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Mental Health First Aid and the National Standard for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace: A Lesson in Implementation

Maureen Carnegie Mental Health First Aid Project Facilitator, Humber College
Sjors Reijers Manager, National Program Promotions and Business Development, MHFA Canada
Samuel Breau Program Manager, Workplace, MHCC

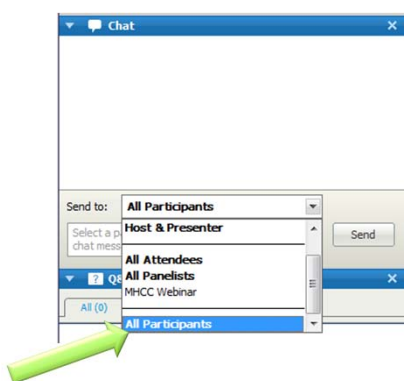
August 27, 2014, Noon - 1:00 p.m. ET

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**Important! Send questions/comments to:
'All Participants'**



Chat

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Host & Presenter

All Attendees

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All (0)

All Participants

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Presenters

		
Samuel Breau	Sjors Reijers	Maureen Carnegie
Mental Health Commission of Canada	Mental Health First Aid Canada, MHCC	Humber College


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Agenda

1. National Standard for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace
2. Mental Health First Aid
3. The Humber College Project: Successful Implementation of MHFA across the Ontario college sector
4. Question Period

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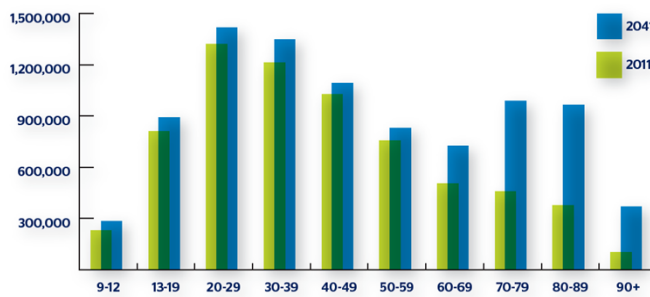
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Impact During Prime Working Years

- One person in five in Canada will experience a mental health problem or illness, with those in their early working years being most affected
- By age 35, about 50% of the population will have or have had a mental illness

Mental health problems and illnesses in the population (Canada)



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Mental Health in the Workplace in Canada

- Currently, **only 25%** of employees believe that their supervisor manages mental health issues effectively.
- Employers are increasingly being held **legally responsible** for psychological health and safety in the workplace.
- Nearly **3 in 4 people** (73%) say they have stopped doing things they wanted to do because of fear of stigma and discrimination often associated with mental health problems or mental illness.




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Mental Health in the Workplace in Canada

- **82%** of organizations rank mental health conditions in their top three causes of short-term disability (72% for long-term).
- The average responding organization in a recent study reported spending more than **\$10.5 million** annually on absence claims.
- In 2011, lost productivity due to absenteeism and presenteeism (present but less than fully productive at work) due to mental health problems and illnesses was **approximately \$6 Billion**.
- If unaddressed, the impact of mental health problems on lost productivity (due to absenteeism, presenteeism, and turnover) will cost Canadian businesses **\$198B over the next 30 years**.

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The Benefits of Positive Workplace Mental Health

Productivity:

- 1 in 6 employees are likely to experience problems with stress, anxiety or depression at any one time.

Recruitment and Retention

Cost Savings due to Disability and Absenteeism

Conflict Reduction

Operational Success

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Intent of the National Standard

- ✓ Wellness for all
- ✓ Reduce stigma
- ✓ Reduce stressors
- ✓ Happier workplaces, enhanced productivity, better health, safety, and fiscal performance
- ✓ Improved risk management
- ✓ Increased organizational recruitment
- ✓ Retention
- ✓ Corporate & social responsibility



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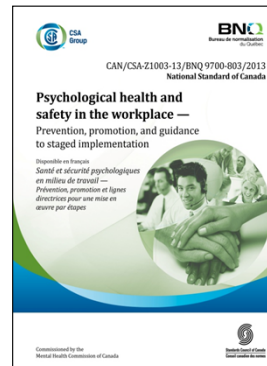
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Purpose of the Standard

Prevent psychological harm due to conditions in the workplace

Promote psychological health in the workplace through support



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What is the Standard?

