



Mental Health
Commission
of Canada

Commission de
la santé mentale
du Canada

April 27, 2012

To Canadian Employers,

The psychological health of Canadian workers and workplaces is critical to productivity, sustainability and well-being.

For employees, working in psychologically healthy and safe jobs can promote mental well-being and support individuals who may be suffering from mental health problems and illnesses. In contrast, working in consistently stressful environments can lead to anxiety, depression and burnout. It can also exacerbate existing mental and physical health problems.

To address this, the Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC), in collaboration with the Centre for Applied Research in Mental Health and Addiction (CARMHA) at Simon Fraser University, is introducing *Psychological Health and Safety: An Action Guide for Employers*.

The *Action Guide* is based on six steps - Policy, Planning, Promotion, Prevention, Process and Persistence – that support employers and human resources personnel building effective workplace mental health strategies. The 24 evidence-based actions in the *Action Guide* offer flexible, practical tips that can be used across various types of workplaces. It also offers tips to support managers, suggestions for small businesses and advice on how best to work with the health care system.

Employers are increasingly seeking the latest information on psychological health and safety in order to pursue ways to implement new strategies in their workplace.

This message has been gaining importance since the MHCC announced a voluntary *National Standard for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace* will be released in late 2012.

The steps and actions described in the *Action Guide* will also prepare employers to more easily implement the voluntary *National Standard* when it is released.

Employers who use the *Action Guide* will demonstrate a commitment to workplace psychological health and safety, allowing for increased recruitment and retention, improved risk management, enhanced cost effectiveness and increased corporate social responsibility at their workplace.

Mental health problems are the leading cause of both short-and long-term disabilities in Canada. The economic cost has been estimated at \$51 billion annually, with almost \$20 billion of that coming from workplace losses.



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I encourage you to review *Psychological Health and Safety: An Action Guide for Employers*, implement the recommendations that are most appropriate for your workplace and continue to emphasize the issue of psychological health and safety on an ongoing basis in your organization.

The release of this *Action Guide* represents an opportunity to take immediate action that will help improve the psychological health and safety of employees and create more productive workplaces across Canada.

Louise Bradley
President and CEO