



Trends in Mental Health in the Workplace: Psychologically Healthy Workplaces



*Ian Arnold
Mental Health Commission of Canada
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Learning Objectives

Following this presentation, participants will:

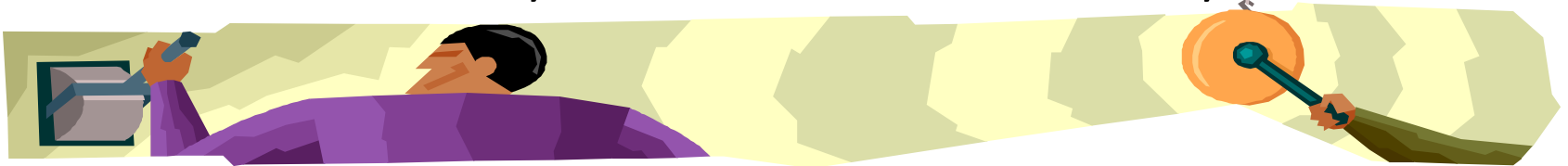
- Understand the role of the Mental Health Commission of Canada and the Workforce Advisory Committee
- Understand the business case for dealing with psychological health and safety in the workplace
- Be aware of the Mental Health Commission of Canada's standard development strategy





The MHCC - in the beginning:

- Senate Standing Committee on Mental Health – Chaired by Senator Kirby
- Many studies completed including “Out of the Shadows at Last”
- Public demand for a Commission on Mental Health recognized in “Out of the Shadows at Last”
- August, 2007 - Prime Minister Harper announced the formation of the MHCC, Chaired by the Honourable Michael Kirby



- All governments in agreement - the Commission design, structure and mandate recognizes Canadian constitutional reality – health care is a provincial and territorial responsibility
- Eight volunteer advisory committees set up including the Workforce Advisory Committee (WAC)



What is the MHCC's mandate?

- Non-profit, at arm's length from all levels of government, funding from Health Canada.
- Five strategic initiatives:
 - Mental health strategy for Canada;
 - Anti-stigma/discrimination initiative;
 - Knowledge exchange;
 - Homeless research demonstration projects;
 - Partners for Mental Health.
- MHCC as “catalyst” for mental health system transformation.





What is the Workforce Advisory Committee Doing?

Six strategic initiatives (3 covered in this presentation):

- **Review of the jurisprudence psychological health and safety in the workplace (Dr. Martin Shain)**
- Research project on employment sustainability for persons with significant mental health issues (U of T “Aspiring Workforce project”)
- Research project to define existing best practices (SFU – “Integrated Approach to Workplace M. H.”)
- **Leadership Initiative – the business case**
- **Development of workplace standards for psychological health and safety**
- Initiated development of an MHCC peer support accreditation and certification process (LCol Stephane Grenier)





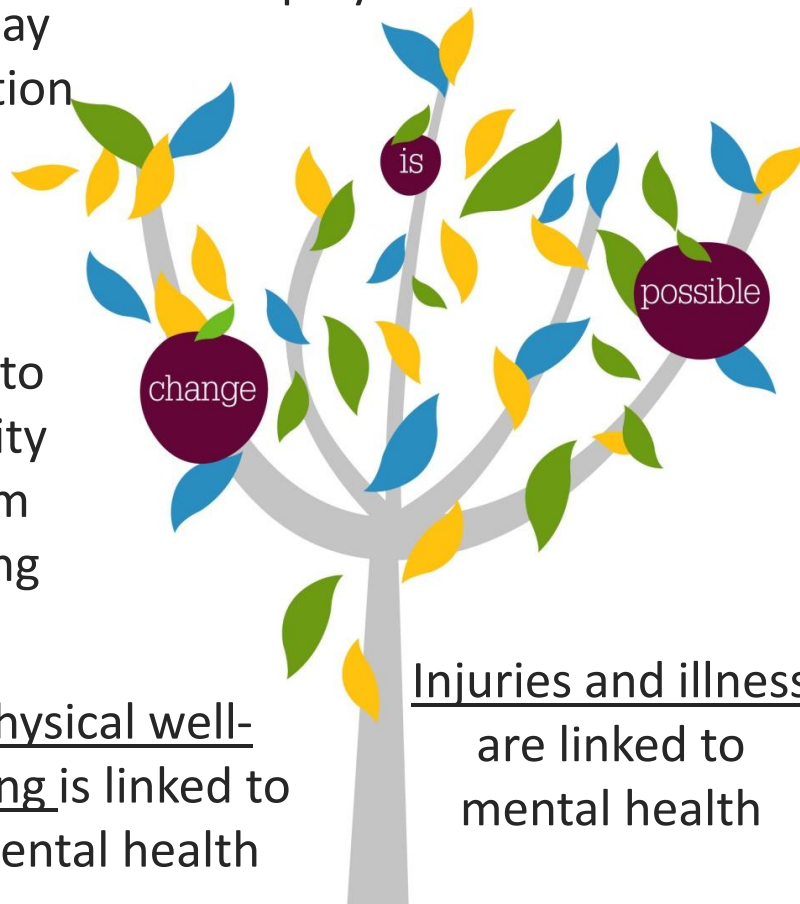
So many issues...why workplace mental health?

