

Mental Health  
Commission  
of Canada

Commission de  
la santé mentale  
du Canada



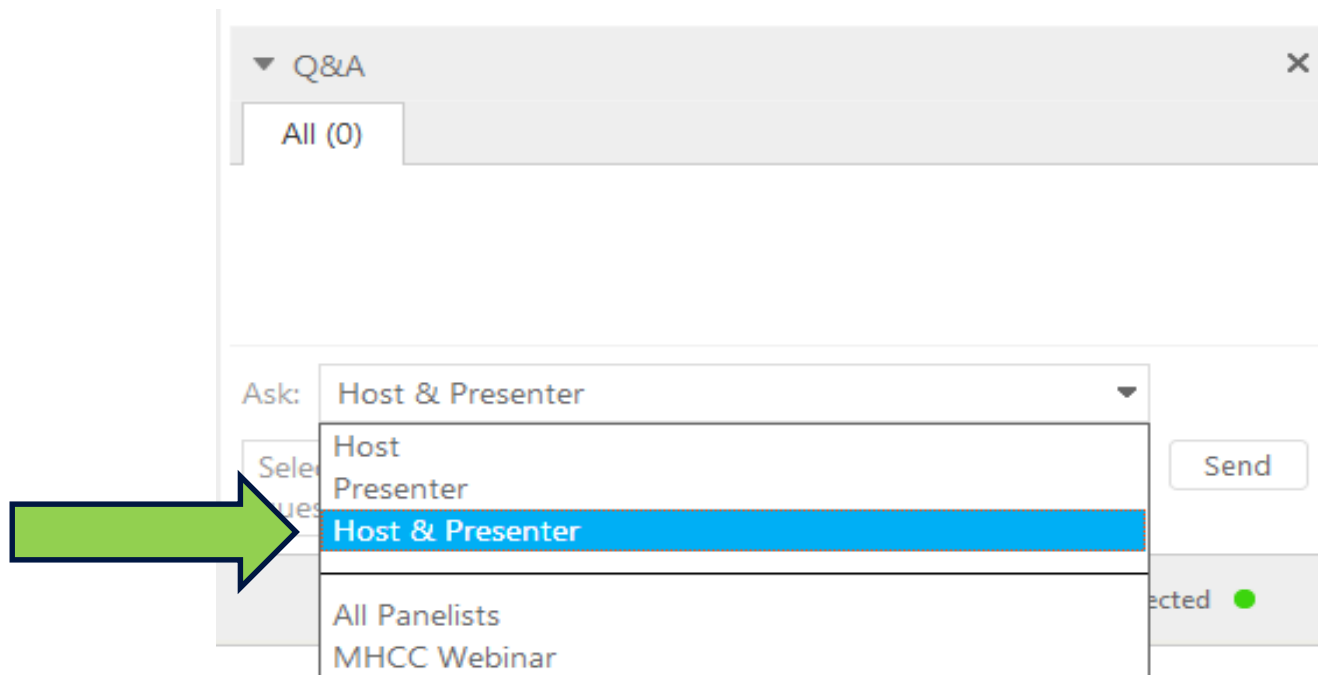
# Depression and Anxiety in the Workplace

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SEB Benefits & HR Consulting Inc.

April 29, 2015, Noon-1:00 p.m. ET

**Important!** Send questions/comments to:  
**'Host & Presenter'**



# Presenter



Julie Holden  
SEB Benefits & HR Consulting Inc.



# Agenda

- Mental Health – The Facts
- What is Depression?
  - Effects of depression
  - Depression in the workplace
- What is Anxiety?
  - Signs and symptoms
  - Risk Factors
- What is Stigma?
- Accommodation and Return to Work
- Questions



