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Commission  
of Canada

Commission de  
la santé mentale  
du Canada

# Don't isolate those working in isolation

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April 27, 2016, 12:00 - 1:00 p.m. ET

#WorkplaceMH

 @MHCC\_  /theMHCC  /Mental Health Commission of Canada

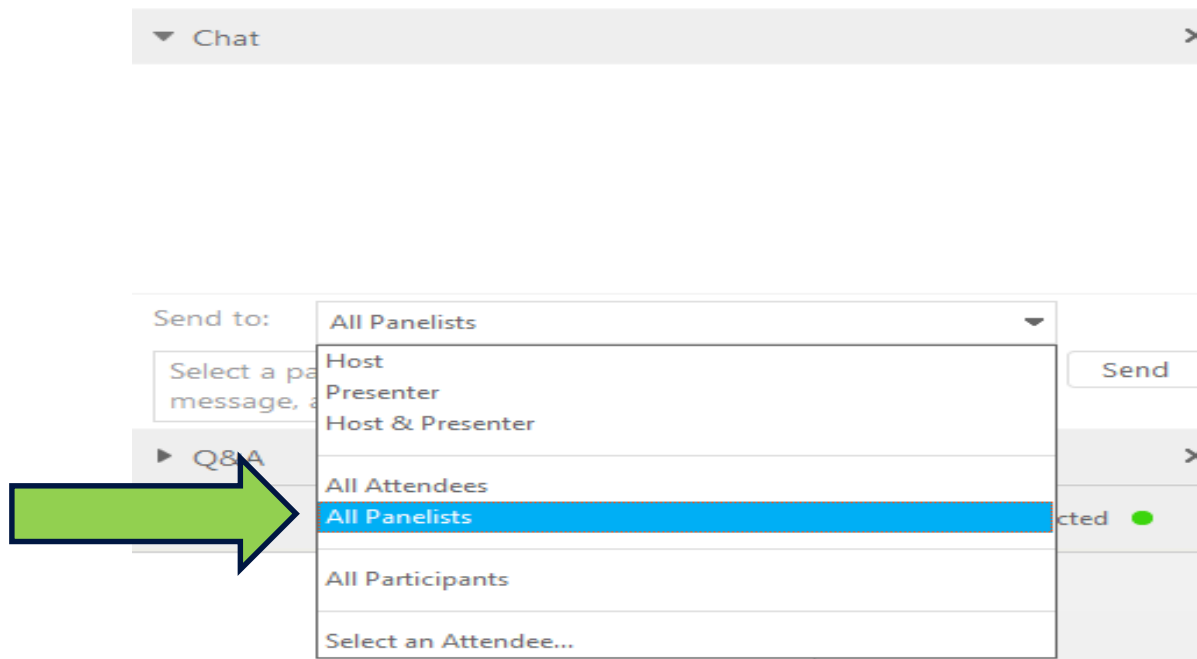
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**Important!** Send questions/comments to  
'All Panelists'



@mhcc\_ #workplaceMH #StandardCda

# Presenters



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Trucking HR Canada



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# Focus of Today's Webinar

- Importance of mental health in the workplace
- Working alone or in isolation
- Mental health in the trucking industry
- Trucking HR Canada initiatives
- Addressing the issues
- Q & A

# Everybody's Business



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500,000



Canadians, in any given week, are unable to work due to mental health problems or illnesses.