Changing demographics may increase competition for talent

Cost trends due to turnover, disability and absenteeism may be increasing

Physical well-being is linked to mental health

Productivity is linked to employee mental health



Injuries and illness are linked to mental health

“Organizations should address the conditions that cause overload at work”
(Duxbury 2010)

“Dow Chemical Company . . . forefront of innovation and development in Health & Productivity programs . . . company placed in the “high-effectiveness” category in this year’s study” Watson Wyatt Worldwide, 2010



The Business Case is Clear

1. Corporate Social Responsibility

Towards employees, the community,
shareholders,
and other stakeholders



Whose responsibility is it?

“When it affects *my* business,
it is *my* responsibility.”

And...Bill C45 takes it even further.*

*Bill C-45 is federal legislation that became law on March 31, 2004. It established new legal duties for workplace health and safety; imposed serious penalties for violations resulting in injuries or death; and provided new rules for attributing criminal liability to organizations, including corporations, their representatives and those who direct the work of others.



Mental Health in the Workplace

Building Leadership Commitment

 [Don McKinnon](#)

This Video is part of a series of Videos available at
<http://www.mhccleadership.ca/>



Working can be good for mental health

Disability duration is less when:

- ❖ There is positive mental health (all disabilities)
- ❖ Good coping strategies for stressors exist
- ❖ Workplace issues are resolved quickly
- ❖ There is high employee engagement

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%
- ❖ Focus on prevention and early intervention





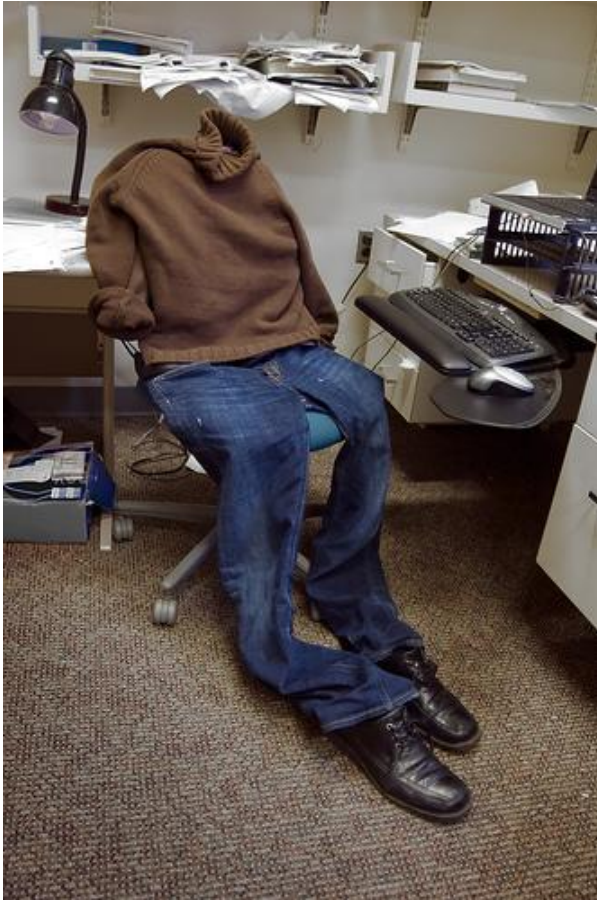
The Business Case is Clear

2. Cost Effectiveness

The biggest single cause of workplace related disability in Canada is associated with mental health conditions