# MENTAL HEALTH: THE FACTS

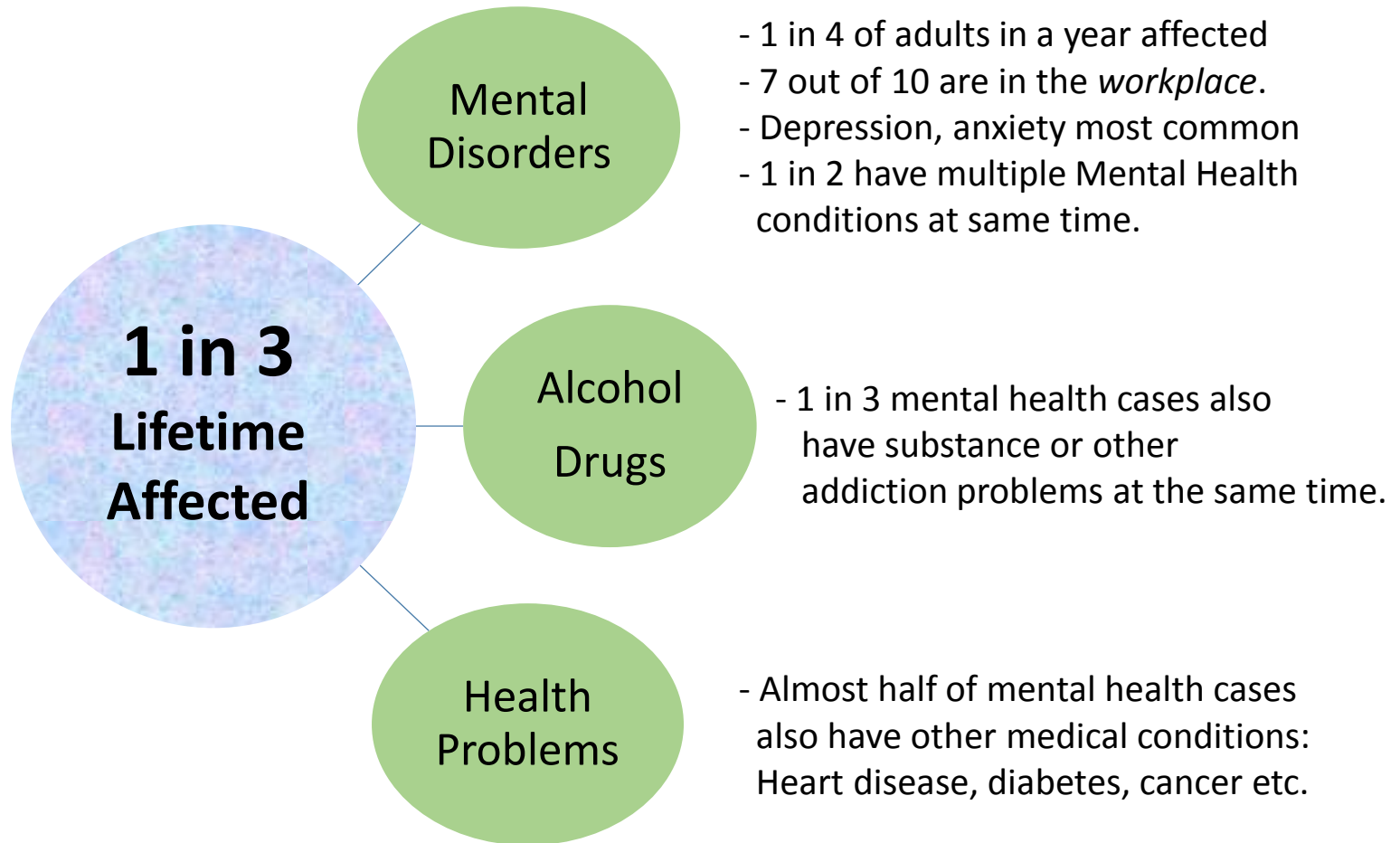
- Every week, **500,000** people will not go to work due to mental illness.
- **1 in 5** Canadians will experience a mental health challenge this year.
- Mental illness in Canada costs an estimated \$51 billion per year and of that, **\$20 billion** is attributed to lost productivity in the workplace.



Sources:1) The Mental Health Commission of Canada. 2014. Issue: Did You Know? Available online: <http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/English/node/5346> 2) The Mental Health Commission of Canada. 2013. Issue: Workplace. Available online: <http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/English/issues/workplace?routetoken=d1279674b28f98851f2e7d85a022c1cc&terminal=30>

# MENTAL ILLNESS

## COMMON • COMPLEX • CO-MORBID



Dewa et al. (2004), Kessler et al. (2005), NIMH (2008), Urbanoski et al. (2007)



# EFFECTS OF DEPRESSION

## *Effects on Emotion*

- Sadness, anxiety, guilt, anger, mood swings, lack of emotional responsiveness, helplessness, hopelessness, irritability

## *Effects on Thinking*

- Self-criticism, self-blame, worry, pessimism, impaired memory, difficulty concentrating, difficulty making decisions, confusion, belief others see them in a negative light, thoughts of death and suicide