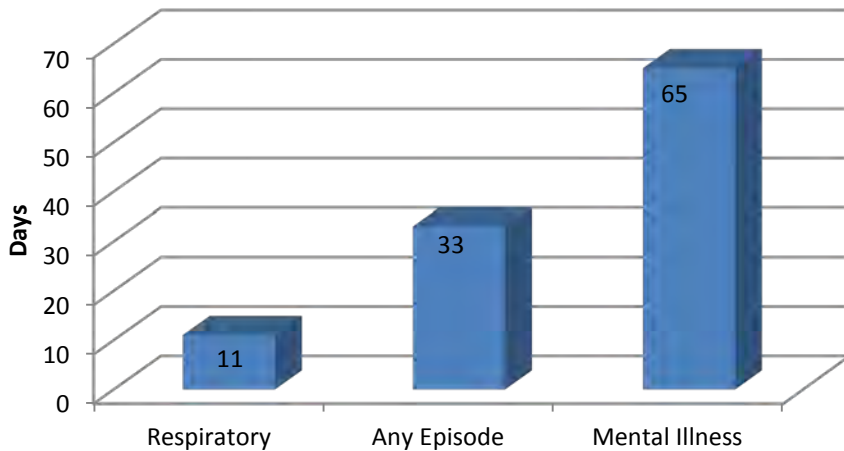
**\$51 BILLION**



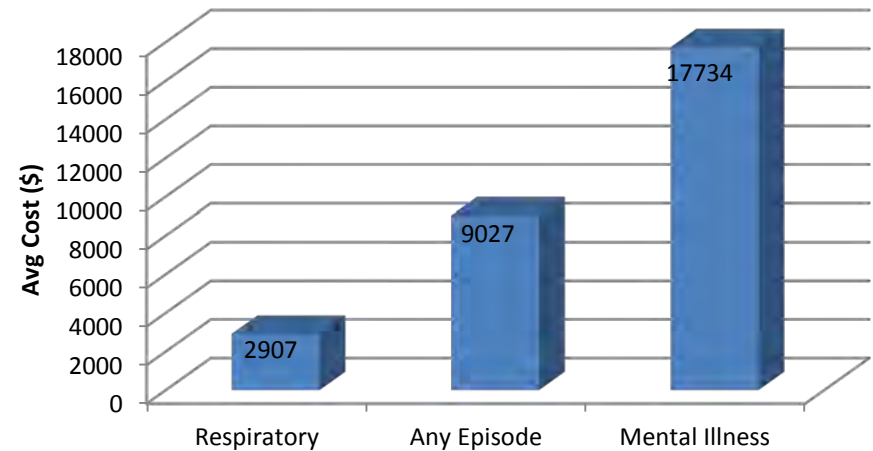
# Facts & Figures

Case study example (Dewa, Chau, & Dermer, 2010)

**Episode Length**



**Cost Per Episode**



# Stigma



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What are some of the labels  
you've heard being used for  
individuals with mental illness?

# What is meant by working alone or in Isolation

A person is "alone" at work when they are on their own; when they cannot be seen or heard by another person.

Source: Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety definition



Do you or  
anyone you  
know work  
alone or in  
isolation?



Employers have a duty to care



# Industry Examples where employees work alone or in isolation

- Transportation
- Construction
- Mining
- Postal
- Maintenance and Installation
- Oil and gas
- Forestry
- Health, home care, and social service employees
- Academia
- Remote outposts
- Night – shift employees
- Security guards

**B**urnout

**A**nxiety

**D**epression

**S**tress

# Mental Health in the Trucking Industry

Working in Isolation



# The Canadian Trucking Industry

- Approximately 2/3, by value, of Canada's trade to the US is moved by truck
- Well over 400,000 people employed in the sector
  - Approximately 300,000 Commercial Vehicle Operators (Drivers)





# About Trucking HR Canada

- National, not-for-profit partnership-based organization
- Promote the provision of safe, secure, efficient, and professional trucking services in Canada
- Neutral forum for gathering and exchanging ideas, information and knowledge on HR and best practices in training



# Trucking HR Canada Initiatives

- Supporting holistic health and wellness programs that address both physical and mental health needs
  - HR Seminars and Webinars to address unique mental health issues within the industry
  - Top Fleet Program



# Mental Health and Trucking

- Drivers are widely considered a vulnerable population with an unacceptably higher risk of injury, disease and mortality
  - Higher rates of obesity, diabetes, anxiety, depression, cardiovascular disease, and drug addiction than the average individual
  - Mental health issues play off physical health issues and vice versa



# Mental Health and Trucking

Stressors rooted in the transportation environment:

- Time pressures
- Loneliness
- Boredom
- Financial pressures
- Being away from home
- Negative public perception
- Driving conditions
- Road rage
- City traffic
- Violence
- Dangers around truck stops/warehouses
- Fatigue and loss of sleep