Watson Wyatt Worldwide 2009/2010 Survey*



- In Canada, mental health is the leading cause of both STD and LTD, in the U. S. it is the 4th greatest cause for STD and the 3rd for LTD
- Companies with the most effective health and productivity programs:
 - ❖ 11% > revenue per employee
 - ❖ < medical trends by 1.2%
 - ❖ 1.8 fewer days absent per employee
 - ❖ 28% > shareholder returns

* The study involved 282 U. S. and 70 Canadian organizations representing more than 11 million employees in all major industry sectors

<http://www.towerswatson.com/research/648>



The Business Case is Clear

3. Risk Management

Risk to organizations and employees from psychological health and safety factors is clearly increasing



Dr. Martin Shain said...

“We observe seven major trends in the law becoming stronger by the year.

We can characterize these trends as pressures building toward a perfect legal storm, where the whole is far greater than the sum of the parts.”

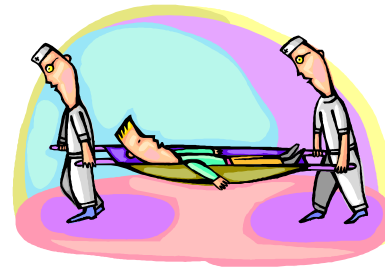
*A psychologically safe workplace is no longer a “nice to do”.
It is now a “must do”.*





Mental injury and psychological safety in the workplace

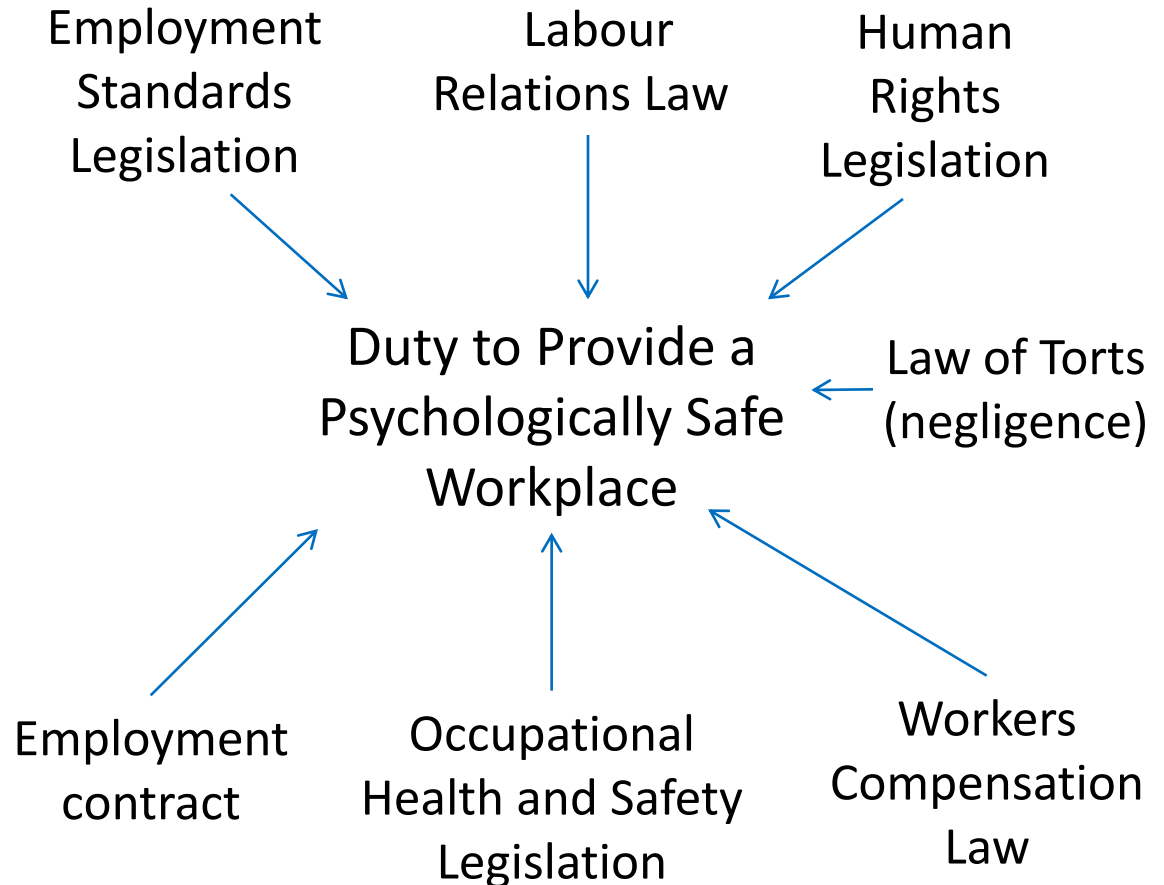
- **Mental injury** is not the same as mental illness. It is harm to mental health [mental suffering] that significantly affects the ability of employees to function at work and at home.