## *Effects on Behaviour*

- Crying spells, withdrawal from others, neglect of responsibilities, loss of interest in personal appearance, loss of motivation

## *Physical Effects*

- Chronic fatigue, lack of energy, sleeping too much or too little, overeating or loss of appetite, constipation, weight loss or gain, irregular menstrual cycle, loss of sexual desire, unexplained aches and pains



# DEPRESSION IN THE WORKPLACE

- **Help is key** - 80% of people with depression can recover with the proper help.
- Do not try to diagnose the problem yourself - a trained healthcare professional should be the only one to do this.
- **From a colleague or manager's perspective:**
  - Assess the risk of suicide and/or harm.
  - Ask if there is anything that you can do to help.
  - Show your colleague respect. Listen non-judgmentally.
  - Make your colleague aware of their value in the workplace.
  - Offer encouragement and give reassurance that there is hope.
- Encourage your colleague to seek support and speak to their health professional, on-site occupational nurse, therapist or employee assistance professional.

Source: 1) MDSC. 2009. Quick Facts on Mental Illness & Addition in Canada. Available online: <http://goo.gl/J6k2e>



# ANXIETY DISORDERS – HOW MANY ARE AFFECTED?

- Anxiety disorders are the most common mental illness in Canada.
- 9% men and 16% women are affected each year.

## Types of anxiety disorders and % affected:

- Generalized Anxiety Disorder - 1.1%
- Specific Phobias – 8.0%
- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder – (Data unavailable)
- Social Phobia - 6.7%
- Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder - 1.8%
- Panic Disorder - 0.7%

Source: MDSC. 2009. Quick Facts on Mental Illness & Addiction in Canada. Available online: <http://goo.gl/J6k2e>

# SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF ANXIETY DISORDERS

## *Psychological*

- Fear, trepidation, sense of impending doom or imminent danger
- Excessive inappropriate worry
- Fear of dying or “going mad”
- Decreased attention and concentration
- Environment feels unreal and unfamiliar
- Feeling detached from oneself
- Speeding or slowing of thoughts
- Easily distracted, irritability, insomnia, vivid dreams

## *Physical*

- Cardiovascular (heart palpitations, chest pain, rapid heart rate, flushing)
- Respiratory (hyperventilation, shortness of breath)
- Neurological (dizziness, headache, vertigo, tingling)
- Gastrointestinal (choking, dry mouth, nausea, vomiting)
- Musculoskeletal (muscle ache and tension, restlessness)

