



Promoting Safety Together

Supporting Employees in a Crisis



for Workplace
Mental Health



Canadian Mental
Health Association
British Columbia
Mental health for all



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Ministry of
Mental Health
and Addictions

Welcome

Aaryn & Ginger work on the traditional, unceded territories of the Syilx people of the Okanagan nation.

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Overview

- Framing Our Crisis Response
- Seeking Assistance
- Importance of Choice



What is a Crisis?

- Demands of the situation exceed our usual methods of coping with challenges, or our perceived ability to cope.
- Immediate safety is not always a concern, but err on the side of caution.



Common Concerns

- What if it is none of my business?
- What if I do nothing?
- What will I do next?
- What if help is far away?
- What if I make it worse?





Parallels to First Aid

- Immediate danger? 911 & environment management
- You're not a paramedic* or surgeon... or a counsellor or psychologist
- Promote safety, prevent further harm

Seeking Assistance

- If calling 911, just the facts
- Be transparent
- Know that the police may come
- A note re: Mental Health Act
- Crisis line, navigation service, or mental health line together





Importance of Choice

- **Reasons:**
 - Lessen trauma
 - Promote empowerment
 - Build trust
- Often, someone in a crisis may feel they have little or no control/few or no options

Examples of Choice

- Emergency = immediate 911
- “Emergency services are on their way to help, do you feel more comfortable waiting in here or should we wait outside?”
- “I have to call someone, would you prefer we call the crisis line first or try your doctor?”





Listen to Understand

- Active listening **does not** mean:
 - Listening to reply or “get it right”
 - Giving advice on their problems
 - Judging
- It **does** include:
 - Holding time and space
 - Checking understanding
 - Challenging assumptions



Proactive Mental Health Support for Employees

- Provide training and support – how to respond to difficult guest situations
- Build relationships with employees
- Normalize talking about mental health in the workplace
- Debrief challenging situations
- Provide a safe space to share frustrations
- Share mental health supports and resources



Dealing with Difficult Guests

go2HR Resources

- [Scripts: Responding to Difficult Guest Situations during a Pandemic](#)
- [Scripts: Proof of Vaccination -How To Deal with Challenging Situations](#)
- [BSAFE™ Training](#)

Safety Talks

- Pilot “Mental Health Awareness in the Workplace”
- Employee resource + 5 minute video
- Workmentalhealthbc.ca
- We want your feedback!
- 10 topics ~mid-November



for Workplace
Mental Health

Safety Talk • Employee Resource

Mental Health Awareness in the Workplace

What is Mental Health?

Just like physical health, we all have mental health. Mental health is a state of well-being that includes our thoughts and emotions. Our mental health can affect our ability to solve problems and overcome difficulties, our social connections, how we “show up” at work, and even our physical feelings. Anyone can experience mental health challenges (e.g. a very stressful week) or a diagnosable mental illness (e.g. depression).

Our workplace can play an important part in promoting positive mental health and supporting people when they are going through a tough time.

Risks to Mental Health at Work

- Inadequate health and safety policies
- Poor communication
- Lack of breaks and time to debrief
- No input into how or why work is done
- Unreasonable or unclear expectations
- No job training or preparedness
- Gossip and excluding others
- Bullying and harassment

Why Does This Matter?

When we don't have mental health awareness at work, it can have a negative effect on every individual as well as the overall organization.

These effects may include:

- Increased physical illnesses (e.g. flu)
- Higher rate of accidents and injury
- Low morale
- Higher turnover and absenteeism

Wellness Tips

It is important that we create a supportive culture and check in with each other on a regular basis. You don't have to wait until someone is in a crisis to be a caring co-worker.

Speak up when you have concerns. If you think there is a health hazard, a better way to do your work, an unreasonable expectation, or you're worried about someone's well-being, speak to your supervisor. If you are a supervisor, be patient and respectful when receiving this feedback, and go to your own manager if you need help.

Take your breaks and talk to your supervisor if you're having trouble finding the time or coverage to do so.

Learn more about free mental health resources available and access them as needed.

Additional Resources

- wellbeing.gov.bc.ca
- 310-6789
- heretohelp.bc.ca
- bouncebackbc.ca

workmentalhealthbc.ca



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