- “A **psychologically safe workplace** is one in which every practical effort is made to avoid reasonably foreseeable injury to the mental health of employees” (Shain, 2009)



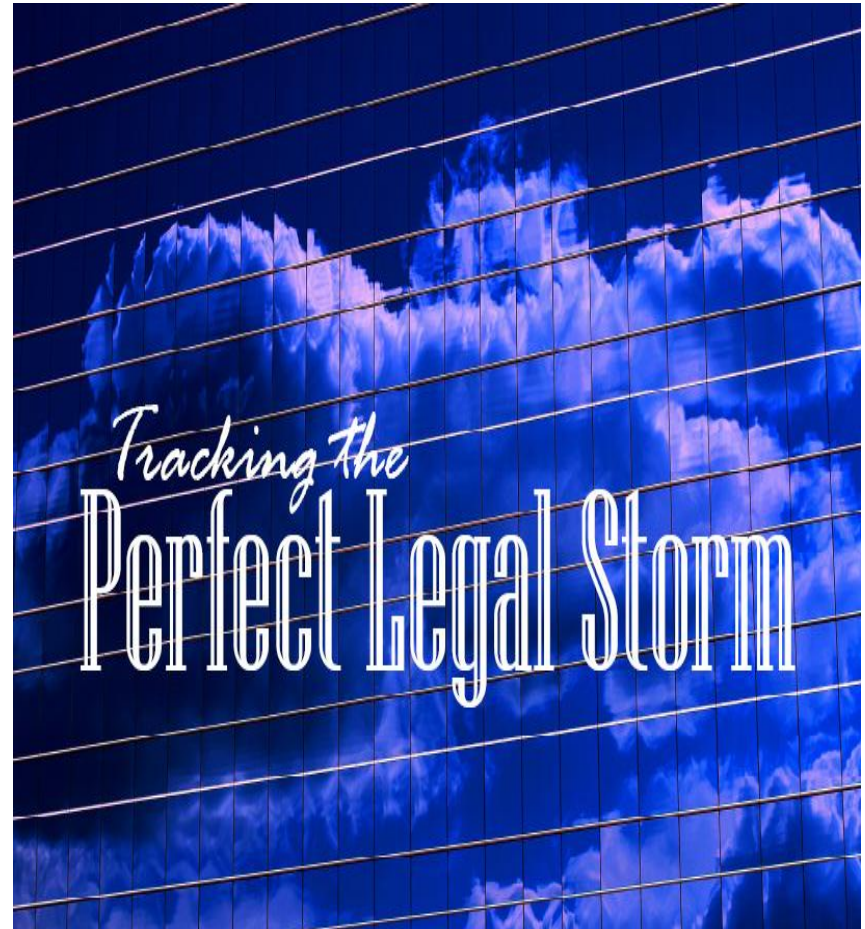
Influences on the Duty to Provide a Psychologically Safe Workplace