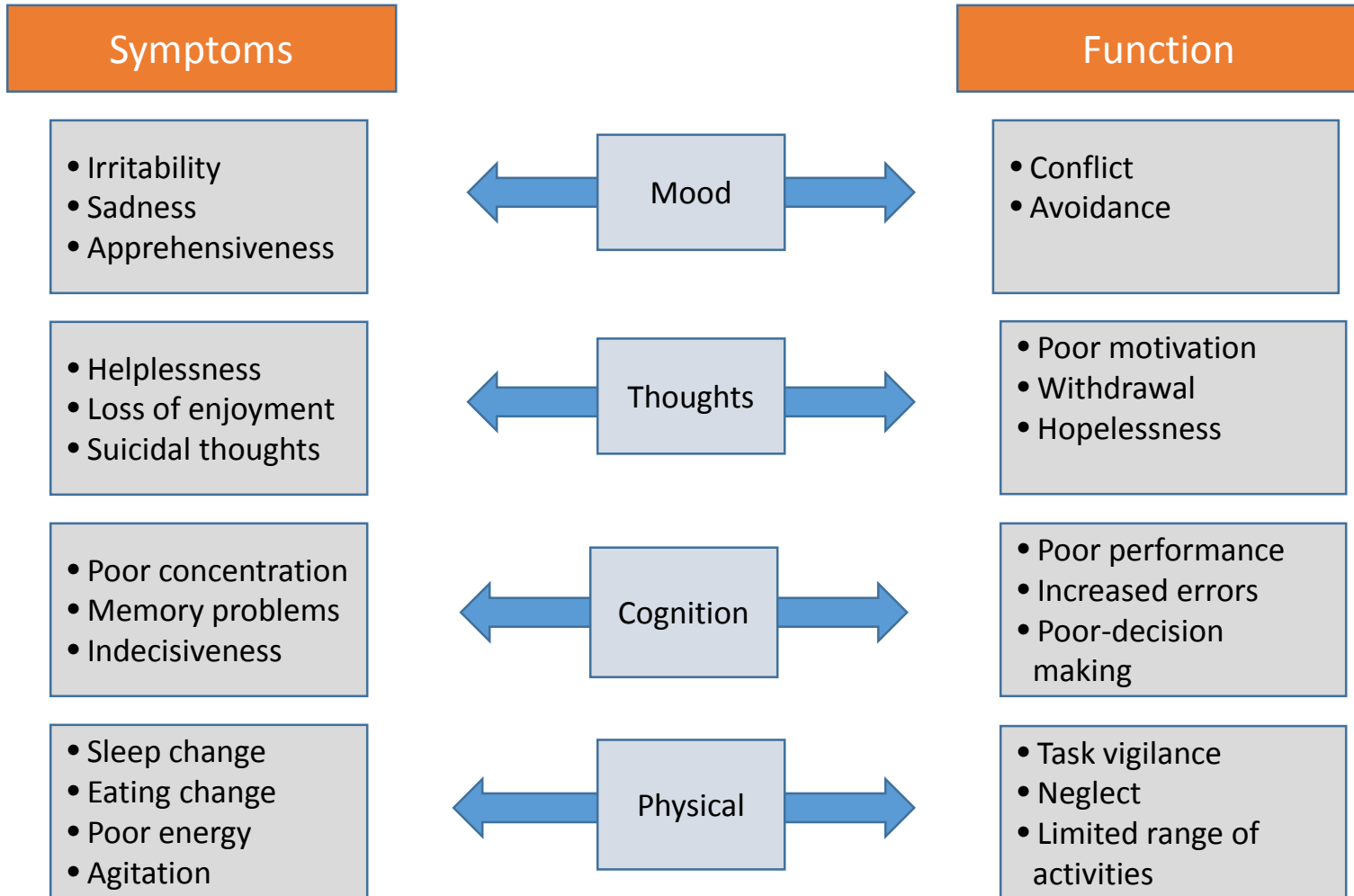
# RISK FACTORS FOR ANXIETY

- Anxiety is mostly caused by perceived threats in the environment
- Some people react with anxiety or develop anxiety disorders when they are threatened or believe they are being threatened
- Anxiety symptoms can also result from:
  - Side effects of certain medications
  - Certain drugs (e.g. caffeine, amphetamines, cocaine)

# HOW TO HELP OTHERS WITH ANXIETY

1. Assess the risk of suicide and/or harm
2. Listen non-judgmentally
3. Give reassurance and information
  - They have a real medical condition
  - Anxiety is a common illness
  - An anxiety disorder is not a weakness or a character defect
  - Effective help is available
  - Skills can be learned to reduce the effects of stress and anxiety
4. Encourage the person to get professional help
5. Encourage other supports
  - Can take many forms (reducing caffeine, exercise, engaging in leisure activities, controlled breathing, support groups, etc.)

# RESOURCE: INNER AND OUTER SIGNS OF DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY



Source  
Dr. Ash Bender/CAMH

# DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY: CLINICAL TREATMENT AND CARE

- The most widely used and most effective kinds of treatments for depression and anxiety include *medication* and *cognitive behaviour therapy* (or a combination of both).
- *Personalized medicine* is fast becoming the way drug therapies will be determined and monitored.
- *Shared care/collaborative care*, a model using the assistance of a psychiatrist to help facilitate treatment with a patient's attending physician and disability case manager.



# WHAT IS STIGMA?

- Although **1 in 5** Canadians will be affected by mental illness this year, stigma prevents many from reaching out for assistance.
- What is stigma? There are two different kinds:
  - **Self Stigma**
  - **Stigma and Discrimination by Association**

# WHY ARE MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES OFTEN HIDDEN?

- The number one reason why mental health is hidden at work is due to fear.

## Common Fears of:

- Losing an employer's respect
- Losing one's job
- Not being promoted
- Being isolated or shamed by co-workers and colleagues
- Asking for accommodation
- Long-term career goals may be affected
- Admitting to an illness in general

# ACCOMMODATION AND RETURN TO WORK

# AREAS OF EMPLOYEE WORK FUNCTIONING THAT MAY NEED ACCOMMODATION

- Supervision Style
- Work Scheduling
- Job Duties
- Meeting Deadlines
- Employee-Supervisor Relationship
- Stamina
- Concentration Limits
- Emotional Response
- Training Needs
- Communication

Table 4 from *Able-Minded* Report (2010)

