Mental Health First Aid In the Workplace
Keith Tyler
MHFA Instructor
Director of Training
St. John Ambulance

- St. John Ambulance is the leading first aid and safety charity in Canada. We are on a mission to get people SET™ for Safety at work, home and play.
St. John Ambulance

- We provide businesses and organizations with safety solutions that ensure the health and safety of their workers and promote a safety culture.
What comes to mind when you think of Mental Health?
What is Mental Health

• Mental Health is “the capacity of each and all of us to feel, think, and act in ways that enhance our ability to enjoy life and deal with the challenges we face.

• It is a positive sense of emotional and spiritual well-being that respects the importance of culture, equity, social justice, interconnections and personal dignity.”

• Source: Public Health Agency of Canada
## MENTAL HEALTH CONTINUUM MODEL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HEALTHY</th>
<th>REACTING</th>
<th>INJURED</th>
<th>ILL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Normal fluctuations in mood</td>
<td>Nervousness, irritability, sadness</td>
<td>Anxiety, anger, pervasive sadness, hopelessness</td>
<td>Excessive anxiety, easily enraged, depressed mood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normal sleep patterns</td>
<td>Trouble sleeping</td>
<td>Restless or disturbed sleep</td>
<td>Unable to fall or stay asleep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physically well, full of energy</td>
<td>Tired/low energy, muscle tension, headaches</td>
<td>Fatigue, aches and pains</td>
<td>Unable to perform duties, absenteeism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consistent performance</td>
<td>Procrastination</td>
<td>Decreased performance, presenteeism</td>
<td>Exhaustion, physical illness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socially active</td>
<td>Decreased social activity</td>
<td>Social avoidance or withdrawal</td>
<td>Isolation, avoiding social events</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Actions to Take at Each Phase of the Continuum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HEALTHY</th>
<th>REACTING</th>
<th>INJURED</th>
<th>ILL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Focus on task at hand</td>
<td>Recognize limits</td>
<td>Identify and understand own signs of distress</td>
<td>Seek consultation as needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Break problems into manageable chunks</td>
<td>Get adequate rest, food, and exercise</td>
<td>Talk with someone</td>
<td>Follow health care provider recommendations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify and nurture support systems</td>
<td>Engage in healthy coping strategies</td>
<td>Seek help</td>
<td>Regain physical and mental health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain healthy lifestyle</td>
<td>Identify and minimize stressors</td>
<td>Seek social support instead of withdrawing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Why is Mental Health in the workplace important

• 70% of Canadian employees are concerned about the psychological health and safety of their workplace.
• 14% don’t think theirs is healthy or safe at all

• Source: MHCC
Why is Mental Health in the workplace important

- 23% of workers experienced physical health problems caused by stress, anxiety or major depression
- 1 in 5 workers experienced fatigue, sleeping problems, headaches and anxiety
- 30% of short- and long-term disability claims in Canada are attributed to mental health problems and illnesses
- $6 billion in lost productivity from absenteeism, presenteeism and turnover.

- Source: MHCC
How to build a Mental Health First Aid program

- Policy
- Training
- Culture
Policy

- Canadian standard
- Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace

CAN/CSA-Z1003-13/BNQ
9700-803/2013

Psychological health and safety in the workplace - Prevention, promotion, and guidance to staged implementation. This standard is available as a free download.
Training

• SET™ for Safety Partner Program
• Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) training
What is Mental Health First Aid

• Mental health first aid is the help provided to a person developing a mental health problem or in a mental health crisis.

• The first aid is given until appropriate professional help is received or until the crisis is resolved.
Aims of Mental Health First Aid

• Preserve life
• Prevent deterioration
• Promote the recovery
• Provide comfort
Culture

More than 60 per cent of people with mental health problems and mental illness won’t seek the help they need; stigma is one of the main reasons.

SPE - Z1003 Implementation Handbook

Assembling the Pieces - An Implementation Guide to the National Standard of Canada on Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace. Available as a free download or for purchase as a hardcopy book.
Thank you