Tracking the Perfect Legal Storm (Shain, 2010)

- A perfect legal storm is brewing in the area of mental health protection at work
- This storm brings with it a rising tide of liability for employers who fail to provide a psychologically safe work environment
- Yet, employers lack the tools to assess and address workplace risks to psychological health





Shain (2009) recommendations for psychological safety at work: Corporate and national policy levels

- Corporate level:
employers wise to
identify, measure, assess
and abate threats to
psychological health
- National policy
 - ❖ Population health policy
– zero tolerance
 - ❖ National standards for
measurement and
management along with
training, education,
advice and consultation





The Business Case is Clear

4. Recruitment and Retention

Engaged employees generate 43% more revenue than disengaged ones*

* Hay Group – “Engage Employees and boost performance 2001”



Recruitment and Retention: Towards sustainable organizations

Employees today expect organizations to support personal and professional growth – good mental health is one of the keys to success

Attracting employees in a competitive market is a challenge



Prospective employees are looking for the “right culture” to support their personal and professional ambitions

Positive workplace mental health enhances organizational sustainability, including employee recruitment and retention.



Action Plan for the Workplace – Towards a National Standard



- 2007/10 Shain reports commissioned
- 2008/2009 – WAC advises MHCC BoD re: Shain report key recommendations
- December 2009 - MHCC/WAC, with Great West Life, holds consensus meeting in Vancouver – National Standard supported by all attendees, consensus statement issued
- Early 2010, discussion held with Canadian Standards Association (CSA) and the Bureau de Normalization du Quebec (BNQ)
- 02/10 Statement of Understanding agreed to by MHCC, CSA, BNQ



Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace – a National Standard for Canada

- Objective: to provide employers with a methodology that will lead to measurable and sustainable improvements in psychological health and safety
- Stand alone, voluntary standard
- To be developed jointly by the Canadian Standards Association and the Bureau de Normalization du Quebec, contracted by MHCC
- Will align with other international efforts.





Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace – Alignment with other Standards

- Will be consistent with the British Standards Institutes Guidance document, the OHSAS 18000 and CSA Z 1000 Health and Safety Standards, and the BNQ Healthy Enterprises standard
- Standard to follow the ISO framework with 5 key elements:
 - ❖ Policy and commitment
 - ❖ Planning
 - ❖ Implementation and Operation
 - ❖ Checking and Corrective Action
 - ❖ Management Review





Action Plan for the Workplace – A Sustainable Approach



A sustainable approach is needed:



1. Set Policy, demonstrate commitment
2. Plan – assess where you are now and where you want to go – define needs
 - ▣ Financial impact (absenteeism, presenteeism)
 - ▣ Employee health impact
 - ▣ Structural attributes that promote good mental health (Guarding Minds at Work)
3. Implement programs that address your organizations defined needs
4. Evaluate program operation and effectiveness
5. Review, reassess and improve



Conclusions

- A systematic and sustainable approach for psychological health and safety, on a parallel with how physical health and safety is managed, is becoming a business imperative;
- The business case is clear – social responsibility, cost effectiveness, risk management, and recruitment and retention;
- Development of a standard on psychological health and safety in the workplace will provide a solid basis for action: leadership commitment, policy, planning, implementation, measurement, and review will ensure continual improvement for employees and employers.

The time to act is now



A selection of resources that are available on-line

The MHCC Leadership Initiative:

<http://www.mhccleadership.ca/>

The Shain Report:

http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/Key_Documents/en/2009/Stress%20at%20Work%20MHCC%20V%203%20Feb%202009.pdf

Guarding Minds at Work:

<http://www.guardingmindsatwork.ca/>

The Great West Life Centre for Mental Health:

<http://www.gwlcentreformentalhealth.com/english/index.asp>

Working Through It – Stories of People dealing with workplace mental health issues:

<http://www.gwlcentreformentalhealth.com/english/display.asp?l1=2&l2=17&l3=173&d=173>

The Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC):

<http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/Pages/index.html>

Business in the Community – Business Action on Health (BITC – U. K.),

http://www.bitc.org.uk/workplace/health_and_wellbeing/index.html



Thanks for your interest



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