# MENTAL HEALTH WORK ACCOMMODATION- EXAMPLES

## A) Changes in the work environment:

- Maintaining stamina
  - > flexible scheduling/part-time work schedules
  - > allow time off for counseling
- Maintain concentration
  - > reduce distractions in work area
  - > provide for frequent breaks
- Attendance issues
  - > work from home arrangements
  - > employ job sharing
- Change issues
  - > provide resilience and coping skills training
  - > provide job retraining

Source: Douglas Hanson-UBC  
Truncated list prepared by Mental Health International(MHI)

# MENTAL HEALTH WORK ACCOMMODATION- EXAMPLES

## B) Intellectual Limitations

- Difficulty staying organized and meeting deadlines
  - > make daily to-do lists and completion check-off sheets
  - > remind employees of important deadlines
- Memory deficits
  - > provide written instructions
  - > allow additional training time

## C) Social Limitation

- Work effectively with supervisors
  - > provide positive praise and reinforcement
  - > provide for written job instructions and sign-off
- Interacting with coworkers
  - > educate all employees on their right to accommodation
  - > provide sensitivity training to coworkers and supervisors

Truncated list by MHI/ Douglas Hanson-UBC

# SUCCESSFUL RETURN TO WORK

- Important to understand that an employee has not successfully returned to work on the day he or she re-enters the workplace.
- Ask employee how to handle co-workers.
- Success is when an employee returns and is able to sustain a level of engagement in the workplace.
  - Likely not able to take back all job duties
  - Understand and plan for the fact that it will take time
  - Open and ongoing communication is key
  - Modify the return to work plan as required
  - Employ health coaching or other programs to support employee
- Employee's involvement in return to work planning and communication to peers, colleagues and management is essential.

# HEALTHY LIVING CHECK IN – THE PILLARS OF GOOD HEALTH

Tip	Action
Eat Healthy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Eat regular meals, enough fruit and vegetables and be aware of your alcohol, fat and sugar intake.</li></ul>
Exercise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Get regular physical exercise – 150 minutes/week or try 15 minutes of straight cardio/day.</li></ul>
Simplify Your Lifestyle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify your priorities and adjust your life to make room for things that are most important for you.</li><li>• Check on your time management and your plans for the day. Are there steps you can take to free up some of those busy hours at home?</li></ul>
Personal Self-care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How much sleep do you get – 7-8.5 hours/night?</li><li>• Take time to look after yourself. Each day, do something you love doing. It's ok to say “no” sometimes – you need to find your own balance.</li></ul>



Source: 1) Canadian Society of Exercise Physiology. Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines. Available online: <http://goo.gl/NTBTzk>



# FROM AWARENESS TO ACTION.

## WHEN IN DOUBT INVEST IN THESE *TOP THREE* INITIATIVES:

### *Reduce stigma:*

- Improve mental health literacy in the organization
- Establish 'peer' support groups

### *Improve early detection:*

- Train supervisors and managers to recognize early symptoms of mental health issues and how to effectively address concerns to employees
- Provide self assessment tools and incorporate creative incentives (respecting privacy)

### *Utilize EFAP services:*

- Make available and promote the benefits of EFAP mental health program services
- Encourage self management through *resiliency training and coping skills*



## Resources

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

Mood Disorders of Canada  
[www.mooddisorderscanada.ca](http://www.mooddisorderscanada.ca)

Feeling Better Now  
[www.feelingbetternow.com](http://www.feelingbetternow.com)

Anxiety Disorders Association of Canada  
[www.anxietycanada.ca](http://www.anxietycanada.ca)

Guarding Minds@Work

▪ [www.guardingmindsatwork.com](http://www.guardingmindsatwork.com)

Canadian Mental Health Association

▪ [www.cmha.ca](http://www.cmha.ca)

Centre for Mental Health in the Workplace

▪ [www.gwlcentreformentalhealth.com](http://www.gwlcentreformentalhealth.com)

Excellence Canada

▪ [www.excellencecanada.com](http://www.excellencecanada.com)

Mental Health International

▪ [www.mentalhealthinternational.ca](http://www.mentalhealthinternational.ca)



# Next Workplace Webinar

**Date:** May 27, 2015 at 12:00pm to 1:00pm ET

**Topic:** Supporting Employee Success - A Tool to Plan Accommodations that Support Success at Work

**Speaker:** Mary Ann Baynton, Ian Arnold and Laura Lozanski



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



# Join the Conversation

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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>



# Thank you

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