The Standard is a set of guidelines, tools and resources focused on promoting employees' psychological health and preventing psychological harm due to workplace factors

- Voluntary – set of tools, not rules
- Aligned on existing standards and tools
- Applicable to any organization – regardless of size or sector
- Intended to enable employers and employees measure progress
- Doesn't create new legal obligations but may have influence on the application of 7 branches of law that currently exist
- Informative annexes are included to help users develop approach to implementation and integration

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Why Mental Health First Aid?

- Mental health problems are common
- Professional help is not always on hand
- Members of the general public often do not know how to respond
- There is stigma associated with mental health problems and illnesses
- Not everyone with a mental health problem or illness seeks treatment
- People may lack the insight to realize that they need help or that help is available
- Many people are not well informed

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Mental Health First Aid in Canada

- Over 100,000 people trained
- A network of over 1,000 instructors
- Active in every province and territory
- Active in every economic and social sector
 - Oil and gas
 - Construction
 - Education
 - First Responders
 - Social Services


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There is stigma associated with mental health problems

Imagine if we treated everyone like we treat people with mental illness.

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HEART DISEASE. JUST ANOTHER EXCUSE FOR LAZY PEOPLE NOT TO WORK.

IMAGINE IF WE TREATED EVERYONE LIKE WE TREAT THE MENTALLY ILL.

Shocking, isn't it? But it's true. People simply don't take mental illnesses seriously. They assume that those with mental illness are weak or somehow at fault for their suffering. But like heart disease or any other serious affliction, people with mental illness can't get better by themselves. The Canadian Psychiatric Research Foundation raises money to research mental illnesses in the hope of finding cures. Still, research into these diseases, which strike 1 in 5 Canadians, remains drastically underfunded. And that's as unsettling as the headline. We need your help. If you can, please give. Call 1-800-955-CRPF or visit www.cprf.ca



MENTAL ILLNESS IS REAL. HELP US FIND A CURE.

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A LOT OF PEOPLE GET CANCER BECAUSE THEY JUST CAN'T DEAL WITH REALITY.


IMAGINE IF WE TREATED EVERYONE LIKE WE TREAT THE MENTALLY ILL.

Shocking, isn't it? But it's true. People simply don't take mental illnesses seriously. They assume that those with mental illness are weak or somehow at fault for their suffering. But like cancer or any other serious affliction, people with mental illness can't get better by themselves. The Canadian Psychiatric Research Foundation raises money to research mental illnesses in the hope of finding cures. Still, research into these diseases, which strike 1 in 5 Canadians, remains drastically underfunded. And that's as unsettling as the headline. We need your help. If you can, please give. Call 1-800-955-CRPF or visit www.cprf.ca




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Myths and Facts about Mental Health

MYTH	Mental health problems or illnesses are rare
FACT	One in five people will experience a mental health problem or illness in the course of a year
MYTH	People with mental health problems or illnesses never recover
FACT	With the right support most people with mental health problems or illnesses get better
MYTH	People with depression could just “snap out of it” if they wanted to
FACT	People with depression have serious symptoms which aren’t within their control

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Aims of First Aid

Preserve life	Prevent deterioration of injury or illness
Promote healing	Provide comfort to the ill or injured

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Aims of Mental Health First Aid

<p>Preserve life where a person may be a danger to themselves or others</p>	<p>Provide help to prevent the mental health problem or illness from becoming more serious</p>
<p>Promote the recovery of good mental health</p>	<p>Provide comfort to a person experiencing a mental health problem or illness</p>


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Evidence-Based Outcomes

- Significantly greater recognition of the most common mental health problems or illnesses
- Decreased social distance from people with mental health problems or illnesses
- Increased confidence in providing help to others
- Demonstrated increase in help actually provided

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The Course

Basic Adult:	• 12 hours / 2 days / 4 sessions
Adults who work with Youth:	• 14 hours / 2 days / 4 sessions
Northern Peoples:	• 18 hours / 3 days
Instructor Training:	• 5 days / 6 days for Northern Peoples


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MHFA Action Plan: ALGEE

- A**ssess risk of suicide and/or harm
- L**isten non-judgmentally
- G**ive reassurance
- E**ncourage professional help
- E**ncourage other supports


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Signs and Symptoms

Recognizing signs and symptoms of developing mental health problems or illnesses:

- Substance Related Disorders
- Mood Disorders
- Anxiety Disorders
- Psychotic Disorders
- Deliberate Self-Injury (Youth Course)
- Eating Disorders (Youth Course)

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Crisis First Aid

- Suicidal behaviour
- Overdoses
- Panic Attacks
- Reactions to traumatic events
- Psychotic episodes

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Always Remember

MHFA *does not* train people to become counselors or therapists.


