnesses account for approximately 30 per cent of short and long-term disability claims. In fact, they are the fastest growing disability claim in Canada.

Fortunately, many work-related stressors that give rise to mental injuries and stress-related illnesses can be identified and eliminated. With this in mind, the Workers Health & Safety Centre (WHSC) offers a range of stress/mental injuries training programs and other resources aimed at raising awareness and targeting preventive interventions at the workplace level.

Stress in the Workplace

▶ Duration 3.00 hours

Mounting evidence shows workplace stress is a serious hazard posing significant risk to workers' health and the financial well-being of businesses. This program is designed to equip participants with information helping them to understand the tell-tale signs in those suffering stress-related health impacts. The many aspects of work that can be stressful to workers are explored along with strategies to eliminate or reduce exposure. This program includes several practical tools participants can use in their workplace for assessing harmful working conditions and related health impacts, including the Copenhagen Psychosocial Questionnaire (COPSOQ).

Workplace Violence and Harassment

▶ Duration 3.00 hours

This program is designed to raise awareness about the serious risk to physical and mental health posed by workplace violence and harassment. It is also intended to help workplace parties understand and comply with the legal requirements mandated by the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* to address violence and harassment (including domestic violence). Employers, for instance, are required to develop workplace-specific violence and harassment policies and programs. Essential elements of these will be explored including procedures for workers to report incidents along with worker training.

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Participants will discuss workplace-specific strategies for identifying and assessing potential for workplace violence and harassment and observing for evidence of domestic violence. Also discussed will be specific control measures for eliminating or controlling potential exposure to violence and harassment.

French program available.

Note: The WHSC also offers compliance checklists for both employers and workers along with fact sheets on workplace violence, harassment and bullying. These can be accessed at www.whsc.on.ca under the Resources banner.

Critical Incident & Post Traumatic Stress

▶ Duration 3.00 hours

Participants review the many causes of critical incident stress (CIS) and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) including major catastrophes, violent situations and hazardous exposures. How the body responds to stressful situations or events is explored in terms of acute and chronic health effects. Equally important is a focus on primary prevention in order to eliminate or limit exposure to stressors along with methods for coping with CIS and PTSD such as counseling provided through Employee Assistance Programs. Participants will also discuss the development and implementation of policies and programs dealing with CIS and PTSD.

Psychosocial Hazards and Workplace Mental Health

▶ Duration 3.00 hours

This program provides a basic understanding of psychosocial work hazards and how they may impact workers' mental health. It outlines the health effects associated with psychosocial hazards and explores a range of workplace factors from job demands/job control and worker engagement to civility and respect. Equally important, participants will discuss a host of methods to identify and assess psychosocial hazards including policies and programs, physical and cognitive demands analysis and workplace surveys. The program concludes with a discussion on preventative and protective measures for a safer and healthier workplace. The use of video clips and case studies also engages learners and helps them identify and understand contributing and workplace factors and gain a basic understanding of the accommodation process.