# Mental Health and Trucking

- The higher number of occupational stressors, the higher risk for social, psychological and psychiatric problems (like depression), substance abuse, risky sexual behaviours and suicide
- Occupational stress is highest for long-haul drivers

# Mental Health and Trucking

- PTSD and Drivers
  - Violence and accidents can lead to Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder among drivers
  - Symptoms of PTSD include:
    - Difficulty sleeping
    - Difficulty staying awake
    - Panic attacks
    - Problems concentrating



# Mental Health and Trucking

- How the industry impacts mental health
  - Hyper-masculine work environment
  - Limited health and wellness resources on the road
  - Regulations to be ‘physically and mentally fit’

# Mental Health and Trucking

- A recent study found truck drivers to be a highly underserved population with regards to mental health:
  - Loneliness (27.9%)
  - Depression (26.9%)
  - Chronic Sleep Disturbances (20.6%)
  - Anxiety (14.5%)
  - Other emotional problems (13%)



# Mental Health and Trucking

- Working in isolation
  - “It isn’t simply being alone that is hard. It’s missing those back at home. Sitting alone in the cab of a truck gives you a lot of time to think and reflect.”

‘TruckerMike’ – [TruckingTruth.com](http://TruckingTruth.com)

# Mental Health and Trucking

- “One of the most common reasons why people walk away from trucking is the relentless solitude; the isolation from their home, their family and their friends. And if that isn’t bad enough, the most heartbreaking part may be that it doesn’t necessarily end when you get home.”



Brett Aquila, founder of [TruckingTruth.com](http://TruckingTruth.com)

# Mental Health and Trucking

- High stress levels and mental health issues may lead to ‘self-medicating’ behaviours:
  - Drug use
  - Alcohol use
  - Sex work patronage

# Addressing the Issues

- Websites and Blogs

**HealthyTrucker**

Money Health Lifestyle Blog

## How To Be A Healthy Trucker

Facebook 472 Twitter Google+

Free Truck Driver Health Tips & Advice for Happier Living

Welcome to The Healthy Trucker, a website dedicated to providing the trucking industry with tips and expert advice to help you live a healthier, happier life on the road. The HealthyTrucker.net is a resource of real world advice for truckers and their families to live better, happier lives. We've brought in industry experts to work with our great team in creating the ultimate support system for truck drivers. From exercise and nutrition advice to information for better money management and tips to enjoy happiness, The Healthy Trucker is your co-driver for the "fitness of mind, body & wallet."

Here's The Latest Tips From The Healthy Trucker

**KETTLEBELL WORKOUTS FOR THE BUSY TRUCKER**

**LEARN MORE!**

**THE TRUCKING NETWORK**  
Serving the industry since 2012

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DRIVER HEALTH >>

### SO YOU GAVE UP ON YOUR HEALTHY LIFESTYLE...NOW WHAT?

Andrea Morley Nutritionist & Health Coach Healthy Trucker You spent the few couple of weeks in January eating perfectly and working out consistently, until you walk into a truck stop and notice your favourite

Read More >

### WHAT'S YOUR WHY?

By Siphwe Baleka, Founder of Fitness Trucking I had two drivers come into my office recently. Both of them had previously completed the Driver Health and Fitness (DHF) 13 Week Program. The first driver

Read More >

### CARRIER: HEALTH & WELLNESS MUST BE PART OF NEW ERA RETENTION PLANS

Carriers must do more in helping drivers get healthy if they hope to recruit and retain veteran drivers, says a fleet operator in the U.S. The trucking industry has lost more than 150,000

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**The Trucking Network**  
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# Addressing the Issues

- Websites and Blogs



# Addressing the Issues

- Social Media
  - Facebook Groups
  - Twitter Pages
  - Blogs



# Addressing the Issues

- Connecting with family, friends and fellow drivers via online while on-route
- Making the cab a home away from home
- Travelling with a pet
- Physical activity and exercise

# Industry Action

- June 2015
- Partnership between Trucking HR Canada and Canadian Trucking Alliance (CTA) to raise awareness around mental health within the industry
- Developed and delivered a webinar





# Industry Action

- **Guarding Minds @ Work**



**GuardingMinds**  
@ WORK

Guarding Minds @ Work:  
A Workplace Guide to  
Psychological Health & Safety

ENGLISH FRANÇAIS

# Employer Action

- Mental health education and resources during driver orientation
- Established Employee and Family Assistance Programs (EFAPs)
- Top Fleet program expanded to recognize mental health resources and supports

A blurred white truck cab is shown in motion, moving from left to right across the frame. The background is a soft, hazy landscape under a bright sky.