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MHFA as a PHAC Best Practice Intervention

BEST PRACTICE INTERVENTIONS	
Home	Home > Interventions-At-A-Glance > Mental Health First Aid Canada
Interventions-At-A-Glance	
Intervention Search Centre	MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID CANADA
Systematic Review Sites	
About Our Process	
Recommend an Intervention	Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) is the help provided to a person developing a mental health problem or experiencing a mental health crisis. Just as physical first aid is administered to an injured person before medical treatment can be obtained, MHFA is given until appropriate treatment is found or until the crisis is resolved.
Population Health Approach: the Organizing Framework	
Partners	The MHFA Canada program aims to improve mental health literacy, and provide the skills and knowledge to help people better manage potential or developing mental health problems in themselves, a family member, a friend or a colleague.
Join/Login	
Help and Feedback	
About Us	The program teaches people how to recognize the signs and symptoms of mental health problems, provide initial help, and guide a person towards appropriate professional help. MHFA shares the same overall purpose as traditional first aid – to save lives. It aims to preserve life where a person may be a danger to themselves or others, provide help to prevent the mental health problem from developing into a more serious state, promote the recovery of good mental health, and provide comfort to a person experiencing a mental health problem.
QUICK ACCESS BAR	
Selection Criteria	
Recommend an Intervention	
FAQs	
Glossary	
Contact Us	MHFA Canada has a basic course for adults, as well as a course specifically tailored for adults who interact with youth. These are 12 and 14 hour long courses, usually delivered in two back to back days. More than 60,000 Canadians are now trained in Mental Health First Aid (MHFA).

[Visit Intervention Site](#)
[Download Complete Intervention Summary](#)

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Making the Case for Investment

Course options:


- Send staff to become MHFA instructors
- Attend a public MHFA course
- Host an MHFA course in your workplace

How managers and staff work together to make mental health a priority for workplace health and safety


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Outline

- Mental Health in the Post-Secondary Sector
- The Issues
- The Response in Ontario
- Humber College's Project Proposal
- Current Status of the Project
- Project Goals – Institutional Level
- Project Goals – System Level
- Creating Buy-In – Institutional Level
- Creating Buy-In – System Level
- Outcomes – Institutional Level
- Outcomes – System Level
- Sample Responses of Institutional Leaders
- Sample Participant Feedback



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“The mental health and well-being of everyone working and learning in the post-secondary environment should be a central consideration of all post-secondary institutions. The development of a college environment that promotes mental health and well-being will benefit the entire campus community, supporting learning and success.”

Mental Health And Well-being in Post-secondary Education Settings, Gail MacKean, June 2011

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The Issues

- Mental illness was estimated to cost the Canadian economy over \$42.3 billion dollars in direct costs in 2011
- The annual number of people living with a mental health problem or illness is highest in young adults aged 20 to 30 – the age range in which the majority of post-secondary students fall
- Mental health problems and illnesses have a direct impact on academic and workplace satisfaction and success, and are directly related to retention rates
- Colleges have limited dedicated resources available to address student and employee mental health problems and illnesses, and access to community resources is inadequate in most jurisdictions

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The Response in Ontario

In fall 2012, the Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) announced the creation of a three-year Mental Health Innovation Fund for new projects that improve mental health services and outcomes for Ontario's post-secondary students. Overall allocation of funds has been set at \$7 million per year, up to the year 2015.

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Humber College's Project Proposal

- Utilize an established best practice model, Mental Health First Aid, to increase mental health literacy and provide sustainable, ongoing education on how to help those who may be struggling with mental health problems and illnesses
- Deliver Mental Health First Aid training to staff of Ontario colleges, with the goal of training at least 2,500 people
- Provide MHFA instructor training for 24 employees from 12 different academic institutions

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Current Status

22 of 24 Ontario colleges and one university are currently participating in the project

As of June 2014, over 1,800 college employees have taken the MHFA course

48 employees have now been trained as Mental Health First Aid instructors and are actively delivering the course

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Project Goals

Institutional Level

- Create greater awareness of mental health problems and illnesses
- Reduce the stigma associated with mental health problems and illnesses by demystifying mental health problems and “normalizing” their occurrence in many people’s lives
- Provide accessible, concrete intervention tools that go beyond theory to practice
- Enhance psychological support for students and employees as a component of fostering academic and workplace success

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Project Goals (Cont'd)

System Level:

- Contribute to the system-wide education and intervention initiatives aimed at improving mental health and mental health supports in Ontario's post-secondary sector
- Provide a fundamental, sustainable model for understanding and addressing mental health issues that is accessible to all organizational levels

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Creating Buy-In

Institutional Level:

- Generating greater awareness of the scope and impact of mental health problems or illnesses
- Capitalizing on employees' desire for more effective responses to mental health concerns occurring in the workplace (involving both students and staff)
- Establishing credibility by adopting an evidence-based, national/international model
- Establishing MHFA "champions" at the senior management level who actively participate in, endorse, and encourage staff to take part in MHFA training
- Providing numerous and convenient training opportunities

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Creating Buy-In (Cont'd)

System Level:

- Promoting the MHFA project as a system-wide initiative in keeping with the provincial Ministry of Training Colleges, and Universities (MTCU) Mental Health Innovations strategy
- Capitalizing on “word of mouth” communication by early adopters of the MHFA project within college networks
- Engaging in various outreach strategies to promote the project and encourage participation such as broadcast emails, newsletters, testimonials
- Offering opportunities to host courses and/or enroll staff in instructor training
- Did we mention that the course and the instructor training is **free?**

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Outcomes

Institutional Level:

- Development amongst staff of a basic understanding and a “common language” about mental health difficulties
- Improved capacity of all staff with regard to earlier identification of and intervention with those experiencing mental health distress
- Minimization of employee’s fear of those experiencing mental health distress and improvement in their confidence to directly address signs and symptoms in order to connect people with appropriate professional supports

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Outcomes (Cont'd)

System Level:

- Adoption of the Mental Health First Aid program across 92% of Ontario's colleges to date, either through hosting one or more MHFA courses delivered by Humber College, or by engaging staff members in MHFA instructor training opportunities or a combination of both options
- Embedding of a consistent understanding of, and response to, mental health problems or illnesses across the college system

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Sample Responses of Institutional Leaders

As a small rural campus with limited access to community mental health resources, our staff and faculty were struggling with how they could support students that were suffering from mental health issues. The Mental Health First Aid training gave our staff the confidence they needed to engage with students who needed our help, by broadening their understanding of various mental health conditions and by providing them with information that they can apply in their day-to-day work with students that are in distress. This training was not only necessary, it was essential, and potentially the most important professional development we have offered to our staff and faculty in recent years.

**Jamie Bramburger, Manager of Community and Student Affairs
Algonquin College (Pembroke campus)**

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Sample Responses of Institutional Leaders

Mental Health First Aid training provided our team with the tools to better equip ourselves to manage the ever-growing forces of complex mental health issues. There is an explicit set of skills gained, giving us the confidence to contribute to the wellness of students, staff, friends, family, and community. This set of skills is as important as emergency services, the air we breathe, and the people we love.

Nichole Roy, Mental Health Project Lead, Northern College

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Sample Responses of Institutional Leaders

As an administrator I can say, having been a participant as well as an institutional lead in implementing the program, that this is critical work, that it is impactful and ultimately makes a difference in students' lives. The efficacy of this work is not to be underestimated and its impact on staff and students is not to be underrated - participation in this workshop can and does make a difference in so many ways. Heartfelt thanks to Humber College for leading the way on this!

Dr. Craig Stephenson, Vice President Student and Community Engagement, Centennial College

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Participant Feedback

Comments on the question, “What is your overall response to this course?” include:

- *The course was very well presented and very relevant to my job. I feel that I now have the tools to recognize potential problems and how to deal with them.*
- *Great basic information - although I had a fairly good knowledge related to mental health disorders I was unaware of the "first aid" interventions.*
- *Provided concrete actions to take in situations that might arise with students, colleagues, and friends.*
- *All information was relevant and will be very helpful not only in the work environment but in my daily life. I would highly recommend the training for everyone.*
- *It is very eye opening. I learned so much that helps me understand my own mental illness and gained wonderful knowledge to help my daughter who also suffers.*

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Join the Conversation

Communicate. Contribute. Collaborate.



COLLABORATIVE SPACES is an online repository and conversation place for mental health in Canada. Share mental health information with others and learn from others as they post.

The more you contribute, the more robust a resource it will be!

<http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/English/spaces>

 @mhcc_ #workplaceMH #StandardCda #MHFaca

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Thank you

Contact us: sbureau@mentalhealthcommission.ca

Visit: www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/English/workinar

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