# Thank You!

[www.truckinghr.com](http://www.truckinghr.com)



manage the human side of trucking

# What Can You Do?

Questions that employers and employees might consider:

- What can we do to support your mental health at work?
- What will you do to maintain positive mental health?
- How will you let us know if you need more support? How should we approach you if we think you might be struggling? What words should we use?

Source: Mindful Employer Canada

# Resources

**Healthy Trucker** is a community of drivers, trucking companies and industry partners interested in creating a road to a healthier lifestyle for drivers: [www.healthytrucker.com](http://www.healthytrucker.com)

**The Healthy Trucker** provides tips for life on the road and the truck driving lifestyle: [www.thehealthytrucker.net/lifestyle](http://www.thehealthytrucker.net/lifestyle)

‘Driver Health’ News Category of **The Trucking Network** provides articles to support the physical health and wellness of drivers: <http://thetruckingnetwork.ca/category/driver-health/>

**Smart-Trucking.com** provides drivers with a range of resources including tips on maintaining mental health while on the road: [www.smart-trucking.com/tips-for-good-mental-health.html](http://www.smart-trucking.com/tips-for-good-mental-health.html)

**TruckingTruth.com** provides a positive, yet honest view of the trucking industry with friendly advice from experienced drivers. Of particular interest are the driver blogs. [www.truckingtruth.com](http://www.truckingtruth.com)

## National Standard / Training

National Standard for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace  
[www.csa.ca/z1003](http://www.csa.ca/z1003)

Assembling the Pieces - An Implementation Guide to the National Standard for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace  
[www.csa.ca/z1003](http://www.csa.ca/z1003)

Mental Health First Aid Training  
[www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/MHFA](http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/MHFA)

# Resources continued

## Articles

Nosowitz, Dan. *The Long White Line: The Mental and Physical Effects of Long-Haul Trucking*. Pacific Standard Magazine. Retrieved on April 18, 2016 from: <https://psmag.com/the-long-white-line-the-mental-and-physical-effects-of-long-haul-trucking-9b56afd0edbe#.eixzwnrsI>

'Alone Time as a Truck Driver, Can you Handle It?' Blog – TruckerMike. *Trucking Truth.Com*: [http://www.truckingtruth.com/trucking\\_blogs/Article-1717/alone-time-as-a-truck-driver-can-you-handle-it](http://www.truckingtruth.com/trucking_blogs/Article-1717/alone-time-as-a-truck-driver-can-you-handle-it)

'Solitude Becomes Every Truck Driver's Heaven or Hell.' Blog – Brett Aquila. *Trucking Truth.Com*:

[http://www.truckingtruth.com/trucking\\_blogs/Article-3638/solitude-becomes-every-truckers-heaven-or-hell](http://www.truckingtruth.com/trucking_blogs/Article-3638/solitude-becomes-every-truckers-heaven-or-hell)

Shattell, M. et al. *Occupational stressors and the mental health of truckers*. Issues in Mental Health Nursing. 2010; 31(9): 561-568: Retrieved from:

[http://www.academia.edu/509250/Occupational Stressors and the Mental Health of Truckers](http://www.academia.edu/509250/Occupational_Stressors_and_the_Mental_Health_of_Truckers)



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# Questions





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# Next Workplace Webinar

**Date:** May 25, 2016 at 12:00pm to 1:00pm ET

To watch our past webinars, visit our website at:  
[www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/English/workinar](http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/English/workinar)







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Please fill out the survey  
that opens **after** you leave  
the webinar





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# Thank you

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